



The Tusker Tribune

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SOMERS MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWSPAPER

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Fall 2022

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

*The Tusker Tribune will publish on **THURSDAY, December 22** next week. Any story contributions for **NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE** need to be sent in by **Wednesday afternoon, December 21**.*

Holiday Excitement Includes Everyone



By Khloe Kisthart
Tusker Tribune Staff

There are only FIVE days left until the holiday break!

Many people celebrate this break in many ways. Some people finish celebrating Hanukkah, some celebrate Christmas, and so many more!

Even though Inclusive Schools Week was one week ago, we can all try to include everyone and their holidays! As students, it is our job to make everyone feel welcome and comfortable, which can mean including everyone's ways of celebrating holidays!



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I celebrate Christmas, but one of my best friends celebrates Hanukkah. This doesn't make us any different, nor does it mean that we can't be friends.

On the upcoming break, I challenge everyone to ask their friends that celebrate different holidays what their traditions are and things they like to do with their families. You will learn so much about them and what they love to do.

So, this holiday break, let's take a minute to learn about everybody's holidays through different perspectives and ways to celebrate them!

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"Wednesday" Netflix Series Driven by Ortega's Talent



By Ava Schmidberger
Tusker Tribune Staff

"Wednesday" is a good show that turned into a great one by a pretty

astonishing performance from the lead, Jenna Ortega as Wednesday Addams.

Jenna Ortega's interpretation of the morbid character from The Addams Family is the main thing that makes the entire Netflix series work. Her performance methods are already the stuff of a legend, where it is said that she reshot any scene where she blinked, and she personally helped choreograph the Goth dance sequence that has taken over Tik Tok.

Wednesday Addams shows the exact right balance of being irritable and overly hostile as well as a-emotional while still being a compelling lead with just enough sympathy to make her someone you are still able to "root for".

I was incredibly happy when I saw the original Wednesday (Christina Ricci) from 1991 appear in the Netflix series as Ms. Thornhill. The show was given a rating of 4.25/5 stars, but personally, I would give it 5 stars.



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:

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Tusker Tribune Website:

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



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Some Background on Assembly Speaker Chris Herren



By Ava Schmidberger
Tusker Tribune Staff

Christopher Albert Herren is an American former professional basketball player and motivational speaker. He played in the NBA and several leagues overseas. He was born on September 27th, 1975. Chris has a wife and three kids. His three kids are Christopher, Samantha, and Drew Herren and his wife is Heather Herren.

Chris Herren played basketball in the NBA, overseas, and at Boston College. When Chris was in his third month at B.C. he was drug tested three times and failed all three. After the college found out he had failed the drug tests, he was kicked off campus and sent home. After being kicked out of B.C., he transferred to Fresno State. Chris was then drug tested and failed again. Chris left to go to a rehabilitation center for 21 days and came back better than ever.



After his senior year at Fresno State, Herren entered the NBA draft and was selected by the Denver Nuggets in the second round with the 33rd overall pick. The following year, as a member of the Boston Celtics, Herren received his first time as a regular starter. After starting 2–3, coach Rick Pitino inserted him into the starting lineup. He started seven games in a row, resulting in a 4–3 record while playing 29 minutes per night. He was later released by the Celtics.

Herren ended up playing 70 games from 1999 to 2001 as a member of the Nuggets and Celtics. Overall, he averaged 3.2 points and 2.4 assists per game for his NBA career.

Chris Herren Sends Heartfelt Message to 7th and 8th Graders



By Alyssa Diaz
Tusker Tribune Staff

Chris Herren visited SMS on Wednesday to tell the 7th and 8th graders about his story.

His story was very heartfelt and left a lot of students and staff in tears. Chris talked about how when he was in middle school and high school, he started to drink alcohol and do drugs.

Chris was an outstanding basketball player and got a scholarship into college, then made



his way into the NBA. He eventually got caught doing drugs which he wasn't proud of, so he went to a rehabilitation center and made a full recovery.

He then went on to create his own rehabilitation center called The Herren Project. About 80% of 16-26 year-olds in his center he had talked to previously in their school assemblies.

He has spread his story and inspired over one million people and goes on to talk to over 250 groups a year including schools and professional sports teams in the NBA and the NFL.

Chris Herren is truly an amazing person who inspired me, and I hope he inspired you too.

