



The Tusker Tribune



SOMERS MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWSPAPER

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Winter 2021

UnIqueneSs AwarEneSs WeeK

Editor's Note: Somers Middle School celebrated Uniqueness Awareness Week this week, focusing on acceptance and unity. Reporter Mischa Berek covered the various theme days that the week featured.



By Mischa Berek
Tusker Tribune Staff

Equality and Acceptance

Equality and acceptance are both important to our everyday lives. Equality is about making sure that everyone has a chance to be themselves without judging.

Acceptance is a way of making peace with



one another, a method to let yourself grow to become a better person.

These two topics can help everyone be happier and make our lives better. If only everybody can show a little equality and ac-

ceptance.

SMS students and Staff symbolized equality and acceptance by wearing rainbow shirts and other gear.

Hat Day!

Hat day is to show support for team and culture. Sometimes teamwork helps to show what your culture is. Like throwing parades for a special holiday. Chinese New Year for example, when you're doing the dragon dance you need more than one person to hold up the dragon itself. Teamwork can be fun and make you a better person. This is the point of us having hat day.



Continued on Page 5

A NaNoWriMo Excerpt

Editor's Note: The excerpt you're reading is part of a NaNoWriMo piece written by 8th grader Emma Gordon that won a Gold Key Award from the Alliance for Young Artists and Writers Writopia Lab.



By Emma Gordon
Tusker Tribune Staff

Chapter 1 Mark: Fire, Air, Water, and... Cereal?

"I just don't get it. Why would Al Menti need his face on a box of frozen pizza?" I asked Gordon, first adjusting my glasses to make sure that what I was really seeing- Al Menti's face on a frozen pizza- was true. Then, I hastily shoved the box back with the other Al Menti faces. All of them stared back at me from all the other boxes in the bright, icy freezer that hurt my eyes and sent a chill into my face; fogging up my glasses.

"It's for publicity!" Gordon snapped back. But honestly, what was I expecting? Everyone



and their grandma (well, their grandma probably either is afraid of him or doesn't care) knows that Gordon's been obsessed with the well-known "Allementi" Al Menti (he's

faking it, I know it, if he really was an Allementi, he would be protecting the world from people like Ryan, not showing off his newest clothing line). And Izzy is obsessed too. For other, creepier reasons...

Anyway, back to the matter at hand; fighting with my brother.

"Why would an Allementi need publicity?" I retorted, for the billionth time.

He sighed and started to try to organize the frozen pizzas squashed together in the freezer, "How about you just go to the cereal aisle with Izzy and Lara to pick out your breakfast tomorrow, and I'll clean this up and get what we needed here?" he insisted, giving up in the never-ending argument over Al Menti- typical Earthi behavior.

Continued on Page 3

A Kidnapper Has a Change Of Heart



**By Anelise Bobadilla
Tusker Tribune Staff**

My phone lit and began to buzz. It was an unknown number. I had a dentist appointment the other day so I thought it was that. But it was not. It sounded like a strong mean man saying to come meet him at 63 Eastwood Clark Lane.

I knew I should not go, but for some reason, I did. I looked it up on my GPS and found that it was a house in the middle of the woods.

My parents were out of town for some job interview, so they did not know I was here. The only person near me is my 90-year-old grandma, who sits on her rocking chair and knits all day. So, I was on my own.

It took me about 30 minutes to get to the destination. It was dark and all I heard were owls and weird animals in bushes. The house looked like it was falling apart. I knocked but no one answered. I knocked a second time and the man named Nick grabbed me and told me if I screamed, I would regret it. He told me he works for this man named Peter, but he did not tell me why he works for him. I already had an idea in my head though.

Nick kidnapped me and kept me in his house for 3 days. My parents came home and saw I was missing. Later, I was all over the news saying I was missing. After 1 month of me being in that house with him, he was starting to be a little nicer to me. He told me I could finally go outside and go for a walk. Then, something very unexpected happened. Nick, who kidnapped me, told me he quit his job with Peter—the man who was giving Nick money to kidnap me. He told me he quit his job because he felt bad, he knew I had a family.

Finally, I was able to go back home.



Editor's Note: This is the last installment of stories written based on the writer's prompts listed below:

- *I should have been in school that day.*
- *We are what we pretend to be, so we must be careful about what we pretend to be.*
- *They're asking me to remember.*
- *It was a bright cold day in April and the clocks were striking 13.*
- *It began on the night we died on the Kamikaze roller coaster.*



- *The days of the week meant nothing to him.*
- *I am not a category.*
- *Of all the things that I have ever been afraid of, my computer terrified me the most.*
- *All my life, I've been an out-cast and a freak.*
- *Imagine you are alone when a smiley, happy clown appears.*
- *It was a nice day for a funeral.*
- *I only went there once.*
- *I wish I could tell you why.*
- *I keep the things that scare me secret.*
- *I'm filled with hope.*
- *My phone lit and began to buzz.*

A Clownish April Fool Prank



**By Frank Illuzzi
Tusker Tribune Staff**

I am alone in my house. I am preparing lunch. I look out the window because I hear a loud laugh. I have a strange feeling that someone is watching me.

