



The Tusker Tribune

NEWSPAPER CLUB



TUSKER TRIBUNE

SOMERS MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWSPAPER

Issue Number 8

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

Fall 2021

A Talk With My Younger Self



By Chloe Lee
Tusker Tribune Staff

Going back into the past is dangerous, as you might hear in many stories and movies.

I think it is, but other people might think otherwise.

If I would go back to see my younger self? That seems like a long time ago. I won't tell her anything important that will maybe lead into big situations or problems. I would also maybe tell her about the world. I didn't know much and it was hard enough to find it out myself, so maybe I'll save myself a little.

The last thing that I would do is, I would probably have a little fun with her because she probably won't recognize me.

To start with, I wouldn't tell her things that would ruin her whole life. One may ask, how are you going to convince your younger self that you're not a creep trying to get information about you, because I know my parent taught me well about talking to strangers.

I have no idea and don't remember if I believed in fairy godmothers, but I would simply say I'm your guardian angel. If that doesn't work, oh well. But let's say it does. I will tell her all the things about my adventures and say something that would inspire her.

Sometimes I didn't want to do some thing, but those things led me into great things and I know those same things will lead up too many great things into her life as well.

In addition to that, I would tell myself about the world. Well, maybe not the whole world, but most things that I think she will need to know. The world is a cruel place sometimes, and I know it is now but didn't earlier. I wish someone could have told me about how rude and mean people are because all of those times, I felt so miserable that I cared a lot.

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George Orwell's 1984 vs 2021



By Lucas Ziegler
Tusker Tribune Staff

Dystopia vs Reality

1984...a dystopia. A dystopia is an imagined state or society in which there is great suffering or injustice, typically one that is totalitarian or post-apocalyptic. 1984 is a dystopian book written by George Orwell in 1949 about a 1984 imagined world.

He imagined a totalitarian state where there are three superpowers. None can destroy each other. Oceania is the superpower the book is set in. The main character named Winston belonged to the lower party, a middle class of some sorts. In this world, the middle class is barely tolerated and under constant surveillance. Imagine being constantly watched?!

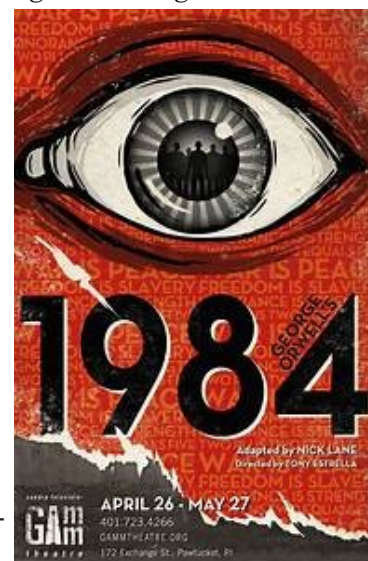
This ideology of Oceania is called in the book socialism. For the people of Oceania, this means constant war, shortages, and long work weeks. In this dystopian world, Big Brother is watching and thought crime is punished severely with torture and death. Thought crime is the crime of thinking something that is against the party's narrative. Big Brother could be one man or many people, but he is always watching, and he is always there.

The main character of the story, Winston, lives in this dystopian world hopeless with all his beliefs in Big Brother. As his day starts, he wakes up to a telescreen, every day. The telescreen shows only one channel with propaganda and watches him all day long. Propaganda is the dissemination of information—facts, arguments, rumors, half-truths, or lies—to influence public opinion.

In current times, social media, like Facebook, fills people's minds with what we could call similar "propaganda" by using algorithms that suggest information based off on what one would search on the internet or clicks on or likes and then it feeds similar content on one's timeline.

Other examples, such as GPS tracking on one's phone, grocery stores making a profile on your shopping habits based on your customer reward card, Google feeding you ads based on your search history and news that must be constantly fact-checked, are all like Big Brother in Winston's world.

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Younger Self

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Now I don't care what other people think about me because I can do stuff that I want to do. All of that information, I had no clue. I probably was just thought everything was happy and the things that I did think was sad, was things little like me getting in trouble.



