



The Tusker Tribune

120



SOMERS MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWSPAPER

Issue Number 10

<https://www.somersschools.org/Page/11489>

Fall 2023

Hard to Believe it's DECEMBER ALREADY!



By Victoria McGee
Tusker Tribune Staff

I cannot believe that it is already December. That means it is Christmas time. So you are probably wondering what to do during Christmas time. So here is a list of fun things to do by yourself, with friends and family.

- Make Christmas themed baskets to give to friends and family. In these baskets you can add blankets, candy, and other things that the person you want to give it to likes.
- Make Christmas cookies and themed desserts. I love the Pillsbury Christmas-themed cookies. They taste so good. I also love making cakes and other fun Christmas-themed desserts.
- Decorate for Christmas. I love decorating my room and adding fun Christmas decorations to it. I have a mini Christmas tree that I love and I add mini ornaments on it.
- Have a Christmas movie marathon or a Christmas hangout/sleepover. I like watching movies with my friends and family. When it is Christmas time, I love hanging out with my friends and doing Christmas-themed activities.



Continued on Page 2

Christmas is 'Only' 25 Days Away!



By Cole Dolan
Tusker Tribune Staff

Christmas is almost here and there are many traditions, but most people love watching movies and especially gifts. I am here to give you the top 5 movies songs and gifts for this Christmas season.



MOVIES

- *Elf* (comedy, PG, main character: Buddy the Elf played by Will Ferrell)
- *Home Alone 1 and 2* (comedy, PG main character: Kevin Macaulay Culkin)
- *How The Grinch Stole Christmas* (Fantasy/Comedy, PG, main character: The Grinch/Jim Carey)
- *The Polar Express* (Cartoon, G, main character: Chris)
- *The Nightmare Before Christmas* (Cartoon, PG, main character: Jack Skellington)

SONGS

- *All I want for Christmas is You* by Mariah Carey
- *It's Beginning to Look a lot Like Christmas* by Michael Bublé.

Continued on Page 2

The Island—A NaNoWriMo Excerpt



By Ava Schmidberger
Tusker Tribune Staff

I figured it was just a little turbulence, but as I walk back to my seat, it slowly grows bigger, and bigger. A beep comes on over the planes speakers . . .

"Please stay calm and do not get out of your seats. While we were over the ocean, a group of bird flew through the engine. Oxygen masks will drop now, please help yourself before assisting others."



I try not to panic, but it just comes out of me, "AHHHHHHHH! We're crashing!"

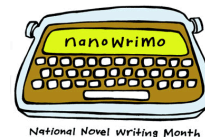
I know I shouldn't have screamed but I did. A girl my size would be lucky enough if I can even make it to the exit .

I feel the plane dropping beneath me. Sounds of panic, and oxygen masks dropping. I need to run and jump out, and I need to do it now. I grab my life vest and jump, I can feel my body shaking, bracing for impact.

Seven more kids, around my age jump out, and when I turn around to look if there is anyone else coming, I see the plane. Falling to the bottom of the ocean, with no other survivors besides the eight of us.

I don't even know what to think. Over 200 passengers, and I'm one of the eight who made it out. Me. Why me? And what do we do now? There's no way of calling for help, so we swim. There's no way of telling where we are going, but we have to try.

The second part of this story will appear in next week's issue.



Solving the Annual Holiday Gift Dilemma



By Ava Schmidberger
Tusker Tribune Staff

If you find yourself struggling to pick out the perfect gifts for the holiday season, you're not alone. Holiday gift shopping often causes stress and anxiety, but thankfully there are ways to insure you pick out the best gift, without a list!

- **Be practical not flashy.** Don't aim to impress with your gift; aim to get something that the person would really like or something that will mean a lot to them.
- **Think of interests.** If the person plays a sport, get them equipment or clothes for the sport. Or if they enjoy art, get them art supplies.
- **When in doubt, get clothes.** If you know the person, and know how they dress, you can insert a photo of one of their outfits they have worn into amazon, and it will show you similar things you could get them. Or if you know their favorite store, ask an employee for a recommendation.
- **Still don't know?** Get the person a gift card to their favorite store, or from Amazon, or from Visa.



