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Winter 2024

Ski Club Takes to the Slopes



**By Olivia Ball
Tusker Tribune Staff**

In SMS, there are many clubs you can participate in, including Drama Club, Art Club, Math Club and many more. A fun club that I recently had a chance to participate in was the Ski and Snowboarding Club. On Saturday, January 27th the Ski and Snowboard club went on its annual trip to Mohawk Mountain.

Despite recent rain and high temperatures, the conditions were great! It wasn't too icy, the snow was soft and there were plenty of trails to choose from—19 out of 26 trails were open. It was



also warm and not windy, so you weren't freezing all day.

The bus left SMS at 7:30 am sharp, so you had to set your alarm extra early for a weekend (6 am), but it was still an incredible day with friends. The drive took about an hour and a half round trip. The bus ride felt a little long at times, but overall, it wasn't too bad. I'd recommend bringing a portable charger, because many phones were low on batteries at the end of the day. There were three buses grouped by grade, so lots of familiar faces.

The terrain was perfect for all levels from beginner to experienced skiers and boarders.

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Today's Ground Hog Day! Did You Know How It Got Started?



**By Sabeeka Mustafa
Tusker Tribune Staff**

A meteorologist? No! How about a groundhog instead?

Today, February 2 is Groundhog Day, where if the groundhog sees his shadow, there shall be six more weeks of winter. But how did this long-standing tradition come to be?

It all started in 1887, in the town known as Punxsutawney, in Pennsylvania. Every February second, the Punxsutawney Groundhog Club went to the Gobbler's Knob, which was where the famous groundhog, Punxsutawney Phil, lived. They all dressed in fancy suits and top hats as they walked over to Gobbler's Knob. When they arrive, they wait a bit for Phil to come out of his den. After some time, he emerged from his hiding place and... He saw his shadow!

Everyone thought that there would be six more weeks of winter, and there was. This tradition was originally celebrated on February first, not February second like we have today. They made it on the first because they wanted to fit it with all the other months. For example, the first of May was May Day, the first of April was April Fool's Day, and the first of November was All Saint's Day.

The reason it is now celebrated on the second is because the Germans, who also celebrated it



at the time, thought that February second was a sunny day, therefore a fifty-fifty chance of casting a shadow. There's only one difference though—seeing a shadow would forecast only four weeks of winter, which is better than six if you ask me!

And this is the famous story on how the tradition of Groundhog Day came to be, where we throw away meteorologists and forecasting, and bring in something cute and a bit irrational, like a groundhog.

Overall, it is a cute and fun holiday that everyone can throw away reality and depend on something new.

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

Aladdin on Broadway Well Worth the Trip



**By Sofia Mendoza
Tusker Tribune Staff**

On Thursday, the 25th of January, I went to Aladdin on Broadway, and it was a wonderful experience. During the month of January, Broadway had a sale of tickets where if you bought one ticket, you would get another one for free. Since I am in chorus, orchestra, and will be taking part in our school's Aladdin Jr. Play, my mom thought it would be a great learning experience to see how professional actors played the roles.



We sat in the balcony section and the view was great because I could see the whole stage from a high view. I thought it was amazing that there was a live orchestra underneath the stage playing all of the music and sound effects for the show. As a violin student in Mr. Gilbert's class, this was a cool experience to see professional musicians at work and how the music played such an important part in bringing the play to life.

It was obvious that the cast had worked very hard and practiced a lot to make the show a wonderful experience for the audience. Their singing skills were very impressive because they could hold notes for very long periods of time and could sing very fast and with a lot of emotion. The actors were not only representing the characters in the play by reciting their lines, but they amazingly took the persona of each character and brought them to life by becoming the characters.

My personal favorite character was Babkak, one of Aladdin's friends because he was funny and a great singer. My sister liked Iago's character because he was very funny, and my little brother really liked the Genie's cool magic tricks. The play had many funny lines which kept the audience laughing and some cool surprises such as streamers that flew into the audience, a flying carpet, fireworks, fast costume changes on stage and more. There were many cool props and beautiful scenery backgrounds which really made the audience feel as if you were in Agrabah.

The most impressive thing that happened was when Jazmine and Aladdin flew in the air on the magic carpet.