To contact Chris Herren about any questions or comments go to: <https://herrentalks.com/contact/>. And if you want to talk to someone about how his speech made you feel please contact your guidance counselor or our prevention specialist, Ms. Casey.

Dream House Would Have Room for Family AND Friends

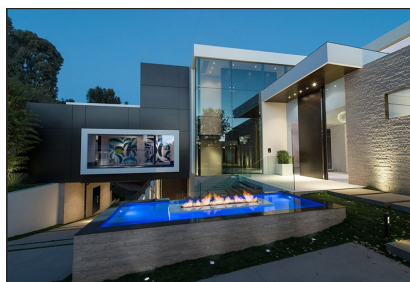


By Julia Peanamanda
Tusker Tribune Staff

My dream house would be a place where I would live happily with my family and friends.

My dream house would be a modern, luxurious, big castle-like house. On the outside, it would have a huge pool with a diving board and water slide. Next to the pool there would be a hot tub.

There would be a huge firepit with twinkly lights all around with comfy chair and benches.



Near the pool there will be a giant yard with a playground, bouncy house, trampoline, and a garden.

My dream house would have five stories. The first story would be a garage to put all the cars. The second story would be where the game rooms, and bar are. The third story would have the kid's playroom and a big movie theater in it. On the fourth story, there would be the kitchen and living room. Finally,

the last story would have all the huge bedrooms.

Drama Club Getting Reading to Perform The Lion King



**By Lauren Crispino
Tusker Tribune Staff**

This year's Drama Club is putting on a great show for 2023—The Lion King! It will be performed March 9, 10, and 11, 2023, with March 12 as a snow date.

With so many characters, set pieces, costumes and songs and dances, these performances are going to be so special and an amazing experience like we had last year with Peter Pan. Let's get to know some of the cast of this year's show! ***This is the Group 1 cast. There is going to be a second article about Group 2!***

Playing Young Simba, we have Elizabeth Spano, Nala is Anna Huber, Timon is being played by Charles Armstrong, we have Mufasa being played by Zach Gordan, Corey Skelton as Rafiki, Aiden Quinn as Scar, Ava DeBellis as Young Nala, and Max Weinfeld as Simba!

How do you feel about the role you got?

Elizabeth Spano—"I feel proud of myself because I am in 6th grade and got one of the lead roles."

Anna Huber—"I am satisfied and happy with the role I got!"

Zachary Gordon—"I am really excited to play Mufasa in the play!"

Charles Armstrong—"I feel great. Playing Timon will be very fun. Being the comic relief of a serious play is great and very fun. You get to make the audience laugh!"

Corey Skelton—"VERY grateful and excited!"

Aiden Quinn—"I feel optimistic because I enjoy this role and being in the play will be a good experience. Scar is the role I think best applies to me because he has a personality that I find very delightful to play."

Ava DeBellis—"I am so happy and excited to be able to play Young Nala."

Max Weinfeld—"I am so proud of myself but I really do think this year will be a great cast. Each and every one deserved their parts!"

If you could get any other role in the show, what would it be?

Elizabeth Spano—"I would want to get older Nala."

Anna Huber—"In all honesty, I really like my role as Nala. Though, if I had to choose any other role, it would have to be Sarabi because she has spoken lines and some parts where she sings! Her role is also similar to Nala's."

Zachary Gordon—"I would want to be Scar because it is fun to play the villain."

Charles Armstrong—"I wouldn't want any other role. I auditioned for the role and got it. I am very grateful for that."

Corey Skelton—"If I could get any other role, I would want to be Big Simba because he gets to use all the lessons his dad taught him to take back Pride Rock and save all the Pride. He also learns about love and friendship while he's trying to figure out who he is."

Aiden Quinn—"I would want to be Mufasa, because I am good at projecting my voice in a kingly fashion."

Ava DeBellis—"I would like young Simba because I love all the songs he sings."

Max Weinfeld—"If I had to choose, it would be young Simba, because I love being more of a kid than an adult."

What is your favorite part of Drama Club?

Elizabeth Spano—"My favorite part is singing and dancing."

Anna Huber—"I love the sense of community within the Drama Club. We all get together to make an amazing production!"

Zachary Gordon—"Getting to act and perform in front of people on stage with my friends."

Charles Armstrong—"It is the live performances. On stage, you get to be someone different. It is so fulfilling. The fun of a live play cannot be recreated."