Hard to Believe

From Page 1

- Make muddy buddies. I love this snack! Muddy buddies are Chex cereal covered in chocolate and you can add peanut butter, then you add powdered sugar and shake it or mix it. Then you have your yummy snack!
- Take a Christmas photo shoot with yourself or with friends or family. I love taking photos with my friends and family and when it is Christmas time, it is really fun because I like Christmas.
- Go to see Christmas lights. And I always go to see Christmas lights and it is really fun and I enjoy it a lot.
- Go ice skating. I have never been ice skating, but it sounds fun and it reminds me of Christmas.

These are just some options of things to do. I am very excited for Christmas and I'm excited to do these activities. I hope you do some of these things, too. I hope it helped ge ideas of things to do!

Traditional Holiday Customs



By Tara Goodwin
Tusker Tribune Staf

Christmas

Christian faiths celebrate Advent this year. Advent starts December 3rd. At the end of Advent, personally, my favorite part is CHRISTMAS.

Christmas is about when Jesus Christ was born. Normally for Christmas, people hang lights around their houses or get a Christmas tree and hang ornaments all over the tree. My favorite part is watching all the Christmas movies.



Hanukkah

Jewish people celebrate Hanukkah. This year, Hanukkah starts at sundown on December 7, and ends on sundown, December 15. A big tradition Jewish people have is lighting the Menorah. At Hanukkah, Jewish people play games like spinning the Dreidel. Jewish people on Hanukkah loved to eat potato pancakes and jelly donuts.



Kwanzaa

The week-long holiday of Kwanzaa honors African American heritage; it is a cultural holiday as opposed to a religious one. Kwanzaa starts on December 26th and goes on to January 1st.

Like Hanukkah, celebrants light eight candles called the Kinar. Tradiitonal foods eaten during Kwanzaa include catfish, collards, and macaroni and cheese.



Only 25 Days

From Page 1

- *Last Christmas* by Wham!
- *Jingle bell Rock* By Bobby Helms
- *Let it snow! Let it snow! Let it snow!* by Frank Sinatra.

GIFTS

- Gaming consoles (Xbox, PlayStation, Nintendo Switch)
- LEGO's (Build Cars, ETC)
- Sports Cards (Trade, sell or collect. these types of cards are a great thing to have.)
- Go-Karts (Always a fun thing to ride around your street)
- Electronics (Phones, Speakers, I-Pad.

The Tusker Tribune is the online Somers Middle School Student Newspaper. It is published weekly (except during school vacations) on the Somers Middle School Website. It is entirely student-written by 6th, 7th and 8th grade students from:

Somers Middle School
250 Route 202
Somers, NY, USA.

Any SMS student is eligible to write stories. If interested, please e-mail Advisor Dean Pappas at:
DPappas@somersschools.org.

Fortnite Has Staying Power!



By Madison Kaplan
Tusker Tribune Staff

Fortnite is making history as one of the biggest video game comebacks in 2023.

After launching Chapter 4, Season 5, on November 3rd, the game had the most users it's seen in months, maybe years! The new video game season is loved because



of the original map and old items. Fortnite was originally released in 2017, and was an instant hit. The game is constantly changing with a new season every one or two months. It is recommended for ages 13 and up because of the slightly violent content, but is believed to be ok for ages 10 and up.

Fortnite is a battle royale game, which means that you fight other players to win. In each match, there are 100 players, and the game continues until there is one player left standing.

Personally, I think Fortnite is a great game for all ages. It is not very violent, and you can play with multiple people on the same device or different devices.

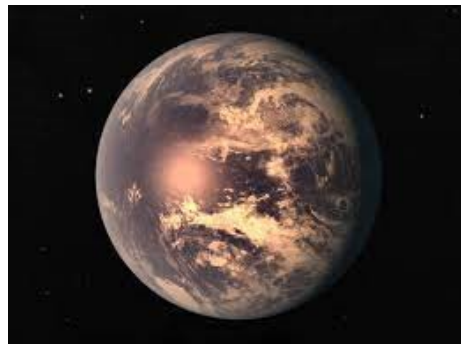
A Future Home Beyond Our Own?



By Ava Schmidberger
Tusker Tribune Staff

Survival on Trappist-1e, a potentially habitable exoplanet located in the TRAPPIST-1 star system, is challenging but possible. With its Earth-like size and potential for liquid water, Trappist 1-e is a potential contender for human colonization. However, the harsh realities of surviving on this distant world require creative solutions.