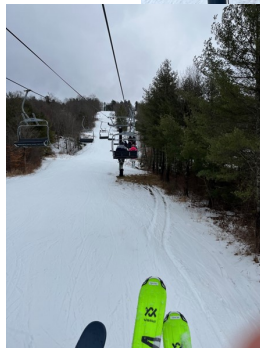
It was an incredible thing to see because there was nothing underneath the carpet and it could move all over the stage without any problems. All the actors' costumes were beautiful with bright colors and intricate patterns, and a lot of jewelry. It was evident to me that a lot of people put in a lot of hard work to get the show to be a success, both the people on stage and those behind the scenes.

This was one of the coolest things I have ever seen in my life, and I highly recommend that everyone who is able to see a Broadway show at least once in their life. But if you cannot for whatever reason catch a Broadway show this year, I highly recommend coming to see Aladdin Jr. Here at our middle school on one of the nights between March 21st through the 23rd. I also recommend trying to catch the Somers High School Spring Musical between April 12-14.

Ski Club From Page 1

Some kids were new to the sport, but the learning areas were easy, with space for practicing. The lodge was warm and cozy, but a little crowded, just like every ski mountain. Finding a table for lunch was manageable and there were lots of different choices of food. They even had milkshakes!

There were more skiers than snowboarders in our group. One of the challenges was carrying all the gear. Most kids brought a bag along with their skis or snowboard, so it was a lot to carry. Each



kid had to pick a partner to ski with for the day, but you could also ski in groups. You also had to check in with a chaperone at different times during the day. The buses returned to the school around 5:00 pm.



I've been to many mountains and Mohawk is now one of my favorites. It was easy to navigate and the trails were fun, especially the advanced trails. I would definitely recommend the trip to anyone interested in learning to ski or snowboard or people that like the sport. An added bonus is you get a nice hoodie when you join the club.

The best part of the trip was getting to hang out with your friends all day and the chocolate chip cookies weren't too bad either. I'm going again next year. Are you coming, too?

The Cryo-Error



**By Robert Jarrett
Tusker Tribune Staff**

"Warning! Warning! CryoPod Malfunction! Scanning for stable life in cryo-state. Confirmed dead, 12,095. Unstable 3,067. Stable, 34. Opening CryoPod 15196."

The hiss of the opening, long dormant CryoPod reminded Elijah of the snakes of earth he heard of as a kid, one of his favorite animals, in fact. He stretched his legs and arms. "CM-1, cryo status report!" he said, expecting a response.

He sat there for a moment before realizing that they were not even in a solar system, which their destination was in the center of the universe's largest solar system, and the only habitable star, because somehow, they detected a small, undeveloped island, with little sentient life.

But they were stuck. Stuck in the vastness of space.

"Log 12, Crew status: all live members, deceased. All EAC, intact, but disabled. 16,062 Confirmed dead passengers. Attempts to restart EAC, 371, attempts succeeded, 1. path to Kepler-4546B. Restored and continued. The current year is 2132. There is only 34 other people alive on this ship, and I do not know who, but sometime in 60 years or so, they will have awakened, and being a 50-year-old man, I will be eternally resting, as I am not authorized to operate a CryoPod."

Aurora, late 22nd century

Ryley Robinson sat on the edge of his bed in



the CryoRoom, as the alarm started blaring an unfamiliar sound, "Warning! Warning! Engine hit by unknown weapon. Please report to the escape pods immi-"

The ship lurched forward at such a fast speed that Ryley was launched against the wall of the room facing his back. The alarm still blared, but the voice was gone, killed in that small crash. He ran to the door, so much adrenaline pumping through him his nose almost hit the door before it could detect his motion and open. He sprinted down the hall and was grateful for the designer of the mile long ship, who had decided the escape pods had to be right near the rooms. He ran inside toward the first one he saw, hit the big red button, which hopefully meant depart and not self-destruct.

He strapped into the uncomfortable seat and looked out the window as he saw the aurora's left engine was completely gone. He felt the feeling of gravity as he went into the orbit of their destination, Kepler-4546B. He was spaced out, too much was going on to think about, because if he did, his head might just explode. That's when it happened: a loose electronic panel flew off of its hinges and hit him in the head, which proceeded to knock him out.