Corey Skelton—"My favorite part of being in Drama Club is that I get to do what I really love and meet new people."

Aiden Quinn—"What can I say? I like most everything in this club, but I especially enjoy the speaking and being able to perform and entertain."

Ava DeBellis—"To be able to put on shows for the public."

Max Weinfeld—"I love the teamwork and the support you can get from each person"

What are you most excited about for the show?

Elizabeth Spano—"I am most excited to perform."

Anna Huber—"I'm excited for the show! The one thing I'm excited about is seeing everyone in costume. That's when I really feel the show has been put together."



Continued on Page 4

FOOD WORD SEARCH by Nick Wintje*Answers to last week's puzzle!*

MSNATRSBJDJCGKHHI**H**DHDBXHBFBHFJGLSWSMFREMITISAWCHIPS NKW
 HHFYFUFDFDDDCXDK**A**FLGHIHJGBGHGGJYIHNMBNNBNFHFHBGHKMGJ
 JHFHGH**H****H****HOTDOG**GII**M**UFJFHGHGHXFMBCVK**CHEESE**GJHGKJNNFYTH
 HBVNLFANWISXCD**F**BJKDHDGHHSHJHHGEEGEFGWGGGGGGGUKGJJTHG
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 FHJTDGGFGFGGEGDI**R**XBNMEVBNMSCVXBNMXFXNXVN**CANDY**NDRUD
 UDGDFG**S****OUPE**VGGEGDGDGDGD**CHICKEN****UGGETS**UYRHSNCDHJKLPL

SOUP CHICKENUGGETS CANDY HAMBURGER CHEESE HOTDOG

Lion King*From Page 3*

Zachary Gordon--"Practicing with my friends and performing on stage."

Charles Armstrong--"I am excited to perform live on stage. It is the best part of the drama process."

Corey Skelton--"I'm most excited about making the audience laugh and smile, especially people who've never seen it. I get to help tell the story of The Lion King now."

Aiden Quinn--"I am most excited about the characters. I think the cast is made of very talented people and it is a pleasure to work with them."

Ava Debellis--"The costumes and stage set up."

Max Weinfeld--"I'm so excited for Tech Week because this is the week where the show really comes together."

What is the hardest part of Drama Club?

Elizabeth Spano--"The hardest part is to know that if I mess up in the performance, everyone will be watching me."

Anna Huber--"Tech Week is the hardest part. This is because you're on stage under hot lights dressed in character, trying your best to go over all the musical until 8 at night."

Zachary Gordon--"Memorizing the lines and song choreography."

Charles Armstrong--"Singing live. It can sometimes be nerve-racking."

Corey Skelton--"The hardest is having full energy after a really long day of school."

Aiden Quinn--"Probably the memorizing. I might forget a particular line or phrase and say it differently, but it will get better after some practice."

Ava Debellis--"Remembering lines."

Max Weinfeld--"Simba, Nala, Mufasa" (Part to get, I meant hardest part of the show, but both work!)

(For 7th and 8th graders) What was your favorite part of Drama club last year?

Anna Huber--"I liked how there was a

whole togetherness in the cast. Everyone came together to make an amazing production! I also liked the set and props"

Zachary Gordon--"I loved playing Captain Hook and putting my own spin on the character."

Charles Armstrong--"It was one of the best times of my life. It was an experience I will never forget, and for most, it was their first live play. Songs from it like "Distant Melody" have stuck with me ever since."

Aiden Quinn--"I loved the expression and flow, and also being the spotlight that shined on the character that stepped into the center stage."

Max Weinfeld--"I loved the innovation put into the show last year. I do have to say I am so proud of one of my best friends, Brynn, because she was very supportive to everyone and enjoyed the show so much."

Can you sum up this year's production in one word?

Elizabeth Spano--"Amazing."

Anna Huber--"Community."

Zachary Gordon--"Rewarding."

Charles Armstrong--"Fulfilling."

Corey Skelton--"Fun."

Aiden Quinn--"Exciting."

Ava Debellis--"Thrilling."

Max Weinfeld--"Betrayal."

Would you recommend Drama Club to incoming SMS students?

Elizabeth Spano--"Yes."

Anna Huber--"Yes! It is a great way to make friends and an amazing extracurricular. It also keeps you busy and you build a sense of excitement leading up to the big show! Though, it takes lot of commitment so show up prepared!"

