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Winter 2024

8th Graders Moving Ahead with MYP Projects



**By Ava Schmidberger
Tusker Tribune Staff**

Somers Middle School and Somers High School participate in the Middle Years Program. The Middle Years Program is a part of the International Baccalaureate Program. It encourages students within the grades of 6th and 10th to make connections between their studies and the real world, helping to prepare them for success later in life.

This year, the 8th grade students in Somers Middle School are participating in an MYP community project. An MYP project is a project in which students find ways to volunteer to help their community in a needed and meaningful way. They pick their partners who have similar interests and are paired with a supervisor who has similar interests. They then begin to plan their project.

Every Wednesday morning during Advisory period, students meet with their supervisor and group mates to discuss how their project has been



going and how it can improve.

One MYP project that made a big impact on the world took place in Puerto Rico. A group of students helped rebuild multiple dwellings after a dangerous storm. Some things they helped rebuild were schools and homes.

Here at SMS, many students have very unique ideas! My group, which also includes Terezina Parubi and Morgan Sabanosh, is working toward helping kids learn sports and exposing them to new ones. Our idea was a group effort and came from our common love of all different sports.

We have begun to organize our project. Sometime in early May, we will host a volleyball and basketball clinic for any children (between 1st and 4th grade) who would like to attend. It would cost \$20 per child. The money that is paid goes directly to a PE program at a Charter School in Mount Vernon NY.

With our project, we hope to help a school develop a better PE program, as well as expose kids to new sports, and help them learn more things about a sport they may already love.

Show Me the Money!



**By Cole Dolan
Tusker Tribune Staff**

Late last year, the Los Angeles Dodgers signed Japanese pitcher



Yoshinobu Yamamoto to a 12-year, \$325 million deal, and just a couple of weeks before that, they signed two-way player Shohei Ohtani to a 10-year, \$700 million deal, which is the biggest contract in MLB history.



These contracts add up to just over \$1 billion! Here is a list of trivia, along with items and their quantity, that you

- could buy with \$1 billion:
1. 178 Lamborghini Venos (about \$5.6 million each).
 2. 1900 average single family homes.
 3. About 135 billion Vbucks (which would be a life-



time supply).

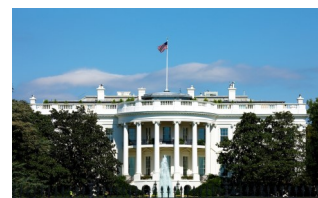
4. The Miami Marlins (About \$980 million)

5. One Super Yacht (About \$600 million)

6. Two White Houses (about \$398 million, but not for sale)

7. Fun fact: 1 billion dollars would be in one-dollar bills 67.9 miles high.

Those are just some of the things you can buy. What would you buy with all this money?



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On the Contrary, How About 'Opposite Day'?



**By Olivia Pelhank
Tusker Tribune Staff**

Opposite Day, a holiday celebrated on January 25th, started as a children's game in the 20th century.

People would say the opposite of what they are trying to say or do something wrong. For example, eating breakfast at dinner, and dinner when it's time for breakfast, or saying goodbye when just entering a room.

Children at the playground would ask each other questions and the other kid would answer it the opposite way they normally would. But it doesn't have any official origin.



Since we don't know the official origin, we don't know why Opposite Day was chosen for January 25th, though some observe it on January 7th. This holiday raises an interesting question: If everything that day is the opposite, and you claim a day is called Opposite Day, is it the opposite of Opposite Day? Tricky, right?

In conclusion, Opposite Day is just a fun holiday. It's so amazing that in Season 1, Episode 9 of *SpongeBob SquarePants*, SpongeBob said to Squidward that it's Opposite day.

So, this month, eat dessert before dinner and say good morning before you go to bed!

Walt Disney's Florida Vision: Disney World



**By Gianna Peanamanda
Tusker Tribune Staff**

Disney World is an amazing magical place where kids all around the world can enjoy this theme park and have fun! Let me tell you the real story of Disney World.