(This is supposed to be a story that is like an epilogue to the video game, Subnautica, which I will put a video that explains the story)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YdZe1B7nHj8>

What Will the Bears Do Without Justin Fields?



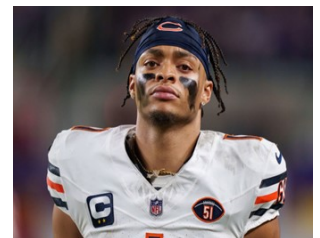
**By Cole Dolan
Tusker Tribune Staff**

The Chicago Bears hold the 1st pick in the NFL draft (from the 2-15 Panthers, who in 2023 drafted Bryce Young, traded a 2024 first round pick), and with that first pick, it puts them in a dilemma.

The reason for this is their former first round pick, Justin Fields, was drafted in 2021 as the 11th overall pick and he has had his ups and downs through his first three years. In the NFL this year, he was great. Last year was OK and his first year, he sat the year to watch veteran quarterback Andy Dalton.

This all leads the Chicago Bears to Caleb Williams, who is projected to go 1st overall and is presumed to be generational talent so what everyone is wondering is, will they trade their 1st overall pick and get three first-round picks? Draft star Ohio State Receiver Marvin Harrison, Jr. and an

offensive lineman? Or will they keep the number one pick draft Caleb Williams, trade Justin Fields for a second round pick, and build around Caleb Williams? What do you think the Bears will do?



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Super Bowl LVIII Halftime Performers Ready to Shine



**By Gianna Peanamanda
Tusker Tribune Staff**

The Super Bowl is the biggest event in football. The half time show is just as popular.



For this year (2024) the half time performers are: Reba McEntire, who is going to be singing the National Anthem, Post Malone, and Usher.

Reba McEntire is a country singer. Reba McEntire is 68 years old and has been a country singer for many

years now.

Post Malone is an American rapper, singer, and songwriter. Some of his popular songs are

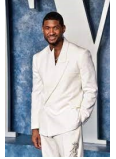


“Sunflower,” “Rockstar,” and “Circles.” He has lots of good songs so you should go check him out!

Usher is an American R&B singer. Personally, my favorite song he has sung is “Yeah”.

Every year, there is a halftime show at the Super Bowl. There are singers that put on a performance. Last year, 2023, Rihanna, Chris Stapleton, Babyface, and Sheryl Lee Ralph performed. Shakira and Jennifer Lopez performed at the super bowl half time performance in 2022.

Oh, there’s also a football game during the Super Bowl. For this year, the San Francisco 49ers will play the Kansas City Chiefs.



Are Super Bowl Commercials Worth the Price?



**By Logan Ticker
Tusker Tribune Staff**

Superbowl Sunday.

One of the most anticipated and popular sporting events of the year.

While most fans watch it for the electrifying football matchup between the two best teams left fighting for chip, other people watch it for varied reasons. There is always a star-studded halftime show and entertaining commercials that people love to tune in for and talk about.

Did you know that for a 30 second commercial slot during the 2023 Superbowl, it cost a whopping \$7,000,000? That means that a company had



to shell out all that money just for people to watch their ad for a mere 30 seconds.

So why do these companies pay these hefty prices? Consider this—upwards of 115 million people per year watch the Superbowl. A percentage of these viewers are not interested in the football at all.

They eagerly wait for the clock to wind down to see some of the much-anticipated commercials at each break.

Some companies that are famous for their awesome commercials are Doritos, Budweiser, Amazon, Bud light, Pepsi, Coca Cola, and many car manufacturers. What commercials are you looking forward to in this year’s Superbowl?

Fun Facts About Groundhogs



**By Julie Genovisi
Tusker Tribune**

As you probably know, Groundhogs Day is today. Did you know that the Punxsutawney Phil predictions have been happening since 1886? On this fun, and rather odd, holiday, Punxsutawney Phil emerges from his den to help us predict the remaining weeks of winter.

Some cities, across the United States and Canada, celebrate the holiday with parades and live animal shows. Would you like to know more about these magnificent mammals? Here are some interesting facts about groundhogs.

Groundhogs live in North America, mostly on forest edges, in meadows, and next to streams. They are also a part of our local ecosystems and can be seen around our town, in gardens, parks, and open spaces along our roads. Their tunnels and burrows can range up to 66 FEET LONG, creating habitat for other animals when they leave.