I look around and see nothing. I finish preparing my food. As I am eating my lunch in peace, I hear another laugh from outside.

I run to the door and I look outside and I see a trail of bright red hair strands on the floor. I follow the trail of red hair and see three laughing clowns in a shed behind my house and I get freaked out. So I say, "What are you doing here???"

The clowns say, "We are here to scare you"!!! The clowns pull me into the shed and they start making a weird laugh.

I am confused so I pull off the mask of one of the clowns and realize they are my neighbors.

It hit me it was April 1.



NaNoWriMo

From Page 1

"I don't need breakfast tomorrow-" I whined but was interrupted by his Brown angry glare that any overprotective older brother (even if only older by an hour) would be proud of. No, one that any overprotective *Mother* would be proud of.

"Fine." I groaned, shoved my hands in my pockets, and started dragging my feet toward the cereal aisle. And hey, maybe I could go unnoticed straight to the school supplies aisle instead! With all the different colored pens, just begging me to buy them!

I just need to make sure that Izzy doesn't notice me as I walk past.

If Lara notices me... not that big of a deal, actually! She couldn't care less. Izzy, on the other hand, couldn't care more.

Okay, I just need to rush past the cereal aisle filled to the brim with unhealthy brain rotting sugar cereals, to the next one with the school supplies. I just need to go really quickly to not be noticed, and go-

"MARK!" Darn it. "I CAN'T REACH MY CHARMY CRUNCHIES! THE DUMB PEOPLE WHO WORK HERE ALWAYS PUT THEM ON THE TOP."

"Izzy, shut up!" I whisper-shouted so the people in the store would stop staring at us. "Nobody in the store needs to hear about your obsession with sugary unhealthy cereals."

"Fine then, how about you stop being mad at me and go do something useful," she started instructing me, as if I had started this argument in the first place. "Go get Gordon so he can reach this cereal for me- he's pretty tall."

"What? I can totally reach that!"

"If I can't reach it Mark, you can't either. I am older than you."

"By fourteen minutes!" I interrupted, "Besides, I'm still taller than you."

"No! I'm 5'6"!"

"What do you mean, I'm 5'6"!"

"What, no! You're 5'5", I'm -"

Before Izzy could finish, however, she was interrupted by the Charmy Crunchies taking a plunge and nearly hitting her on the head. We looked around to see how that happened and we saw Lara sitting on the floor behind us, reading "A History of Airi". Oh, right, we nearly forgot that she was here. She's an Airi, so having air powers allows her to, well... smack people with cereal boxes while barely lifting a finger, I guess?

"You're welcome," she mumbled, getting back to her book.

"Jeez, and I thought Mark was the only nerd around here," she muttered under her breath, but loud enough so I could hear; and so that it could annoy me.

"Izzy, just because I have glasses doesn't mean-"

"Whatever," she interrupted me. "What book even is it this time?" she teasingly asked, picking her cereal box up off the floor and then looking over Lara's shoulder to get a glimpse of the book; blocking the pages with her shoulder-length curly brown hair, "A History of Airi? More like a History of *boringness*."

"No Izzy, it's actually really interesting; it even has a chapter about how the early Airis figured out how to fly, and-"

"Oh please, what can you learn from that dumb book that you can't learn from our skill?" Izzy asked, lowering the book so her and Lara were eye to eye.

"Well, none of you are Airi, so- IZZY!" Suddenly, a tiny flame started right where Izzy's hand just was. Oh great, Izzy set the book on fire. That's what she gets for being an arrogant Firei.

"Sorry, it's just so hard to control such awesome powers!"

"Mark, do something!" Lara hissed, holding out the book as far away from her as she could.

Okay, you got this, Mark. Try out that new move you've been trying to get where you shoot water from your index finger (maybe soon enough I'll get to do it from my middle finger; now that would be useful!) Just focus, and-

"Hey, I did it!" The water started slowly faceting out from my finger. I put it over the little fire on the book. It shouldn't get the book too wet...

"You're doing great, Mark! Just be careful..." Lara instructed slowly, holding the book out.

Just be careful, and... "WHOOSH!" Suddenly, the water started streaming out more dramatically. Now gushing out and making the book wet enough to use as a giant book-like wipe.

"Mark, make it stop!" Lara screeched; her voice was nearly inaudible. She quickly pulled the book away from the waterfall now pouring out from my finger.

"I don't know how to!" I screamed over the water, gushing from my finger.

Continued on Page 4



NaNoWriMo

From Page 3

Izzy sighed, "These Wateri Just keep getting more and more uncontrollable!" she shouted over the gushing water.

"You should be one to talk!" I growled through clenched teeth, pointing my finger at her; making her as wet as the book. "You're the one who set the book on fire in the first place!"