It all started with Walt Disney's dream of creating a place where families could have fun together. In the early 1960s, Walt Disney began scouting locations for a new theme park in Florida. He wanted to create something even more improved than Disneyland in California. After a crazy amount of research, he chose a vast area of land near Orlando.

Construction on Disney World began in 1967 and was a massive project. It took years to transform the swampland into a magical wonderland. Walt Disney sadly passed away in 1966, but his brother, Roy Disney, made sure to carry on his vision and oversee the park's completion.



Finally, on October 1, 1971, Disney World opened its gates to the public. It featured the iconic Cinderella Castle, Main Street USA, and Adventureland, among other magical lands. People from all over the world came to experience the enchantment and joy of this incredible theme park.

Since then, Disney World has grown and expanded, adding more theme parks like Epcot, Disney's Hollywood Studios, and Disney's Animal Kingdom. It has become a must-visit destination for families and Disney fans alike.

I would recommend it for families. With its outstanding attractions, and lively entertainment, it's a place where the whole family can create great memories together. From meeting beloved Disney characters, exploring super fun lands, to experiencing thrilling rides, there's something for everyone to enjoy. So, pack your bags, grab your Mickey ears, and get ready for an unforgettable adventure at Disney World!

An Epic First Season for CJ Stroud



**By Cole Dolan
Tusker Tribune Staff**

The number two pick, CJ Stroud, has come into the NFL and has redefined "first year impact".

CJ led the Texans to the AFC divisional round, where they then lost to the Baltimore Ravens. This might not seem impressive, but the Texans went 3-13 in 2022, which is crazy because in 2023, the Texans were 10-7.

CJ Stroud threw for 3659 yards (including a postseason 4108 yards), he had a 100.8 passer rat-



ing, including in the playoffs, 23 touchdowns and only 5 interceptions. CJ Stroud has proven himself to be a top 10 or even top five quarterback in the NFL for many years to come.

Although CJ Stroud was the leader of this team, you have to give credit to the scouts, the Texans' general management, and especially the rookie head coach, DeMeco Ryans, who was also a huge part of leading this young Texans team to the divisional round.

Do you think the Texans can make it to the Super Bowl in the next few years?

Looking for Snow? Try These Techniques



**By Noah Samuel
Tusker Tribune Staff**

Last Tuesday, after the Martin Luther King holiday, we had a snow day. . But if you want another one, here are seven superstitions that [hopefully] will get us more snow, and maybe even another day off.

Put a spoon under your pillow.

This is a way that dates to the pilgrims! It's hard to tell the exact reason behind this, but I think it's because of the relation between a white pillow and a layer of snow, with the spoon being a snow shovel.

Wear your pajamas inside out and backwards.

A common way, and all you must do is pull your PJ's inside out, slip them on backwards, sleep like that, and you should have snow in the morning, but of course, it might not *always* work.

Flush ice down the toilet.

This is another well-known way, and even though the logic behind this action is not clear, ice cubes come up a lot in snow-day myths. So, it just might work if you give it a shot.

Put pennies on your windowsill.

There's no telling how this came about, but



it's a big part of folklore now. The idea is to stack one penny for each inch of snow on your sill and you should get that amount in the morning. Works for me because I have a lot of pennies. Maybe it's a payment to Jack Frost?

Shake a snow globe.

The idea is that if snow falls on a small scale, it will happen in real life. It might not work, but a snowstorm in a globe still looks like snow.

Put an orange in the freezer.

The freezer makes total sense, but the orange, not so much. The only connection I found was that it grows in a semi-tropical climate but is in season during the winter. It's still worth a try.

Eat ice cream.

Ice cream *does* relate to snow, ice, and the cold, but any excuse to eat ice cream whenever you want is fine by me.

So those are seven rituals to get a snow day, or at least a delay. There are many more beliefs to getting snow, and it's always fun to try some of them. Maybe if you do one – or seven – we'll get a snow day?

Sports to the Max: 2023 NY Jets Season Review



**By Max Nevsky
Tusker Tribune Staff**

Going into this season, the Jets had just finished their 2022 season with a 7-10 record under 2nd year head coach Robert Saleh and 4th year General Manager Joe Douglas.