Groundhogs are some of the few animals that truly hibernate through the coldest parts of winter which helps them save energy. Females have between two-six blind and furless pups in the spring that they take care of for about six weeks.

Groundhogs can live up to about six years in the wild, with three being the average. Did you know that groundhogs are the largest animal in the squirrel family? They have ever-growing incisors

that can grow over one inch in just one week. For this reason, groundhogs need to constantly chew on leaves, grass and vegetables (hopefully not from your garden).

Groundhogs are herbivores, animals that eat plants and can weigh up to 30 pounds (in some rare cases) and grow up to 25 inches long. Groundhogs communicate by whistling to one another. Groundhogs are not just fast on land but they can swim and climb trees, too! Groundhogs are awesome and deserve a special holiday just for them.

Taylor Swift's Next Big Thing . . . ?



**By Giuliana Demartino
Tusker Tribune Staff**

Are you ready to read or are you just going to say no? Here are the theories for the next Taylor's Version.

For all the Reputation fans, reputation came out after two years of silence, and don't blame me if I say this, but this Reputation is the best Taylor Swift comeback, but would Taylor's Version be the same?

One theory I saw on my Instagram page is about her Eras Tour outfit. They said she never had another version to it. That was because her reputation never changes, but wouldn't Reputation Taylor's Version change it or would it just be the same? This album was also the last album Taylor recorded with Big Machine Records. Now let's talk about Debut, also known as Taylor Swift. This was Taylor's first album. There are not many theories about this album, but one of my theories is that it will be the next Taylor's Version.

If you look how Taylor rereleased her Taylor's Version albums it started with Fearless and then Red. After that was Speak Now, and the most recent was 1989. Do you see a pattern? It was like an older album, then a newer album, and it repeats since Fearless was released before Red and Speak Now was released before 1989. But wait—another theory, but it's not a Taylor's Version, is a new album someone on YouTube said that they think Tay-

lor will release—a new album before rereleasing Reputation or Debut. They think this because it was Fearless TV, then Red TV and after that was a new album, which was Midnight. After Midnight, Taylor rereleased Speak Now TV and then 1989 TV.

Many Swifties who look into the new album theory think it will be called Karma, like the album. Some Swifties also think that this album is a hidden album that was supposed to get released before Reputation.

I think that Karma the album will be the Reputation vault tracks. Vault tracks are extra tracks Taylor puts in her rerelease because they did not make the original album. I saw a comment on that video that said they think Karma is basically Midnights.

There is way more to that story but let's get back to some Reputation theories. A post made by Taylor Nation got a lot of fans' attention—it was a part of the Karma for music video, but it wasn't the first-time fans saw a Reputation Easter egg. In this video, multiple times, people saw a coffee cup with a clock in it or it was her outfit.

Taylor also made a video where she likes to insert Easter eggs, her music videos, songs, and even outfits. Her VMA dress was giving Reputation vibes, but her Golden Globes dress was giving debut vibes. What do you think Taylor's next album will it be, Reputation TV or Debut TV or even maybe a new album?



A Memorable Ski Trip



**By Noah Samuel
Tusker Tribune Staff**

This past weekend, January 27th, the SMS Ski and Snowboard Club went on a trip to Mohawk Mountain Ski Area, in Cornwall, CT. As a 6th grader, this was my first time going on a ski trip in SMS. But I thought that overall, the trip was great.

We started by boarding the buses at 7:30 am in the SMS parking lot. We then started the 1.5-hour bus ride. The ride was great because we took coach buses instead of regular school buses, and they had nice comfy seats, storage under the bus for ski equipment, free Wi-Fi, and even a restroom.

When we got to the mountain, we got our lift tickets from our chaperones. They were cards that we would scan every time before we boarded the lift. We kept all our stuff in the lodge



and hit the slopes. The mountain wasn't huge, but it wasn't *very tiny* either. The trails were easy, other than a mogul field on one of the Black Diamond slopes, which was a little bit hard to ski over when on a large drop. But I got past it, and, before I knew it, I had to check in with my chaperone.

