

# The Tusker Tribune

## The student newspaper of Somers Middle School



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Spring 2016

## SMS 'Walks for Autism'

By Justin Vassallo  
Tusker Tribune Staff



On April 29, 2016 SMS walked for autism. In the beginning of every lunch period one grade went outside and walked 1 lap around the loop between SMS and SIS.

This was the culminating event of SMS' Autism Awareness Week, a week where the school sponsored various activities to focus on Autism, its effects, and how to be aware of, and sensitive to, the condition.



A significant amount of people walked in the 7th grade, I would say at least more than half the grade walked. I think that the walk was a great idea for people to express their feelings for people who have autism. I have a Blast. The first thing we did was take a steady walk around the loop. Next we all had a big picnic in the front of SMS. To

wrap up the fun, teachers handed out ice pops and ice cream sandwiches.

At the end of the period everyone had a great time. I would easily do this next year.

## SMS Says 'Farewell' to Assistant Principal DJ Colella

By Remi Saad  
Tusker Tribune Staff

As you may of heard, Mr. DJ Colella, the SMS assistant principal is leaving SMS. He will become a principal at a school in Darien, CT. He will be leaving at the end of the school year, and we will all miss him very much.

He has been a big part of the Middle School and we will all be sad to see him leave. I have made a tribute to him and I interviewed to get an understanding about this new job and the way he feels about it.

We will all wish Mr. Colella a great rest of the school year in this school, and at a new school in the next year. The new school is very lucky to have Mr. Colella.

Remi: I heard that you got a new job at a

different school. Can you tell me a little more about that?

Mr. Colella: I got a job as a principal at a K-5 building in Darien, Connecticut.

Remi: Are you excited about this new job?

Mr. Colella: I am very excited about the opportunity.

Remi: What is your favorite memory here at SMS?

Mr. Colella: Attending the Washington DC trip with the 8th graders. It's usually a lot of fun.

Remi: What was your least favorite memory at the Middle school?

Mr. Colella: I don't really have one, I loved my time here very much.



*Continued on page 3*

## Braces: Something to Sink Your Teeth Into!



**By Julianna Aiello  
Tusker Tribune  
Staff**

Braces are very common in middle school. They come in different styles, like clear and metal brackets. You can get different colors, like red, purple, and pink. You can personalized your braces any way you want.

Braces normally take around 70 minutes to apply. My orthodontist did my bottom braces first, then let me brush, then my top braces; so it took around 70 minutes for everything to be done.

Once all the braces are all on the teeth, your wire is placed into the openings in the brackets, and then your rubber bands are placed on. The rubber bands can be any color; mine currently were for Easter.

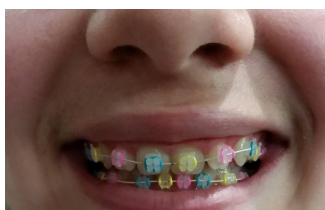
After the braces are complete, you go over brushing, care, and things that are not good to eat with your

braces on. When you leave you are given a toothbrush, wax, travel brush and a proxy brush. You will learn how to use the proxy brush and how to place the wax on a bracket.

Your teeth will hurt for the first few days. They will feel like somebody punched you in the jaw. However, some people don't feel any pain. Your teeth are just getting use to the braces, so it is not bad. Advil or Tylenol is something I would recommend to have during these days.

For my personal experience, it only hurt for three days, then all the pain went away overnight.

Braces are common, and you might be getting braces soon, too! Don't worry! There is no extreme pain or needles or anything to be worried about! Just smile and realize that in the new future, you will have beautiful, straight teeth!



**By Peyton DiSiena  
Tusker Tribune Staff**

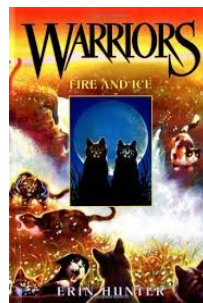
Hello readers! I have a great book, one which is in a series I have mentioned before.

It is Fire And Ice by Erin Hunter. It is the second book in the Warriors series.

Fireheart is a loyal warrior of ThunderClan, but suspicions of a traitor in the clan is stirring in his thoughts.

Before he can explain them to his leader, Bluestar, he is sent on a quest with his friend Graystripe to bring home the lost and driven out clan, WindClan.

Will they be successful? Or will they fall and never be able to explain the terrible traitor in the clan? Read it now to find out! Happy reading!



