



# The Tusker Tribune



Stories on P. 2

## SOMERS MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWSPAPER

Issue Number 26

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

Spring 2023

### Pulsera Project Runs Through April 24



By Madison Kaplan  
Tusker Tribune Staff

What is the Pulsera Project? Well, Pulsera is an organization that helps people in Guatemala and Nicaragua since 2009. It gives underearning people a fair trade job.

What is a Fairtrade job? Fairtrade is an arrangement to help growing countries. It gives fair-paying jobs and good working environments. Pulsera helps its workers



with scholarships, housing programs, healthcare, gender equality, and more.

What can we buy to support the Pulsera Project? You can choose from a variety of colorful bracelets for \$7. No bracelet is the same. They are all unique. You can also buy a small colorful bag, called a bolsita, for \$15. Each item comes with a picture of the artist who made it.

*Continued on Page 5*

### SMS's STAR Students For March 2023

#### Grade 6:



Olivia McGurk



Cooper Fox

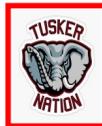


Luc Conti

#### Grade 8



Sylvia Herrera



Reagan Ciccone



Millie McCormack



Rebekah Ennis



Osher Madmoni



RJ Traina

#### Grade 7:



Edwin Vasquez



Aidan Braun

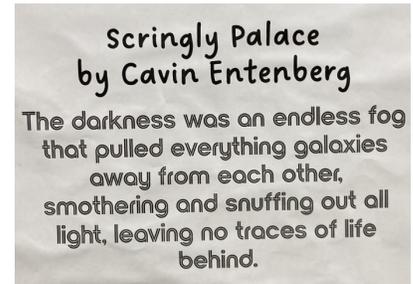
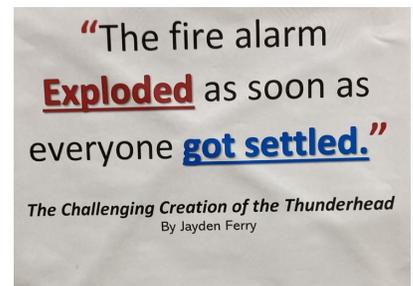


Carolina Lopera

*A STAR award stands for Students who Are Role models. The students pictured here were caught doing something that deserves the STAR recognition for the month—from common courtesy, to helping another student or staff member, to standing up for someone or cheering them up!*

### NaNoWriMo Leads

*The Tusker Tribune will publish different NaNoWriMo "leads" from this year's 8th graders over the next couple of months. These leads are on display throughout the*



## You Can Help With Autism, and Autism Awareness



**By Madison Kaplan  
Tusker Tribune Staff**

April is Autism Awareness Month. Autism is a developmental disorder that affects one's social skills. It also impairs the ability to communicate and interact. The disorder impacts the nervous system. The range and severity of symptoms can vary.

Common symptoms are obsessive interests, repetitive behaviors, and difficulty communicating. It is estimated worldwide that about 1 in 100 children have autism.



Some ways you can support someone with autism are, helping one work on social skills and engage in conversations, don't talk over them, help in awkward social situations, and treat them as you treat others. But remember, everyone's experience with autism is different, so these suggestions may not help your friend, therefore, make sure to ask them what THEY need.

Some ways to help support autism awareness are, being an advocate and speaking up, being a positive role model, attending local awareness events, and educating yourself on the disorder.

## Every Day Should Be Autism Awareness Month



**By Ava Schmidberger  
Tusker Tribune Staff**

April is Autism Awareness Month; however I believe we shouldn't need a month to bring awareness to autism, it should be happening every day.

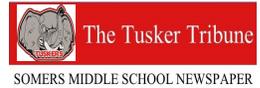
Autism is a disorder that affects/challenges social skills. Instead of looking/staring at someone with autism you should support them. Don't know how to support them? Ask them! However, if you're a little shy, there are some great resources on google. Just make sure your on an accurate site!

What is autism? Autism is a serious developmental disorder that impairs the ability to com-

municate and interact. Autism spectrum disorder impacts the nervous system.

The range and severity of symptoms can vary widely. Common symptoms include difficulty with communication, difficulty with social interactions, obsessive interests, and repetitive behaviors.

Early recognition, as well as behavioral, educational, and family therapies, may reduce symptoms and support development and learning. If you still have questions, don't be afraid to ask an adult, or a child with autism. Just remember to always be respectful when asking!



## Celebrating the Return of World Language Day at SMS



**By Amber Sinagra  
Tusker Tribune Staff**

On March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Somers Middle School had World Language Day! World language day is when all the grades come together to share their language through projects and foreign foods. All our language teachers work so hard to put WLD together and make a special memory for all the students and staff.



As a student who has made a project, I have decided to share a tiny bit about my project. My project was a short chil-



dren's book about a mythical king named Charlemagne. He ruled a lot of Europe way back in 800!