I decided to eat lunch right after with a bunch of my friends, and we got back on the mountain. And then, it

was finally time to leave. I collected my belongings, changed back out of my ski gear, and headed to the bus, where we did a check of all the students. The way to the mountain was about the same as the way back.

Overall, I would say that my first ski trip was a good one. But I hope we go to a bigger mountain for the next trip.

Sports to the Max: 2023 New York Giants Season Review



**By Max Nevsky
Tusker Tribune Staff**

Going into this season, the Giants had just come off a surprise 9-7-1 campaign in 2022 where they made it as far as the NFC Divisional round under 1st year head coach Brian Daboll and 1st year General Manager Joe Schoen. In the first round of the 2022 NFL Draft, the Giants selected Oregon Linebacker Kayvon Thibodeaux and Alabama Offensive Tackle Evan Neal.

Despite having only one winning season as Quarterback, the Giants decided to give Daniel Jones a four-year contract worth \$160 million, which puzzled a lot of people including myself. They also traded Raiders Pro Bowl Tight End Darren Waller for a 3rd Round draft pick. They also let go two starting offensive linemen and Safety Julian Love, who was coming off a great season.

This season was looking to be a good one, but those hopes were dashed quickly once the season started. The season opener was against the division rival Cowboys at home. When it was over, the score was 40-0 Dallas. The Giants were shutout for the first time since Week 15 of 2018 and had their worst opening season loss since 1995, where they were coincidentally shutout by the Cowboys 0-35.

The next game started out terribly as well, as they were down 20-0 at halftime to the Cardinals on the road. The Giants through three halves had been outscored 60-0. Suddenly, something magical started to happen. The Giants scored first in the second half to make the score 7-20. The Cardinals then scored again and converted the two-point conversion to make the score 7-28. The Giants would outscore the Cardinals 24-0 for the rest of the game, winning off a last second field goal by Kicker Graham Gano. The Giants improved to 1-1 with new confidence, but it would not last long. The Giants would lose their next 4 games, including 3 primetime games to drop their record to 1-5.

In Week Three, they lost 12-30 on the road to the 49ers. In Week Four, they lost 3-24 at home to the Seahawks. In Week 5, they lost 16-31 on the road to the Dolphins. Daniel Jones left that game due to a neck injury. Backup Tyrod Taylor played the rest of the game and started the next three. In Week Six, they lost 9-14 on the road against the Bills.

In Week 7, the Giants would get their first home win of the season against their division rival, the Commanders 14-7 thanks to a strong defensive performance and a solid two-touchdown game from Tyrod Taylor. In Week 8, the Giants lost 10-13 in

overtime to the cross-town rival Jets. Tyrod Taylor got injured and undrafted rookie Tommy Devito filled in for him. Kicker Graham Gano got put on injured reserve after the game as well. The Giants ran the ball 52 times that game while only passing 14. They also had a net passing yards total of -9, which was the worst since 2021 (coincidentally by the Giants).

Daniel Jones came back to the lineup for the Giants Week 9 game on the road against the Raiders, who on Halloween fired their Head Coach and General Manager. The Giants got blown out by the Raiders 30-6. In the game, the Giants lost Daniel Jones to a torn ACL, ending his miserable season. Tommy Devito came in for Jones and threw 175 yards and a touchdown and threw 2 interceptions. This dropped the Giants to 2-7, their worst start since 2020.

In Week 10, Tommy Devito was made the starter for the road game against the Cowboys. The Giants lost 49-17 and were outscored 89-17 in their two games against the Cowboys this season, with the two losses being two of the three worst losses they have ever had to the Cowboys. The Giants failed to improve upon their record from 2022 with the loss, dropping them to 2-8.

In Week 11, The Giants went on the road to play the Commanders. Tommy Devito was named the starter and the Giants ended up winning mostly because of a defense that recorded four sacks, three interceptions, and six total forced turnovers along with the game winning pick six and Tommy Devito, who tossed three touchdown passes and threw 250 yards. The G-men won 31-19 and improved to 3-8.

In Week 12, the Giants played at home against the 2-9 Patriots. The Giants won 10-7 off a missed field goal by the Patriots that would have sent the game to overtime. The defense recorded three interceptions and 2 sacks. Tommy Devito threw for 175 yards and a touchdown the Giants won and improved to 4-8, going into their bye week with some momentum. Despite the win, the Giants were eliminated from NFC East contention.