## Reviews . . . Fever by Laurie Halse Anderson



**By Noelle DeMarinis  
Tusker Tribune Staff**

If you enjoy reading historical fiction novels about a real gripping story, Fever 1793 is the perfect book for you! Author Laurie Halse Anderson, emerges you into another world to with sharp and graphic pictures.

The book takes place late in the summer of 1793. Matilda Cook lives with her widowed mother and grandfather. Mattie (for short) spends her days avoiding chores and has high hopes for mak-

ing the family business the finest coffeehouse Philadelphia has ever seen! But then her whole life is turned upside-down by the outbreak of the fever.

Disease sweeps the streets, destroying everything in its path. Mattie and her grandfather soon flee the city. But she soon discovers the sickness is everywhere. Will Mattie survive this horrible epidemic? If you are craving a factual heart-wrenching story, this is the book for you.

# Volkman's Music Mayhem!

## A weekly compilation of popular tunes



**By Evan Volkman**  
**Tusker Tribune Staff**

1. One Dance (feat. Wizkid & Kayla) - Drake
2. Panda - Desiigner
3. Formation - Beyonce
4. All About Us - Jordan Fisher
5. Don't Let Me Down (feat. Daya) - The Chainsmokers
6. 7 Years - Lukas Graham
7. Work From Home (feat. Ty Dolla \$ign) - Fifth Harmony
8. I Took A Pill In Ibiza (Seeb Remix) - Mike Posner
9. Be As You Are (Jordan XL Remix) - Mike Posner
10. NO - Meghan Trainor
11. Never Forget You - Zara Larsson & MNEK
12. Might Not (feat. The Weeknd) - Belly
13. Too Good (feat. Rihanna) - Drake
14. Work (feat. Drake) - Rihanna
15. My House - Flo Rida
16. LIKE I WOULD - ZAYN
17. You Don't Owe Me (feat. G-Eazy) - Grace
18. Love Yourself - Justin Bieber
19. Messin' Around (feat. Enrique Inglesias) - Pitbull
20. Oui - Jeremih

**Chart results for the week of May 1, 2016**

## Colella (From Page 1)

**Remi:** What do you look forward to when you have your new job?

**Mr. Colella:** I look forward to working with a younger group of students and being the leader of their learning community.

**Remi:** Are you going to have any regrets leaving this school? If so, what are they?

**Mr. Colella:** I will really miss the people that I work with and being in the same school as my son and my short commute.

**Remi:** Is this new job going to be anything like your job here?

**Mr. Colella:** It will be similar and that I will be a leader in the building but the main difference is that I am going to be working with young students.

**Remi:** When will you be leaving the school?

**Mr. Colella:** June 30th is my last day.

**Remi:** What will be the thing you will miss the most in the Middle school?

**Mr. Colella:** My colleagues were very kind people and I will miss working with them every day.

**Remi:** Thank you for your time, and I hope you enjoy your new job. Everyone at the Middle School will miss you.

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*I will really  
miss the people  
that I work with  
and being in the  
same school as  
my son and my  
short commute.*

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# ALMANDREM'S STONE

*A Fantasy Story by Kaitlyn DeRosa*

## Prologue

I was only 4 years old.  
"STOP IT! STOP IT! LET THEM GO!" I screamed.  
"It's ok Grace, it'll be alright. Just take care of your baby sister, Morgan, alright? We love you very much sweetie. Just remember that," my mom said with tears in her eyes.

The strange man was holding a gun to her head. Another man was holding one to my father's head. They were both tied up in chairs in our kitchen. I was just standing there helplessly holding little Morgan.

A few moments later my dad desperately mouthed the words 'Run! Run now!' to me. I was too stunned to move. I soon realized they were trying to save me so I followed my dad's orders. I ran out of the room, ran out of the house and into the dense woods behind my little white house. Before I made it far enough away, I heard a scream followed by two gunshots. Then it was silent except for the sound of Morgan and I crying.

\*\*\*

It was a couple of hours since we ran away from the strange men. I hadn't noticed that Morgan had fallen asleep or that she had brought Marshmallow, her stuffed bunny. I took the bunny from Morgan's hands and noticed it had a small tear in it.