Zachary Gordon--"Yes."

Charles Armstrong--"Yes. It's a fun, new, and fulfilling experience, that can't be recreated."

Corey Skelton--"Yes, I would definitely recommend Drama Club to incoming SMS students."

Aiden Quinn--"Very much. It will be quite an experience for new actors and performers."

Ava Debellis--"Yes, definitely. It is so fun and putting on shows will be fun, too."

Max Weinfeld--"Yes."

CHRISTMAS WORD SEARCH



By Nick Wintje
Tusker Tribune Staff

DFBCDBDBCDBCHBGYADCJDCBDBDEDEVVFCGVFGVFGFVFGFGFNGNBIS
HDDHDHSHBEEJJGIFTSHSVHDGCHJUIGEHOHOLIDAYSDDGYDGGDYDUDIDIIA
WHHDHHSASJDBDHGHDDSHSDUHDIUHEDIUDCIHDCHDUDYHCFHUGFN
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SANTA * STOCKING * SAINTNICK * REINDEER * COOKIES * MISTLETOE *

GIFTS * HOLIDAYS

NaNoWriMo Excerpt: Trash Bag Bodies



By Allison Kaminski
Tusker Tribune Staff

Editor's Note: This is an excerpt from Allison's NaNoWriMo story. 8th graders wrote NaNoWriMo novels during the month of November, and occasionally, the Tusker Tribune publishes excerpts submitted by student volunteers.

"Dad? Mom's tapping on your window. She wants to talk to you."

Dad's angry at mom for killing innocent people. Dad's been weird since he found me at the rest stop waiting for mom. He is being secretive. When he gets a text, he makes sure I cannot see what he is typing or what the other person is saying.



I called out to my mom through the open car window, as she's walking away. She turned around and had a small smile. But then all the hope she had was gone when I pointed at my dad.

"Come over here," I say as I continue pointing at my dad. I just looked out of the window and saw something in the mirror. There is nothing in the bed of mom's pickup truck. But when we left her in the parking lot, the bed was full of trash bag bodies.

So, what happened to the trash bag bodies? Mom's coming over to the window. But not mine. Dad's. I thought they were mad at each other. Does she need something from him so bad that she's forcing herself to do it?

The Great Things About Christmas



By Julia Peanamanda
Tusker Tribune Staff

Christmas is my favorite time of the year. Why you may ask, well one thing that I like

about Christmas is

there're many kinds of traditions that you and your family might have.

When its Christmas time I think of the 5 senses: I see colorful, bright, Christmas lights

all over, I smell fresh baked gingerbread cookies right out of the oven, I taste the creamy eggnog in a glass, I hear everyone singing Christmas songs, and touch the pine needles on my sticky tree.

Oh, and that's another thing I love about Christmas, you get to decorate a tree with ornaments and lights!



Continued on Page 6

Social Media: The Good and The Bad



**By Reagan Ciccone
Tusker Tribune Staff**

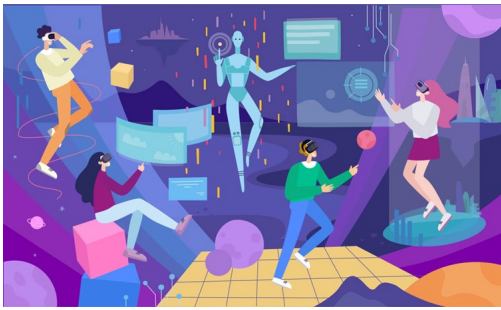
During the year 2020, everyone went into lockdown due to Covid-19, because we were not allowed out of our houses. The amount of time we used on social media sky rocketed, but was that a good thing?

There are a lot of different opinions about social media. Some say it should be banned, others think everyone should use it. In this article you will read about three benefits of social media, and three harms social media can cause.

Positives about social media!

Social media can be beneficial in many ways! Here are three reasons why you might want to stay on social media:

Social Media can be informative!



Different social media platforms can be highly informative. For example, some social media creators talk about different issues going around

in the world, and since a lot of people are on social media, news will spread faster, and more people will be aware of this issue.

Easier to socialize and make friends!

On social media, it can be easier to find people who have the same interests as you! All it takes is for you to post something about yourself and millions of people will be able to see it. Making friends in person can be a struggle for some people, so online socializing might be a solution.