In the 2022 Draft the Jets drafted Ohio State wide receiver Garrett Wilson and Cincinnati cornerback Sauce Gardner in the 1st round. Those two rookies would win both Offensive and Defense Rookies of the Year.

Another notable selection in that year's draft for the Jets was Iowa State running back Breece Hall in the 2nd round, who has proven to be a dynamic offensive weapon for the Jets with his explosive ability when he touches the ball.

With management having seen enough from 2nd year Quarterback and former #2 overall pick in the 2021 draft Zach Wilson, the Jets made a blockbuster trade. The Jets were able to trade for four-time MVP quarterback Aaron Rodgers from the Green Bay Packers. The trade shocked the NFL community and sent Jets fans into a frenzy. They finally had a great quarterback to complement their ferocious defense.



In the first round of the 2023 draft, the Jets drafted defensive end Will McDonald from Iowa State. With Rodgers as the starter, the potential for this Jets team seemed infinite, but the hype would turn into disappointment fast.

Week 1 was a Monday Night Football Game between the Jets and their longtime division rivals, the Buffalo Bills at home. The Jets won in Overtime 22-16 off a Xavier Gipson punt return touchdown. The Jets defense played great, sacking Josh Allen 5 times, intercepting him 3 times and recovering a fumble.

On the first Jets offensive drive, Aaron Rodgers tore his Achilles tendon and was ruled out. Backup Zach Wilson came in and tossed 140 yards and a TD to help the Jets get the win and start 1-0 for the first time since 2018

The rest of the Jets' season would be more bumpy than smooth. Zach Wilson was named the starter for the rest of the season, and after the magical win against the Bills, the Jets would drop their next three games to fall to 1-3 with a blowout loss on the road in Dallas and 2 close home losses to the rival New England Patriots and Defending Super Bowl Champion Kansas City Chiefs despite a strong performance from Zach Wilson.

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NY Jets From Page 4

The next three weeks would be better for the Jets, as they went 3-0 beating the Denver Broncos on the road, beating the undefeated Philadelphia Eagles at home, and after coming off their bye week, they beat my New York Giants in overtime in MetLife Stadium to improve to 4-3.

Unfortunately for the Jets, the next five weeks were very rough as they had 5 consecutive losses. The first was a blowout home loss to the Los Angeles Chargers in a 6-27 loss. The next was a low scoring, mistake-filled 12-16 loss against the Las Vegas Raiders. The game after that was yet another blowout loss on the road against the Bills in a 6-32 loss. The next game was a blowout home loss on Black Friday to the Miami Dolphins in a 13-34 loss. The last of the five losses was at home against the Atlanta Falcons where the Jets lost 8-13. The Jets were now 4-8 and eliminated from AFC East Contention.

Zach Wilson was put back into the starting lineup and threw for 300 yards and 2 touchdowns in a 30-6 blowout win over the Houston Texans at home. With the Jets at 5-8, they traveled to Miami and got destroyed as they lost 30-0 in yet ANOTHER blowout loss. This put the Jets at 5-9 and eliminated them from playoff contention altogether. Wilson suffered a concussion in the game and was ruled out for the rest of the season. QB Trevor Siemian was then named the starter for the rest of the season.

The next game was at home against the league worst Washington Commanders defense and the Jets won 30-28, putting them at 6-9. Their second to last game was against the playoff-bound Cleveland Browns in Cleveland. The Jets lost 37-20 to their former QB, Joe Flacco, as the Jets finished with yet another 10+ loss season, their ninth of such since they last made the playoffs all the way back in 2010.

The Jets ended their season against the 4-12 Patriots on the road in Foxborough, which would turn out to be Bill Belichick's last game as Patriots head coach. The Jets beat the Pats 17-3 and matched their record from the previous season at 7-10.