In Week 14, the Giants took on the Packers at home on Monday Night Football. The game went back and forth but the Packers took a 22-21 lead with 1:33 seconds left in the game. To take the lead, Green Bay decided to go for two but did not convert, giving the Giants plenty of time to get in field goal range. Tommy Devito orchestrated a game winning drive that culminated 37-yard game winning field goal by Randy Bullock. The defense recorded two sacks and two turnovers as well. The Giants to this point had won three straight games and improved to 5-8.

Continued on Page 7



What's the Chiefs' Secret?



**By Logan Ticker
Tusker Tribune Staff**

The Kansas City Chiefs are headed to the Superbowl for the fourth time in five years.

After their upset win over the Baltimore Ravens in the AFC championship game, the Chiefs have done it again.

What is it about this team that leads to this much success year after year? Is it Patrick Mahomes leading them at quarterback? Is it the killer combo of Mahomes and Travis Kelce? Is Andy Reid that great of a coach? Or could it be something else?

Many people believe that it is pure skill and talent of this team. Late in the season, the Chiefs seemed to have been in a serious slump, and a visi-



bly frustrated Mahomes could be seen yelling at his team for several costly mistakes' week after week. However, the Chiefs pulled it together and won their division with a regular season record of 11-6. During the post-season, they turned up the heat and beat the Miami Dolphins and Buffalo Bills to land themselves a spot against arguably, the best team in the NFL, the Baltimore Ravens. They dominated that game with ease and are now headed to the Superbowl to battle it out against the 49ers who beat the Detroit Lions in an intense game 34-31.

With four appearances in one of the biggest games in sports in the last five years, the Chiefs are doing something right. What do you think their secret is?

Giants From Page 6

The next three weeks would not be so rosy for the Giants as they lost 6-24 to the Saints on the road as well as kicker Randy Bullock to injury, lost a competitive game to the Eagles on Christmas Day 25-33 where Tommy Devito got benched for Tyrod Taylor, and they lost another close game to the Rams at home 25-26. The Giants scored on a punt return touchdown with 3:27 seconds left in the game. Brian Daboll opted to go for the 2-point conversion where Tyrod Taylor missed a wide-open Saquon Barkley in the end zone which would have given the Giants the lead. The Giants defense forced a turnover and Taylor got the offense in field goal range, but Kicker Mason Crosby missed a 54-yard game winning kick, losing the game for the Giants.

Despite sacking Ram Quarterback Matthew Stafford four times, picking him off two times and forcing three total turnovers, the Giants still lost. The Giants ended off their season on a good note, beating Division Rival Philadelphia at home 27-10. The win made the Eagles lose the NFC East title to the Cowboys and forced them to play on the road against the Buccaneers during Wild Card Weekend, where they lost 9-32.

The Giants have a lot of glaring holes on the roster. The biggest one is the offensive line. The Giants allowed 85 sacks, the second most all time since sacks became an official statistic in 1982. Daniel Jones got sacked 30 times in the six games/starts he played this season. Tommy Devito got sacked 37 times in nine games and six starts. Tyrod Taylor got sacked 19 times in 11 games and five starts. Even WR Parris Campbell got sacked. That is a huge reason the Giants offense was 30th in points per game, 31st in passing yards, and 28th in passing touchdowns. The rushing offense was ok. They were 16th in rushing yards and 23rd in rushing touchdowns.

There were still some productive players on offense. Saquon Barkley ran for 960 yards and six touchdowns and had 280 receiving yards and four receiving touchdowns, giving him 1250 scrimmage yards and 10 total touchdowns. Tight End Darren Waller caught 52 passes for 552 yards and a touchdown. Darius Slayton led the team in receiving yards with 770. Wandale Robinson led the team in catches with 60. Darius Slayton and Saquon Barkley were in a tie for most receiving touchdowns with four apiece. The Giants had four players other than Barkley who ran for 150+ yards.

The defense did its best to keep the team afloat. They were the 26th ranked scoring defense. They were average when it comes to passing yards allowed, being ranked 19th, but they were 10th in passing touchdowns allowed with 21 and 3rd in interceptions with 18. They also recovered 13 fumbles and tied the league lead in total turnovers forced with 31.