You can make money from home while doing something you love!

One of the best things about social media is that you can make cash off of creating content. If you are interested in doing business and post



about it, people will find out about you and start purchasing your items. You can also make money on social media simply by posting something that interests you! Many influencers started off on apps like Tik Tok, Snapchat and Instagram and are now making millions.

Negatives of social media

Of course, with all that positive stuff about social media, here are a couple of downsides. Here are three reasons you might want to distance yourself away from social media.

Being cyberbullied is extremely easy

When teenagers are behind screens, they tend to say more harmful things compared to what they would say in real life. Being bullied online is way more common and easier to do than to do it in real life. The worst part about cyber bullying it has the same impact bullying does, and it's harder to get rid of.

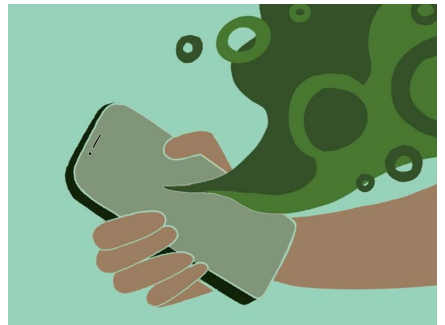
Kidnapping is more common

With so many privileges come responsibility. Social Media has little to no restrictions to what you can and cannot post, if you are not careful with what you say online, people may be able to come and track you. Over 65% of child abductors have turned to social media (Ivana, 2021).

Corruption to the mind.

Being on social media too much can really affect the way you see things. Like I said before, a lot of different things are posted on social media, some of them being false and untrue. Social Media can corrupt your mind into thinking stuff that is not true.

Hopefully, after reading this information, you took time to think about how social media can make or break you. What do you think? Do you think social media is harmful or helpful?



Christmas From Page 5

On the 24th of December, I throw a big Christmas eve party with all my cousins, but the 25th is the real treat. Santa comes down your chimney and brings you presents for you to open in the morning.

Another great part of Christmas is your

elf! My elf's name is Pompom. The purpose of your elf is to come and go to your house and hide for you to find them. They go to the North Pole after you are asleep, and they go tell Santa how you have been for the day.

Some people have more than one elf, but I have one. I hope you have a great Christmas and get a lot of presents this year!

First Snow Really Got Me Into the Christmas Spirit!



**By Gabriella Cordero
Tusker Tribune Staff**

Just this Sunday, we had the first snow of December and it happened to be just about 2-3 inches. Many kids hope for more snow throughout this winter.

Also, very soon, we have holiday break and I bet everyone is excited to be out for the 12 days for the holidays.

In addition, the band winter concert was a good performance by 6th, 7th, and 8th grade bands and jazz band.



Right before that, concert bell choir performed in the lobby with some very fun Christmas songs for everyone to hear.

I know that today, the Bell Choir went on their annual bell choir tour to four different school to get people into the holiday spirit.

Hopefully, everyone got to play in the snow and had a good time doing so.

Well, I hope everyone has a good holiday season with family, friends presents and hot cocoa.

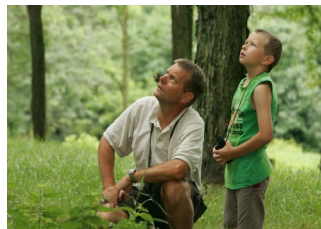
Have fun on break and don't forget to have a happy new year!

Hiking With Dad



**By Nick Wintje
Tusker Tribune Staff**

One time on a sunny day, a little boy named John wanted to go into the woods to go on a hike. So he got in the car with his dad, and they drove to the trail. When they got there, they grabbed a map and started their hike. The hike was three miles long. They started walking for a little bit, and soon, dad's phone alarm went off, saying "You have reached mile two."



So, dad turned his phone off and John said, "Yes, two more miles." And so, they keep walking, and after a bit, dad's phone alarm sounded again and it said, "You have reached your third mile," and they stopped.

"Look, it's a river," John said. John and his dad took a break at the river, so after they took a 15-minute break, Dad said, "John are you ready to walk back to the car?"

"Yes," said John.

And so, they did.

STOP BULLYING



**By Natalie Snyder
Tusker Tribune Staff**

Hi, my name's Nina and I have been bullied my whole life. I go from school to school because I keep managing to embarrass myself.