WLD was such a fun day because I was able to walk around with my friends and go to different "countries" to try a lot of amazing food. Each student in the grade had to make a project and when I went around the classes, I saw a lot of amazing projects.

Sadly, Somers Middle School couldn't host WLD for the past few years due to the pandemic, but I was very honored to be given the opportunity to participate in WLD. As an 8<sup>th</sup> grader, it was my last year doing WLD in Somers Middle School but I'm glad it's an amazing memory to have with all of my favorite peers and teachers!



## 8 Out of 10 Global Problems: Disability Rights



**By Sophia Valenzuela  
Tusker Tribune Staff**

*Editor's Note: This is an ongoing series presenting 20 global problems and solutions to fix them. This is the eighth installment. The first installment ran in the 10/14/22 issue of the Tusker Tribune.*

Disability Rights is ranked 8<sup>th</sup> on the top 10 global issues. People with disabilities can mean people who have vision impairment, deafness, brain injuries, and physical disabilities. Poor disability rights could mean discrimination of employment, state and local government, public accommodations, commercial facilities, transportation, and telecommunications.

People with disabilities mainly struggle with a physical environment that is not accessible, or a lack of relevant assistive technology, and/or negative attitudes of people towards disability. Often people stereotype people with disabilities by assuming their quality of their life is poor or that they are unhealthy because of their impairments. Steps and curbs that block a person with mobility impairment from entering a building or using a sidewalk.

People with disabilities are far less likely to be employed; 35.5% of people with disabilities ages 18 to 64 years, were employed, while 76.5% of peo-

ple without disabilities were employed. Adults aged 18 years and older with disabilities are less likely to have completed high school compared to their peers without disabilities.

People with disabilities are more likely to have an income of less than \$15,000 per year compared to people without disabilities. Children with disabilities are almost four times more likely to experience violence than children without disabilities.



Three ways you can help people with disabilities to get their rights is, first, by sharing disability articles, stories or even this article on social media platforms. This is especially effective if you have many "followers". It's important to spread this message, especially on platforms you know people will get the message on.

A second way to help with this is by amplifying the voices and work of disabled activists. Social media has many ways for you to boost what other people are saying and doing. Boosting other people's work and ideas is helpful to disabilities issues.

A third way you can help is by remembering disability issues when you vote. You don't have to set aside all of your opinions to make a vote based on disabled people, but at least find out where candidates stand on disability issues.

### Reporters/Contributors

**Anna Huber  
Madison Kaplan  
Lenny Novichenko  
Ava Schmidberger  
Camila Sacoto Quinteros  
Amber Sinagra  
Sophia Valenzuela**

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

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

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

**DPappas@somersschools.org.**

Tusker Tribune Website:

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

NEWSPAPER CLUB



TUSKER TRIBUNE

## Chichén Itzá is a Mayan Wonder



**By Ava Schmidberger  
Tusker Tribune Staff**

Chichén Itzá was one of the Mayans' largest settlements between 600-900 AD (Over 1500 Years Old). Unfortunately for the Mayans, the Toltecs conquered the Mayan city in the 10<sup>th</sup> century.

The archeological site is visited by more than one million people a year! The archeological site is a World Heritage Site and one of the New Seven Wonders of The World. The building is in Yucatan, Mexico. Chichén Itzá is also a building in addition to being a settlement (the building is also known as El Castillo).

Chichén Itza was important to the Mayans because it was a religious center for them to use. They used it for calendars, practicing religious rituals, and as an astronomical observatory.

The Mayans also carved things into the walls of Chichen Itza such as, mythical creatures, gods, and animals which makes it even more precious to them. Overall Chichén Itza showed the Mayans' incredible knowledge of math and astronomy, which is why it was important to them.



## How to Make an Eco-Brick



By Anna Huber  
Tusker Tribune Staff  
In the February  
17, 2023 issue of the  
Tusker Tribune, I

talked about eco-bricks and how it can be a simple fix to the plastic pollution problem. Now, we are going to discuss how to make a regular eco brick.

- **Collect plastics.** These plastics can range from wrappers to water Styrofoam! Your plastic water bottles are key, too. However, do not buy these plastics just to make the eco-brick.
- **Choose your water bottle.** When choosing your water bottle, it's best to go for one that has a volume of 600 mL or less. This is because these 600 mL water bottles can be quick to make, so you can learn from your mistakes quicker! However, the size you want your water bottle depends on what you are constructing with these eco-bricks and availability of the water bottle.
- **Clean the plastics and water bottles and dry.** This sounds like a simple step, but it vital for the eco-brick to be an eco-brick! If you don't wash the food, oil, or dirt from the plastics and water bottles, then microbials will grow within this eco-brick, defeating the whole purpose of this eco-brick. After cleaning, make sure you



dry these plastics!