*Probably got snagged by a branch. I thought. Then I noticed that there was a small piece of paper inside. I took the paper out and uncrumpled it. It was a note from Mom and Dad:*

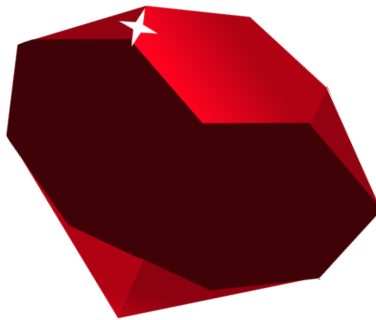
Dear Children,

Whenever you find this letter, this is important. Also hidden inside Marshmallow is one of the pieces of Almandrem's Stone. The people who killed us worked for Albert Wishmorger, the man who is in charge of WITTS, an organization trying to take over the world by brainwash.

Your father and I have been protecting

that piece of Almandrem's Stone, and trying to find other people who hold the rest of the pieces. Now you must take on our mission as protector of the stone and help us continue our mission to find other protectors. Do not let the WITTS obtain the piece of the stone. The world's safety is in your hands.

We Love You,  
Mom and Dad



After reading the letter, I stuck my hand further through the hole in Marshmallow and pulled a bright, shiny, red gem.

*This must be a piece of Almandrem's Stone. It's beautiful. Then I heard Morgan wake up. She wobbled over to where I was kneeling and pulled marshmallow out of my hand.*

"Whoa there, Morgan. Let me put this back ok?" I said, showing her Almandrem's Stone. She handed me Marshmallow, and I put the gem inside. "Now, Morgan, you must take very good care of this. It has a very special stone inside, so don't drop it ok?" I said.

Morgan nodded, as if saying she understood then I handed her Marshmallow. She went and sat on a very flat rock and started playing with Marshmallow, while I searched the area for some edible looking berries. As I was searching, I heard lots of yelling and saw some flashlight beams.

*Probably the police investigating the murder. I thought. Soon the voices were close enough to make out what they were saying.*

"Come on guys! They couldn't have gone far! We have to find them or boss won't be happy!" one voice said.

"We're never going to find them! Some kids are very good at hiding," another voice mumbled.

"I saw them run into the woods! I'm telling you!" The first voice yelled again.

I realized that those voices weren't police, they were members of WITTS. And they were looking for us.

# All About Robins (Yes, the Bird)



By Nitin Seshadri  
Tusker Tribune Staff

## What are they?

The widely known early bird, American Robins are common sights on lawns across the United States, where you can often see them tugging earthworms out of the ground. Robins are universally popular birds for their warm orange breast, cheery, uplifting song, and their unusually early appearance in spring. The robin is considered the symbol of spring.

## What they look like

American Robins are fairly large songbirds with a large, round body, long legs, and fairly long tail. They are gray-brown birds with warm orange bellies and dark gray heads. They are authoritarian birds that bound across lawns and stand erect when they are surveying their surroundings.

## How to find them

Look for American Robins skittering across lawns or stalking earthworms in the ground. Since robins sing frequently, you can find them by listening for their clear musical whistles. They are also common across the country in gardens, parks, yards, golf courses, or any open field. Most should have no trouble finding a robin near their home.

## Their diet

The American robin's diet generally consists of around 40 percent small insects, such as earthworms, caterpillars and grasshoppers, and 60 percent wild and cultivated fruits and berries. In the winter, they flock to fermented *Pyracantha* berries, and after eating enough, they will exhibit intoxicated behavior (!) such as falling over while walking.



## Are robin eggs really blue?

Yes. A female robin usually lays 3 or 5 eggs (further emphasizing the fact that they are odd-numbered birds: they have 3 toes and they hop in sequences of odd numbers as well). They are

usually a turquoise color.

It's amazing that even with the Easter egg coloring kits we can buy at the store, no amount of coloring can create eggs that match the hue of the robin's eggs. No one knows **why** they are blue, though. One bird biologist says that "a blue egg may be nicely camouflaged at the bottom of a dark nest, especially if the nest were partly covered with green leaves." Interesting.



*Note: I took the picture of the robin eggs. This picture inspired me to write this article.*

## Conclusion

The American Robin is recognized as the universal symbol of spring. Its red breast but contrasting blue eggs make it a bird of interest for many. The robin is a good starter bird for amateur birdwatchers who want to learn how to identify different birds by shape and size. Most of all, its cheery song will make your day!

## Sources

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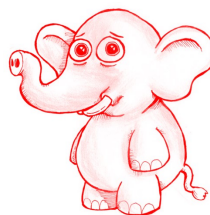
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