My analysis for this team is simple. This Jets team can be incredibly good if they can get Aaron Rodgers back healthy in 2024. The Jets defense is one of the best units in the league. They finished 2023 with the 12th best ranked scoring defense in the league, allowed the 2nd fewest passing yards, 4th fewest passing touchdowns, and the 8th most interceptions. The defense accumulated 17 interceptions, 10 recovered fumbles, 90 pass deflections, and 48 sacks. They also had two all pros on the defense, Quinnen Williams and Sauce Gardner. They also scored three defensive touchdowns and had a safety.

The Jets offense, though, is terrible, to put it nicely. They had the 30th fewest passing yards, and were dead last in passing touchdowns, 22nd in rushing yards, and 30th in rushing touchdowns. That does not mean they did not have some bright spots though. Breece Hall, in his second season, was six yards shy of 1000 yards on the year and had 1600 scrimmage yards and nine total touchdowns. Second year receiver Garrett Wilson had 95 catches for 1042 yards and three touchdowns. And tight end Tyler Conklin and 61 catches for 621 yards.

In the offseason, the Jets should find Rodgers a good #2 and #3 receiver. A solid backup RB also could not hurt the Jets. The Jets should also look to resign double digit sack man Bryce Huff as well. Good Luck Gang Green next season!

Mohawk Ski Adventure



By Cecilia Morrissey
Tusker Tribune Staff

Recently, I went to Mohawk Mountain and went skiing with my dad and brother. We went up the lift and down the mountain. We had conversations going up the mountain, and going down the mountain, we would always fall.

My dad was a good skier. My brother and I would follow him down the mountain, falling behind him as we tried to keep up. My brother and I like to go fast. We



would go fast one moment and fall on the ground in another.

One time when we were going down the mountain, we went to the cafe that was on a patch of land halfway down the mountain for skiers and snowboarders to stop and eat. Before going again, we went in and ordered hot chocolate and burgers. After we ate, we went down repeatedly until we finally stopped and went to the car.

When we got to the car, we took off all our stuff. Our hands and feet were so cold, we couldn't feel them. We went in the car, warmed up and started driving. Our mom had been at a baby shower, so we were excited to see her again. As we drove home, we talked about our next adventures.

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**Somers Middle School
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Any SMS student is eligible to write stories. If interested, please e-mail Advisor Dean Pappas at:

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Zoos Provide Important Education



**By Ava Schmidberger
Tusker Tribune Staff**

Zoos play a vital role on earth, protecting biodiversity and providing knowledge for both curious minds and scientists. One reason we need zoos is their crucial role in conservation.

As our planet faces the harsh realities of habitat loss and climate change, zoos provide a safe haven for endangered species, offering them protection and a chance to thrive. Through carefully managed breeding programs, zoos contribute significantly to increasing the populations of species on the brink of extinction.

Zoos are also essential for education. They bring the wonders of the animal kingdom closer to us, creating a connection that



inspires empathy and understanding. By providing an up-close look at diverse species, zoos educate visitors about the importance of preserving wildlife and ecosystems. Guided tours and educational programs create awareness, nurturing a generation of environmentally conscious individuals.



In addition to conservation and education, zoos contribute to scientific research. By studying animals in captivity, scientists gain valuable insights into behavior, genetics, and physiology, aiding global conservation efforts. Overall, zoos are not just places for entertainment, they are a powerful part in the fight to protect our planet's rich biodiversity and inspire future protectors of the environment.

Taco Talk!



**By Logan Ticker
Tusker Tribune Staff**

The big question—which type of taco shells do you prefer? The world-renowned food, TACOS!

One thing is for sure—most people LOVE tacos. There are all kinds of tacos. Some of the main ingredients can be steak, chicken, seafood, pork and many more.

There are so many different things that you can put inside a taco.

For example, most love cheese, some kind of meat, on-going

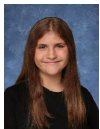
There are two kinds of people



salsa, sour cream, corn, beans, avocado, and so much more. Some people even make it a weekly meal theme known as "Taco Tuesdays."

No matter what you put inside of a taco, the outside shell is just as important. Some people prefer a hard, crunchy shell, while others might choose a warm, soft shell (known as a tortilla.) Some popular chain restaurants that are known for their delicious tacos are Taco Bell, Chipotle, and Salsa Fresca. The great taco shell debate will always be an one....which one you like best?