Second year linebacker Kayvon Thibodeaux recorded a team best 11.5 sacks. Defensive Tackle Dexter Lawrence was named to a Pro Bowl for the 2nd Straight Year with 4.5 sacks and 53 tackles. Linebacker Bobby Okereke led the team in tackles with 149. He also intercepted two passes, had 10 pass deflections, four forced fumbles, and 2.5 sacks. Second year linebacker Micah Mcfadden played well recording 101 tackles, five pass deflections, four fumble recoveries and one sack. The Giants forced 19 fumbles and recorded 34 sacks.

Unfortunately, Defensive Coordinator Wink Martindale resigned after tensions raised with Head Coach Brian Daboll. The Giants should find stability at kicker as four different men kicked for the Giants this season. They hired a new offensive line coach as well. In the draft, the Giants should get offensive lineman, wide receivers, and a running back to complement Saquon.

Watching this season as a fan was tough, but the Giants showed resilience at times and lost a lot of close games. Good luck G-Men next season!

SMS Ski Trip Was a Blast



**By Cecilia Morrissey
Tusker Tribune Staff**

A Saturday in January was the SMS ski trip for the Ski Club, and I was in the Ski Club. I had been waiting for this trip ever since the beginning of the school year and it only happens once a year, so I was extra excited.

I packed with my mom. In my bag were ski supplies, snacks, water, hot chocolate, skis, and hot hands. I could not wait for the bus in the morning, I could barely sleep. I was in my bed, thinking about the next day, what would it be like? What will I do? will I get hurt?

So many thoughts were going through my head, I had not even noticed the time, so I went to bed. In the morning, I was so excited that the time we were supposed to get there was 7:30 so I got ready faster than I ever have. I went to my mom and asked if it was time to go yet, and she told me that I had to wait just a couple minutes, so I waited. I asked again and she said that we could go, so I put on my coat, put on my boots, and ran out the door to the car while she got my stuff.

When we got to the school, I could see three buses, one for eighth graders, one for seventh graders, and one for sixth graders. I got out of the car and walked over to the sixth-grade bus. The spot where we put all our stuff was super big so it could fit all our bags. I put my bag in the bus and put my



skis in the bus. I told my mom that I wanted to wait for my friend, Giuliana. She said OK and so we waited. My mom was talking to some teachers, and I was looking around for my friend then I spotted her. "HI GIULIANA!" I shouted. She came running over as our moms started to talk to each other. She put her stuff on the bus, and we said goodbye to our parents and got on the bus. We took a seat and got comfortable. The bus started leaving at about 7:50. I was so excited. I looked out the window as we passed the school, then Firemen's Field, then DeCicco's and then the Town

House. Giuliana and I talked for a while about what we were going to do, whether we were going to go on blue square or green circle slopes, or black diamond slopes, or all of them. There was so much to decide.

About an hour later, we had finally arrived. I was super excited. We got out of the bus, got our stuff, and walked to the Lodge. All my stuff was super heavy—my arms were hurting so much but I made it and put my stuff down. I looked at the mountain and was ready to go. I put all my ski gear on, got Giuliana and went out to the mountain. After hours and hours after skiing, it was time to go, I took all mt ski gear off and went to the buses.

I put my stuff on the bus and got on as I took a seat, I looked at the mountain as we drove away thinking about my next run down it.

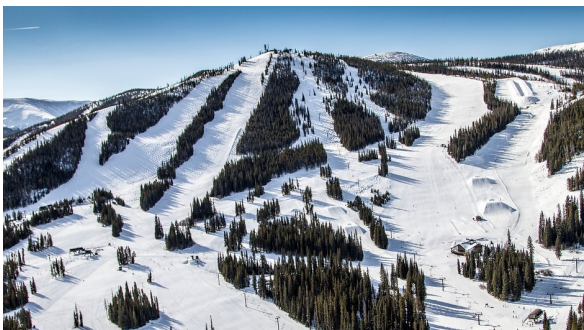
There is Something Special About Winter



**By Gianna Peanamanda
Tusker Tribune Staff**

Winter is an awesome season. Snow falls and cold comes! Personally, I like to play in the snow, have hot chocolate, and sit by the fire. I also ski. I ski in Vermont at Mount Snow.