The first challenge is the red dwarf star TRAPPIST-1, which Trappist-1e orbits. The star's variability and high levels of radiation demand robust shielding for any potential human settlement. Advanced technology in radiation-resistant materials would be essential for human survival. The planet's thin atmosphere is another significant challenge. Developing a life support



systems that can maintain a stable and breathable environment is crucial. Oxygen production and carbon dioxide removal systems would need to be very efficient to make up for Trappist-1e's atmospheric limitations.

Survival on Trappist-1e would require cutting-edge technology in radiation shielding, and life support systems. The journey for human colonization on this distant exoplanet pushes the boundaries of our current scientific and technological capabilities, this challenges us to adapt and innovate for the sake of exploration and potential habitation beyond earth.

November Events Open Up the Holiday Season



By Allison Cardillo
Tusker Tribune Staff

November's events are a sure sign the holiday season is approaching.

Veterans Day is always observed on November 11. In 1954, President Eisenhower changed it from "Armistice Day" to "Veterans Day" in honor of those who served our country. The veterans gave their time and their lives to protect us and keep our country safe.



To celebrate, we take a moment of silence at 11:11 am because fighting stopped in WWI in 1918 on November 11 at 11:11 AM. Thanksgiving is

the most popular holiday in November and is celebrated on the fourth Thursday. Thanksgiving is all about the four F's: food, family, football and fun. It's time to reflect on the year. Be thankful and celebrate with friends and family by having a delicious meal together. Do you like to watch the Thanksgiving parade? I like looking at all of the floats and the parade is also great.

In 1621, the first Thanksgiving, the Pilgrims held a feast to give thanks for their survival in the new world. They also invited the Wampanoag native Americans to join them.



May Be Time to Revisit the Backpack Rule



**By Ava Schmidberger
Tusker Tribune Staff**

In 2022, after the COVID pandemic, Somers Middle School banned the use of backpacks in school. As an 8th grade student, I highly disagree with this rule, and many of the other students at SMS agree with me. Approximately 88% of 8th grade students who I surveyed said that the backpack rule should be changed. About 15% of the 8th grade students said that backpacks and lockers should be allowed.

Liam Colderbanks, an 8th grade student, says he voted no for backpacks because "Going to our lockers is a social time to see friends."

This is how many other students think as well. This is a problem because it creates hall traffic, therefore, allowing backpacks would reduce the amount of hallway traffic. Another 8th grade student, Estefinia Leon, said, "I think backpacks should be allowed because it would be easier to not be late to classes and would make me feel safer."

You may be concerned about the space backpacks take up in the classroom, but they could be kept under desks to



Don't Overlook Benefits of Dance



**By Madison Kaplan
Tusker Tribune Staff**

Not many people know how many benefits dancing has. It improves your heart health, helps strengthen bones, and has a positive effect on your mental health.

It improves your heart health. Dance is a cardio exercise. The movement gets your heart beating fast and this improves the health of your heart, which improves the health of your entire body.

Dance also helps your bone strength. The National Osteoporosis Foundation found that high intensity workouts associated with dancing cause new formation of bone tissue, which makes your bones stronger and rigid. Dance also makes your muscles stronger by tugging and pushing them against the bones.



Any cardio exercise (including dance) helps improve your mood by releasing feel-good endorphins which reduce stress levels and can help with mental wellness.

Overall, dance is a great form of self-expression as well. You can express yourself using your body and music when dancing. Facial expressions can also be used to express yourself during dance.

Interesting Facts About Turkeys



**By Ava Schmidberger
Tusker Tribune Staff**

Turkeys are fascinating birds that are native to North America. They have a unique appearance with their large bodies, feathered tails, and colorful feathers. Turkeys are known for their distinctive gobbling sound, especially during Thanksgiving. They are also known for their ability to fly, even though they prefer to stay on the ground.

Turkeys are omnivores, which means they eat plants and small insects. Wild Turkeys often sleep in trees. Did you know that male turkeys are called "toms" or "gobblers", while females are called "hens"?

Turkeys play an important role in American culture, especially during Thanksgiving, where they are normally the centerpiece of the dinner and a symbol of generosity and gratitude.



Did you know Turkeys have a better sense of sight than humans? They also can change colors!

There are two common ways to cook a turkey for thanksgiving—roasting/cooking it in the oven, or deep frying the turkey. Surprisingly, frying the turkey is actually a healthier option!

Reporters/Contributors

**Allison Cardillo
Cole Dolan
Tara Goodwin
Madison Kaplan
Victoria McGee
Ava Schmidberger**