Pop Music vs Classical Music



**By Ava Schmidberger
Tusker Tribune Staff**

Recently while online, I stumbled upon a debate topic, Pop Music vs. Classical. The argument was for why classical was better, but I disagree.

Pop music and classical music are two distinct genres that cater to different tastes, but when it comes to enjoyment and relatability, pop music takes the lead. Firstly, pop music is more accessible to a wider audience. Its catchy tunes and lyrics are easy to understand, making it relatable for people of all ages, especially for those in middle school.

Likewise, pop music reflects contemporary culture and speaks to the experiences of younger people. The lyrics often touch upon topics like friendship, love, and personal struggles, which



many people can relate to in their everyday lives.

In contrast, classical music, with its intricate compositions and historical context, may seem distant and harder to connect with, especially for younger audiences.

Additionally, pop music is versatile and constantly evolving. It incorporates various styles and influences, staying current with the latest trends. This dynamism keeps listeners engaged and excited about discovering new sounds. Classical music, while timeless, may be perceived as rigid and less adaptive to the changing preferences of younger generations.

In conclusion, pop music's accessibility, relatability, and adaptability make it a preferable choice for anyone seeking music that resonates with their experiences and reflects the contemporary culture.

A Day in the Life Of Waffles



By Cecilia Morrissey
Tusker Tribune Staff

Cat's name: Waffles

Day of the week: Saturday

Told from Waffles' point of view . . .

When I wake up, I go to the kitchen. Then I drink some water. After that, I go to Cece's bed and sit on her face until she wakes up. Then I lay down on her rug while she gets dressed. Then we play.

I scratch her hand and sometimes I get to jump on her face and then she starts to kiss me, which is unacceptable, so I bite her face. Then she will put me down and yell at me like this:

“nhcuidwygfvuyugrbyuch!”

I never know what she is saying so I just walk away and take a nap. Then I get awakened five minutes later to someone lying on me . . . it is Cece, lying on her bed, watching colors. I watch them, too, but I do not know why she can just sit there forever and watch colors.

I go to bed again and I wake up again, but this time, Cece is getting up, so I follow her. She is eating so I go and eat, too, but I get too bored so I sneak out and Cece follows me, so I RUN. Sometimes she catches me, but this time, I get away and RUN to the bushes.

When I get to the bushes, I go to the trees to find a friend to play with. I FOUND ONE!!! I named him Gary and I played with him but then he fell asleep, and he did not wake up, but I kept playing with him and I decided to show Cece, so I went home, and she yells at me again like this: “bchyudsgbfvhsbvyuhc!” and she takes me inside.

I go to her room, go to my bed, and fall asleep. When I wake up, I find Cece on her hammock reading a book and I watch as the hammock moves side to side. I jump up on to the hammock and jump off. Cece gets up, picks me up and brings me to her bed. I fall asleep thinking about the adventures for the next day.

How I Finally Got Waffles



By Cecilia Morrissey
Tusker Tribune Staff

About one or two years ago I was looking to adopt a cat. I always would beg my mom to get another cat because at that time, we had a different cat named Briggsy. He was an old cat that my mom had owned ever since she was in college. He was always sleepy, thirsty, and lonely.

My mom said that I could finally get a cat, so I was overly excited. When we went to the first shelter to look for a cat, it was the same shelter that she got Briggsy at. When we got there, I was overly excited to finally get the kitten I was begging for.

We walked through the door and sat in the little room filled with pictures of adopted pets. I waited there until my mom was done filling out a sheet. Then, someone walked in the door and told us to follow her. As we walked through the room filled with dogs, I looked at every dog and their expressions.

Then we made it to the room with cats in it, but they weren't kittens like we were looking for—they were about one-year-old cats. We went in and I went over to this cat who did not seem happy, I told my mom that I wanted to see the kittens, so we walked out of that room and into a big room that was filled with cats and then there it was—the kittens. I could see the two little kittens playing around in a big room with clear walls so you can see them.