Furthermore, traveling back into time doesn't mean I can't have a little fun... right? I won't do anything like letting my family members see me or anything, but I had fun when I was a child. I didn't worry that much at all like about school or myself. The more I grew up, the more I began to feel aware of my surroundings. What I mean about that is, I overthink a lot. I know I shouldn't and it's really bad for you, but I think about other people's thoughts and think about every action I do. Everyone grows up eventually, and that's a part of life, but now I know other older people saying "I miss being a child." I really shouldn't be talking because I, too, am still growing up and still have lots to learn but writing and thinking about my younger self makes me feel a little old.

To end with, going back in time to see my younger self would be kind of difficult. You will have to go through convincing your own self about things that she might not believe. Telling her the whole world is going to be hard would be tough because you have felt that way one time and I know I didn't like it. Having a little fun will also go with it. This might all be in one day, but this one day might change your whole life and be the most worthwhile time of your life that you will never forget.

1984

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Thought crime from Winston's world could be associated with "cancel culture" of today.

These are all reasons why we should be careful where we get the information and who we give access to our information. We also must make sure that we critically analyze the information and double check its credibility before making important decisions based on it.

A Shattering Experience



By Col Shala
Tusker Tribune Staff

I'm going to talk about the time my cousins and I broke five windows in a single day at my cousin's house.

It started out fine. We were playing two versus 1 basketball against my cousin, Derina, because he's very good at it.

During the game, my cousin Rilind got very angry because we were losing 2 to 10. The reason why he was getting so mad was because Darien put on a bet. He said, "I'll buy you whatever you want if you win."

So Rilind kicked the ball, and it went straight through the bathroom window. Now my cousin's house is pretty big, so there are lots of windows. Somehow, he managed to kick the ball upward to break that window. I'm glad no one was in the bathroom at that time. We didn't care all that much, so we went back to playing the game.

Then Rilind suggested we play hockey after that. I didn't have any experience with hockey, so when I hit the puck with my stick, the puck flew through the entrance door window.

With two windows broken, we probably should have thought about stopping, or telling someone, but then, Darien suggested that we keep playing, as if two broken windows was that big of a deal.

So we started playing soccer. For awhile, it was fun, and then Darien tried a goal shot. The ball hit the goal post really hard, and it ricocheted inbound to the other yard. At the time, we had no idea that we've just broken a third window. And we couldn't find the ball because it was inside the house after going through the third window.

So Darien just got another ball and we kept playing for a little while. Then we switched to baseball. Since we didn't have a baseball, we used a tennis ball, and that ball would travel really far no matter how lightly we hit it.

So we were playing and then, all of a sudden, I hit it really hard. The ball bounced off a brick pallet that my grandfather had left around because he was fixing our brick walls. After bouncing off the brick pallet, the ball went through a fourth window.

Now we were scared because soon, my cousin's parents would come home and see these broken windows. And we still didn't realize that there was a fourth window already broken due to a soccer ball. So then, after breaking four windows, we decided to do some cleaning. But then Rilind tripped while holding a broom and the broom flew straight into... a fifth window.

That's when we just gave up and took the punishment



My Perfect School Lunch



By Lou Meza
Tusker Tribune Staff

If I were in charge of school lunches at Somers Middle School, this is what I'd do.

My perfect school lunch would consist of a filet mignon and mashed potatoes for the main course, with a 2-liter Sprite and a 2-liter bottle of Pepsi for the drinks, and a brownie and a chocolate cookie for dessert.



Another one of my perfect school lunches would consist of pizza, broccoli for the main course, with 2 liters of Coke to drink and a brownie and some chips for dessert. I chose this menu for lunch because everyone likes pizza.

The lunch would cost \$2.50. In my opinion, the country that has the best lunch is China because their lunch has meat and I can't live without meat.

I chose this menu because everyone needs protein in at least one meal a day. I also chose this menu because not everyone likes the traditional school lunch.

Be Alert! Accidents Hurt



By Col Shala
Tusker Tribune Staff

Today, I'm going to be talking about how I had a bike race between my cousin Lindon and me.

I had just gotten a new bike for my birthday, and I really wanted to show it off because it was a bike with gears. Before this, Lindon and I only had one-speed bikes with no fancy add-ons.