- **Cut your cleaned plastics up.** For the eco-brick to be dense, you need to cut up the plastics into small pieces. Once that's done, you can start with your eco-brick!

- **Stuff a soft plastic at the bottom of eco-brick.** Now that you have your plastic cut up, start by stuffing a solid colored soft plastic and the bottom of your eco-brick. Soft plastic could look like a plastic bag.

- **Weight your eco-brick.** Now that you have finished your eco-brick, you need to weigh it to ensure the quality of it. A 600mL water bottle must be above 200 grams while a 500 mL water bottle must be above 500 grams.

- **Log your eco-brick.** As you finish and cap your eco-brick, you will want to add important information on the outside of your water bottle. You want to record data such as your name, final weigh of the eco-brick, the date, what you will use this eco-brick for, and a serial number generated by the "GoBrick App."

So, now you finally created an eco-brick. What now? With your eco-bricks, you can form different structures such as gardens. If you can't build right away, make sure you store your eco-brick away in a safe, slightly elevated spot like a shelf! Thank you for reading this article, see you next time!

## Science Assembly Was Fantastic



By Camila Sacoto Quinteros  
Tusker Tribune Staff

The Franklin Institute Science Museum Science Assembly, sponsored by the Somers Middle School PTA, was amazing. It was such an enjoyable experience.

One of the things we learned is if you add boiling water to liquid nitrogen, it will make a big cloud. The cloud flooded all the stage floor, just like a waterfall coming downstage.

We also saw how electrons react around protons and neutrons by using people to represent them.

We also saw how electrons will attract or repel by using a sign that says "negative charge" and "positive charge". Liquid nitrogen is very cold and if you add boiling water, it will evaporate and that is what made the big cloud. It was cool and amazing and it was like an explosion.



## Improve Your Homework With These Tips



By Lenny Novichenko  
Tusker Tribune Staff

We all know the feeling. You get home from school, and feel overwhelmed by the mountain of homework that you have to get down.

A few hours later, you find yourself scrolling through Tik Tok and realize that you aren't even halfway done with your assignments. Here are some tips to prevent this situation from happening.

### Prioritize and organize your work

It's easy to get overwhelmed by having a lot of assignments to do. Because of this, it is important to make sure that you have a clear plan in mind of what order you are going to do your work. Got a big science project due tomorrow? Start with it first, even though doing a simple 5-minute Edpuzzle for social studies may seem more enticing at first. Always start with the most difficult or most important work first, since you will always have more energy at motivation in the beginning.

Also, remember to take small breaks in between your studying and working. By doing something important to you for five minutes every hour or so, you will stay more motivated and more focused.

### Practice chunking your assignments

You've probably heard of chunking from ELA class, where it refers to the note taking strategy of dividing a reading into sections and finding

the main idea or most important detail of each section. This can also apply to doing homework.

Look at all of your assignments for the week. Then, distribute the work evenly between the 5 days. This can help your homework to feel more predictable and less overwhelming.

### Put your phone away

Although your cellphone is a very important tool, it can also be very distracting. When stuck on a difficult assignment, it is often tempting to pick up your phone and scroll through social media. Social media is designed in a way that makes it very addictive and distracting, so the best way to combat it is to simply put your phone in another room and put it on silent mode.

### Download an extension to help you be more focused.

When you are doing your homework online, it is often very enticing to switch over to YouTube or scroll through Reddit or Twitter. Fortunately, there are many extensions for Google to stop this from happening. One example is a Self Control extension, which allows you to temporarily block distracting websites. Most of these extensions are free, and you can find them by going to the Google Chrome Web Store.

### Don't stress if you get stuck.

Our plans don't always work out. You might anticipate that you can get through your math worksheet quickly, but then get stuck on a question. If this happens, don't worry. If you really can't figure out the answer, move onto the next question and try again later.



## Pulsera

From Page 1

Purchases are in cash only. Bring your payments to world language classrooms 237 and 240.

The World Language Department thanks you for your support of this great effort!



## Quassy Park Trips Set for June



By Ava Schmidberger  
Tusker Tribune Staff

Both the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade are going to Quassy Amusement Park in June (on different days). Last year, Quassy was a very successful field trip. The park has amusement rides and water rides.

Some rides at Quassy are the Frog Hopper (sitting ride that lifts you 16ft in the air!), the Little Dipper (small roller coaster for kids), the Big Flush water coaster (two-person water raft ride), and the

Wooden Warrior (small roller coaster). There are also some fun rides in the water park area, such as the



Tunnel Twisters (two dark water slides next to each other), the Bullet Bowl (a toilet bowl inspired water slide with twists and turns), and the Rapid Water Coaster, with fun drops and turns!

Last year Quassy was a fun success! Overall, I would rate the park 5 out of 5 stars. If you've never been, you're sure to find something fun that you'll love to do!