We went into that room, and we played around with the two cats. One was a calico, and the other was a tabby cat. We played for like 20 mins before deciding we wanted to adopt one of them.

We wanted the calico cat, and I was going to name her Lilly. We told the lady, and she told us that she was sick so it would take extra-long to be able to bring her home, and even if she wasn't sick, it would still take a long time because that shelter had to make sure that we would not abuse her, so we decided not to adopt her and go to a different place.

So, about a week later, we went to a different shelter. The room with cats was smaller but there were definitely more cats. We looked around and I saw a very small cat that I played around with for a while, but my brothers played with a different cat.

We left and then a week later, I came home from a sleepover and there he was the cat my brothers played with...Waffles.



Backyard Chickens are Amazing



**By Laurel Knapp
Tusker Tribune Staff**

When you think of a pet, you are most likely thinking of dogs, cats, and fish. But have you ever considered having pet chickens in your backyard? Probably not, so I am going to explain how to take care of, and about all the wonderful aspects of, the backyard chicken.

Chickens live in coops. There should be an indoor area with nesting boxes, and an outdoor area called a Chicken Run for exercise. In Westchester, there are a lot of predators that would like to eat chickens, so you must make your coop predator proof. Be aware that some of the predators can dig and climb as well.



Chickens prefer to live together, so if you are thinking of making a chicken your new favorite pet, then you should get more than one.

There are many advantages to having backyard chickens. Your chickens will



lay about one egg a day five days a week each.

If you have at least five chickens, you will most likely not need to buy eggs from the grocery store anymore. Fresh eggs always taste better than regular store-bought eggs.

It is also nice to know that the eggs come from happy chickens; the chickens that lay eggs for the store are usually very unhappy. Chickens are also extremely easy to take care of. All you need to do is occasionally refill their food and water bowls, collect the eggs, and give them plenty of love!

When chickens are chicks, it is extremely hard to know if it is male or female; so, if you decide to get chicks, then you might have a rooster and not even know it! In urban and suburban areas, it is against the law to own a rooster, because they make too much noise. If your chick grows up to be a rooster, you can return him to the store. I think this rule should be changed, because if people can make noise with their leaf blowers, why can't roosters make a little bit of noise?



Study Resources!



**By Lauren Crispino
Tusker Tribune Staff**

I know that it can be terribly hard to find study resources, especially outside of the ones teachers have given you. Here is my list of resources I use a TON to help me succeed in my classes!

Obviously, a lot of teachers have you write notes. But, if you are finding it hard to make them organized, something that I do in some of my hardest classes is take a rough draft of my notes as the teacher is explaining them. These notes should be messy, and stress free, so you can focus on learning the material. Then, later that day or the next day if you want to review, copy down the notes. This time, try to make them neat, labeled, and maybe even add a pop of color! That really helps me step up my notes and helps me digest the content super well.

For science and math concepts, **Khan Academy** is great! It is truly great for every subject, but with countless articles on topics and practice questions, it can be so helpful to apply math skills and science concepts. I'm sure to use this before every science or math test, to really test my skills and see what I am struggling with.

Another great resource is **Quizlet flashcards**

and games. We have all heard of it, and while you might be asking "How can I use this in a subject like math? Or social studies?" Well, I have a solution. For math, if you have a certain equation or topic, write the name on one side of the flashcard and the name of the concept on the other side. For example, "Slope intercept" on one side, and on the other, " $y=mx+b$." This helps me memorize the concepts and makes it easier to apply them during class and tests.

For social studies, I usually write an event on one side and the description on the other. But, if you need a way to spice it up, write a year on one side, and something that happened during that year on the other. Or, if you are trying to learn where something is, write the area on one side, and the thing on the other.

If you are looking for something to track how much you study, a fun app is **Study Bunny!** It is an app that times how long you study, and the more time you spend studying, the more fun things you can buy for your little animated bunny! You can buy its costumes, decorations for its room, and so much more. This is very motivating for me, because I love to take care of my bunny.

While there are so many more, these are the ones I use the most often to help me get straight As for middle school! Hope you enjoyed it!