When he saw this new bike, he got jealous. "If your bike is so good, why don't you race me with it?" he asked.

I accepted the challenge, and, soon, I was winning with a 20-foot lead, mocking him. But I wasn't paying attention, so I didn't see the "downhill" sign in front of me and I didn't know that on this bike, you don't peddle backwards to stop. So I was going really fast and I crashed into a bush, with my bike completely gone, and me 20 yards into a forest.

I managed to find my bike in another bush, and came out to the main road. I was completely fine, but there were 30 sticks in my bike that reminded me about how being cocky caused me to crash.



A Hard Lesson to Learn on a Quad



By Col Shala
Tusker Tribune Staff

Hi! My name is Col. In this story, I'm about seven years old and I got jealous of all my cousins knowing how to ride a quad. So one day, I asked my cousin Darien's dad if he could teach me how to ride a quad.

Now when I was learning this, my cousins used to have a track down by a chicken coop that was in an old farm that nobody took care of, so they made it a quad track.

My cousin Rilin had a small quad, and I was still young enough to use it, and so when Darien's dad was teaching me, he said that I should not keep pressing the gas pedal over and over again, since that would increase the chance of falling off.



"If you don't want to go fast, just press the gas lightly," he said.

So I did, but then I got a little curious and then said to myself, *what happens if I push this gas pedal all the way?*

The quad I was on was the most top-of-the-line quad, so when I pressed the gas all the way, it went from 10 mph to almost 50 mph really quickly. Of course, I flew off and the quad kept going into the forest until it hit a tree. Luckily, there was no damage done to the quad except for the fact that the plastic covering around it was scratched up a bit.

After that, I told myself I'm not going to learn to drive the quad until I'm 10.

NANOWRIMO Excerpt Part 2



By Akosua Adobea-Wiredu
Tusker Tribune Staff

Editor's Note: This is a continuation of Akosua's NANOWRIMO story. The first segment appeared in the November 5, 2021 issue of the Tusker Tribune.

I check the clock on the wall from the living room. It reads 1:38 am and I look at the rope. I'm kind of worried knowing that I haven't even finished Step 1 of my plan.

I look at Theo snoring on the bed and a smile appears on my face. He's the only one who has kept me sane through these weeks, but I have to go back to my normal life.

In one of Willow's episodes that I had witnessed, Willow was screeching off-key to Polo G's music while drinking a vodka. She must've been really drunk because she was jumping up and down on the only bed they had.

The bed split in two due to the intensity of Willow's jumping and the vodka bottle broke into many pieces. Willow was smart enough to know that I would use the shreds of glass as a way to break into the rope, so she cleaned up just about every speck of glass.

Not every speck, though. I saw a tiny piece of glass from the vodka bottle near the closet door I'm usually tied to. Thank God for Willow's drunk episodes.

That was three days ago and ever since then, I've been using that tiny shard to plan my whole escape. I made Theo more tired than ever

by annoying him with my usual questions. And I'm guessing Willow is sleeping heavily with those sleeping pills.

I shift my position to get closer to the shard and laugh maniacally. Okay maybe, that's a bit too exaggerative. I aggressively use my hands to reach to it and triumph silently when I do. I check to see if Theo's still asleep and give myself an okay to go when I see that he's still peacefully asleep.



I bend my hands backward so the tips of my fingers are touching the rope and I hold the piece of glass tightly. I start slitting the rope and raise my eyebrows in astonishment when I see the rope slowly disassembles. I continue the same motion until the the rope is fully fragmented.

Step one is fully complete. Now I just have to tip-toe and get Willow's special keys which are at end of the couch. I creak the door open in the slightest way where it won't wake up Theo. I slither through the door of the one tiny bedroom they share, to the living area that has a kitchen and bathroom as well in it, and scan the living room.

I scrutinize the couch as well and my body freezes as I witness a body that looks as lifeless as a rock and I start wheezing as I see blood spilling out of the eyes, nose, and arms. I look at the face and my eyes bulge in terror as I recognize the face to be... Willow.

I scream out Theo's name as loud as the heavens could hear and the last thing I saw was the pill bottle as I drop down to the ground.

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**.

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Have a Great Thanksgiving!
Next issue will be Friday, December 3.