Today I am starting at my sixth school in the past three years. My mom says I will fit in fine, but I do not think so. Well time for bed.

"Ring!" That's my alarm clock. I get up and get dressed and run downstairs. The aroma of sweet buttery pancakes hit my face. "Yum!"

I grab a pancake and race outside because, of course, I am late on my first day. I walk up to the school as it towers over me. I walked in and a girl immediately welcomes me. Her name is Lia. She has short blonde hair.

Lia and I start to hang out a lot more and she tells me how so many people in her school have been bullied for having a disability or other issues.

I come home later and tell my mom all about it. She says I should do something to help change it, but I am too scared to. My mom

tells me to sleep on it, so I go to bed, lay my head on the cold silky pillow, close my eyes, and drift off. I wake up with determination to fight bullying. I know I cannot stop it, but I can make it safe for kids to go to school.

I go to school and run with all my might to the principal's office.

"Hi. May I please talk to the principal?"

"Sure sweetie. Let me go get her," the receptionist replies.

I tell the principal all about how I want change, and she said that we can hold an assembly for it tomorrow.

The next day, at the assembly, I get on stage. My hands are shaking. I can hear my own breathing. Sweat drips down. I'm a bunch of nerves.

I walk up to the microphone. "We need to stop bullying" I say in a quiet, but shaky voice. I say it once again, in a louder, more confident voice: "We need to stop bullying. It is affecting kids everywhere. Kids cry and some kids do not want to go to school anymore because the second they walk through the door, they know they'll be bullied. We need to stop bullying." I leave the microphone and I hear cheers.

A smile crosses my face.



The Mysteries of Planet X



By Leo Mundis
Tusker Tribune Staff

WRITER'S NOTE: *Planet X, or Planet Nine, is not to be confused with Pluto, which has not been a planet since the IAU ruled it as a dwarf planet. It is also completely hypothetical, so the existence of it is not guaranteed.*

At least since 2006, everyone knows there are eight planets (apologies, Pluto): Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, *sigh* Uranus, and Neptune. However, that's all we *know*.

There have been mysterious observations in the outer Kuiper Belt (a large ring of meteors, comets, and other icy objects beyond Neptune). Several small objects found in this belt caught the attention of some astronomers. Their orbits were unique and appeared to be set off from the expected course.



January of 2015 marked the first possible evidence of something like Planet X. Using models based on pure mathematics as well as computer simulations, Caltech astronomers Konstantin Batygin and Mike

Brown formally declared their findings.

According to the work done, Planet X is about the size of Uranus or Neptune and is 10 times as massive as Earth, or almost 60 *trillion trillion* kilograms! Also, it would have an average distance of about 90 billion kilometers (56 billion miles) from the sun.

However, a planet isn't the only possible solution to the 'Caltech scientists' discoveries. Avi Loeb, a science professor at Harvard University, proposed that Planet X is a black hole, and a tiny one for that matter. If this theory is true, the black hole is a little bigger than an apple, and 5-10 times as massive.

However, there is no need to fear if Loeb is correct. The solar system would be completely unaffected, except for the most distant bodies, like the few objects astronomers used to predict Planet X's existence.

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Are Video Games Bad For You? The Debate Continues



By Andrew Gutwillig
Tusker Tribune Staff

Some video games are educational, very nice, and fun for kids.

There are many video game consoles around the world. But, are they bad for you?

Some games out there are bad for kids, like Call of Duty. Call of Duty is a very bad game for kids because there is a lot of blood and bad words.

So should 10 year old kids play very bad games like Call of Duty? No. They should be playing games that are good for their age. That is common sense.

If I were a parent and my kid was

playing video games at 10 years old, if they were playing a game like Call of Duty, as a parent, I would



step in, see what my son is playing, and see if it is good or bad for him.

If it is bad for him, I would talk to him about it, ask him if he can handle it. If he can't, I'd ask him to uninstall or delete the game.

My friend and I used to be addicted to video games while Covid-19 was happening. We always got angry on games and, while we didn't break stuff, we'd scream at the tops of our lungs. My mom was very angry when I did it many times.

In addition, I usually got depressed at school and had a lot of bad days. So she took my video games away for six months because she wanted me to not be addicted anymore. It was amazing!

Now I feel a lot better and still play video games, but for like three hours on weekends and two hours on weekdays. Now I feel really positive about myself and I'm having good days at school.