"WHAT THE HECK IS GOING ON!" Gordon roared from the end of the aisle. So much for trying not to cause attention, the entire store went from chitter-chattering throughout the store and babies crying, to everyone—including the babies- staring at us in dead silence.

They all observed our spectacle; and with Izzy and Lara sopping wet, and Lara clutching the wet book to her chest; along with the water now slowly dripping out of my finger like a leaky faucet, it was... quite the spectacle.

A Note from the Author, Emma Gordon:

The excerpt that you just read wasn't from a published book sold to the public; it was actually from my NaNoWriMo, Allementi (All-eh-ment-eye, NOT All-eh-ment-ee). You probably have heard of NaNoWriMo before, whether you have written one or are going to in the next year or two. But if you haven't, NaNoWriMo is basically something you do in eighth grade ELA when you write a novel in a month. Might seem challenging?

Well, it's actually doable. And I was even able to win an award for it.

Right before November -National Novel Writing Month- my ELA teacher, Mrs. Reynolds, told us to start coming up with ideas for our NaNoWriMo. I already knew exactly what mine was going to be about; four siblings that have different elemental powers -water, air, fire, and earth- whose older brother is an Allementi, someone who has all four elemental powers, which is half the time something to be afraid of, and half the time something to be celebrated.

Anyway, on November 1st, I set a goal of 12,000 words for myself and started writing. By November 30th- the last day we had to reach our word goal- I greatly exceeded that goal... but was nowhere near finished with the story that I had planned. So, I kept writing into the month of December.

Which brings this story to December 7th; when Mrs. Reynolds announced to us that there was a writing competition called the Scholastic Writing Awards that we could submit our novels or other writing and art works to starting in 8th grade if we wanted to. So, since my novel was still nowhere near finished, what did I do to get to that

deadline? Did I just go as far as I could and submit unfinished? No way Jose! I worked on that novel every free moment I had until finally... I got to my ending on December 15th, the day it was due. I printed out and submitted the forms, sent in my work, and then waited for the results.

By the end of January -January 28th to be exact- an email came in with the link to the list of people who won awards. I scrolled the list for my name, hoping I just got something; that I was at least on that list. And I looked through the list and...my name wasn't there. Oh wait! There it was! In the section of people whose last names started with "G". I looked next to my name and it said I got...A Gold Key Award! Wait, what was a gold key award? I scrolled back up to the top and it read said that 104 Gold Keys are awarded to

the most accomplished works! I couldn't believe it! I not only got an award, but I got the best award that you could get out of the main 3: Gold Key Award, Silver Key Award, and Honorable Mention. And it even said that all Gold Key Award Recipients would get their work submitted to the national level!

Plus, everybody who got an award (not everyone got one) was also invited to an awards ceremony! That may all already seem like enough of a dream come true for a writer, right? Well, a few weeks later, I even got another award! The Village Bookstore Award, given to 7 middle school Gold Key Award winners in the Hudson-to-Housatonic Region. Plus, I even got \$50 from it (They haven't actually given the \$50 to me yet, though)! I couldn't believe it at all! I felt like I was truly a terrific writer!

Anyway, in the beginning of March was finally the Awards Ceremony -which I also had to submit a 10 second video about myself to- and they had some speakers there, and even an author that had helped judge everyone's work.

People from all over the country were watching this ceremony, where they even announced my name and title of my book as part of announcing the winners of the Village Bookstore Award. They pronounced the title of my novel wrong, but I still felt very special and like a lot of people had read and really enjoyed my work.

Overall, I do not regret submitting my work to the Scholastic Writing Awards one bit, the opposite really; I would've regretted it if I didn't submit my work to it. I was just looking for my writing to be seen by other people, and I ended up also getting money, awards, even a little pin, and possibly more awards to be announced! I definitely would recommend somebody who loves to write or even make art to submit their work to this competition- whether you like to draw or paint, or write poems or plays or short stories, I would definitely recommend submitting your work and letting people see your talent!



UnIqUeneSs

From Page 1

St. Patrick's Day

Happy St. Patrick's Day! This day is the death date of Saint Patrick. Saint Patrick was one of the saints of Ireland who also banished all the snakes from Ireland. This saint introduced Catholic Christianity to the country. This is what St. Patrick's Day is about.



Show Unity

Unity means to be together or with someone. Sometimes we all could use a little bit of unity, someone to talk to or just hang out with. This day is also about promoting progress for



peace. To do this it requires you to consider yourself and others. It's good to care about these things, you can also make new friends in the process.

Pajama Day!

It's pajama day! A day wear you can be yourself. Pajamas sometimes show the best of you and the time when you're most sleepy. It's when everyone sees you in your own skin! Everyone has pjs, possibly with food stains. Happy Pajama Day everyone!



SOMERS MIDDLE SCHOOL UNIQUENESS WEEK 2020-2021



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SOMERS MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWSPAPER

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NEWSPAPER CLUB



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