Winter is the coldest season of the year. The winter solstice is the "shortest day" of the



year, meaning the least amount of sunlight. As a result, nights are longer in the winter-time.

Now, going a little bit off topic, did you know that the first Winter Olympics were held in Chamonix, France, in 1924? In the first Winter Olympics, there were only 16 sporting events and now only 15. Some of the sporting events now are speed skating, skiing/snowboarding, ice skating, bobsledding, and curling. I like to watch skiing because I ski, too! Sometimes, when skiers may fall down/wipeout, I will get nervous but when I see that they are ok, I will feel better.

Now, I hope that I have taught you a little bit more about winter and a fun fact about me is that winter is one of my favorite seasons of the year!



The Tusker Tribune

SOMERS MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWSPAPER



Groundhog Day



**By Noah Samuel
Tusker Tribune Staff**

Groundhog Day is today and we all are predicting whether Punxsutawney Phil will see his shadow. The accuracy of his predictions is debatable, but an early spring is something we can all hope for – unless you *want* six more weeks of winter.

Did you know that this tradition is over 130 years old? Amazing how we've been looking at a groundhog's shadow for that long.

History

Though Groundhog Day was first officially started in 1886-87, the origins of the holiday date back to the 16th century! This started with the German tradition of "Badger Day," on the Christian holiday Candlemas. The superstition was that if a badger saw its shadow on February 2nd there would be four more weeks of winter. Though this practice and many others were discouraged by the Protestant Reformers, immigrants from German-speaking Europe, called the Pennsylvania Dutch, brought the tradition over. Meanwhile across Europe, a regional animal – like a fox or bear - was being used.

Americanization

The Pennsylvanians continued the tradition of Groundhog Day in America. But for them, the badger was the *dox*, which the Deutsch language referred to as "groundhog." They celebrated this



Punxsutawney Phil predicted an early spring for 2024.

occasion with another slight tweak. The prolonged winter would be six weeks (about one and a half months) instead of four (about one month).

Punxsutawney Phil

The mention of a Groundhog Day observance was in the newspaper *Punxsutawney Spirit*, in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, in 1886. But the first "official" Groundhog Day commemoration was in

1887, with a group consulting the groundhog in the same place as the annual celebration is today. The Groundhog Elks Lodge carried out the celebrations in the 1880's, and with the Groundhog Club being formed from the lodge members, the occasion was continued in the 1890's.

The Groundhog Day celebration in Punxsutawney, PA is the largest annual Groundhog Day celebration, with crowds of about 40,000. The groundhog used for the festivities is the same one used in 1887! His name is Punxsutawney Phil, but he was only given that name in 1961.

Conclusion

Groundhog Day is celebrated throughout the US and Canada every year on February 2nd. There are many animal meteorologists to predict the weather on this occasion, and they range from groundhogs to marmots, to even taxidermic specimens! I hope this article taught you something about Groundhog Day, and let's all hope for an early spring!

Do Video Games Help Kids in Their Daily Lives?



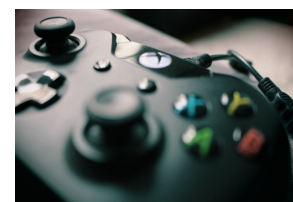
**By Cole Dolan
Tusker Tribune Staff**

Everyone knows almost every kid's favorite thing to do after a long day of school is to play video games for a while. On the other hand, this is a parent's worst nightmare; they want you to take out the trash, put away the dishes, do your homework . . . you get the point. They want you to get off the game so your brain doesn't rot.

But little do your parents know that I am about to tell you a couple of upsides to video games! Did you know video games help your decision making in a huge way? Say you are playing a game like Madden and it's 4th and 5.

You have to decide if you want to go for it or punt it away. If you go for it should you pass it or run? It is a quick decision you must make.

One of the biggest benefits of video games is improve your mental health.



They bring joy to everyone, and it is a second way of talking to your friends outside of school.

Now this doesn't mean you do not do anything for the rest of your life and just play games all day. You still have to go outside. Just remember video games are not terrible for you. (There are many more positives than negatives to video games).



***Next Week:
Superbowl
insights and
Valentine's
stories, plus
a whole lot
more!***