

The Tusker Tribune

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Spring 2019

Living History Day A Rousing Success



It was perfect weather for the Annual Living History Day on Wednesday, May 22. The reenactors left memorable experiences for all who attended the various events.

Studies: Homework May Do More Harm Than Good



**By Christopher Gardner
Tusker Tribune Staff**

There is a large debate in schools on whether students spending too much time on homework.

The short answer is yes.

Homework is supposed to give students a reminder of what happened in class and make sure you understand it. However, homework can also reduce the amount of free time students have. This can reduce time students have for hobbies, sports teams, bonding with family, and visiting friends.

It's very important for students to have a balance between school and relaxing. Spending too much time on homework can lead to students resenting school and losing interest and motivation.



Studies have also shown that too much homework can be very unhealthy, making students feel stressed and burnt out. In a study by Healthline, more than 56% of students say that homework is a major reason they stress about school.

According to research done by the New York Times, spending more than 120 minutes on homework is unhealthy. On average, students spend anywhere from 1-3.5 hours on homework.

In conclusion, I believe that students should be given less homework. Students should not be feeling stressed, do other important things, and are spend less time on homework.

An Open Letter About the Syrian Refugee Crisis

Editor's Note: This letter was written by 8th grader Andrew Tatela as part of the 8th Grade ELA Social Action Project, where 8th graders choose a global or domestic social issue and come up with a plan for addressing it.



Andrew Tatela
c/o Tricia Baldes
250 Route 202
Somers, NY 10589

March 22, 2019

Dean Pappas
250 Route 202
Somers, NY 10589



Dear Mr. Pappas,

I am writing this to bring awareness to a human rights issue. The crisis of Syrian refugees and their lack of access to education in the countries they seek sanctuary in, and how that affects the future. I am addressing you specifically because I know you can bring this issue to the attention of the school through the *Tusker Tribune*. I am passionate about this situation because I believe education is one of the most important things a person can receive, for the benefit of themselves and others. If one does not even have access to it, they are missing out on a plethora of opportunities. What concerns me is that many refugees of the Syrian war are in a position where they cannot receive an education, and that should be changed.

Of all the refugees from Syria, only about half are even in primary school. So many of them do not have access to supplies or schooling in general in the countries they take refuge in. This is a violation of one of the basic human rights set out by the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights: the right to a free and compulsory education. The education that these children are missing out on is vital to ensure their future opportunities to prosper, gain employment, and be self-sufficient. It will also be much more challenging for them to contribute to society and the world without an education. I feel that these children are missing a very important opportunity, and that is not ok.

Not only are the children not receiving an education, but they are also traumatized by what they have fled from: war. The Syrian civil war has an immense effect on the children's psyche. They are losing homes and family members to the frequent bombings. This causes detrimental psychological damage to kids. Many develop depression, PTSD, or lose the ability to speak from the stress. No child should have to go through that, and I find it disheartening that thousands of children must endure it. Once they have escaped, providing them with an education can introduce stability and a sense of normalcy in the children's lives that they are missing, and hopefully heal their minds.

Things are being done about this problem, but it is not enough. Groups such as the Regional Refugee & Resilience Plan that support formal education for children, report that their funding is not sufficient to keep with the needs of the region. If organizations like the RRRP or UNICEF receive more money through donations, they can continue to for the improvement of these children's lives. These associations can contribute to the well-being and education of Syrian refugee children by volunteering to build schools in countries like Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan, where lots of refugees flee to. They can also donate school supplies to those that need them. These charities need the support and donations to continue doing what I believe is honorable work.

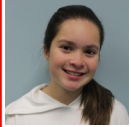
I am hoping that you will submit this letter to the *Tusker Tribune* (with revisions to make it more like an article,) so as to bring awareness to this problem, possibly spark interest in it or convince people to donate to charities for it. Some might say that these refugees and their education is not high priority, but I disagree. These children are pivotal to the future of the world. They, along with all other children will be the ones making decisions and progress. If they are not educated, we will be much worse off as a whole. We will have hundreds of thousands of traumatized, unschooled people instead of secure members of society, able to contribute.

Overall, the issue of Syrian refugees' access to education is a glaring one that will send ripples through the future on the planet. I hope that with this letter I can bring attention to the problem. If the psychological damage done to these children isn't healed and they aren't provided with schooling, then the planet will have a lot more people that cannot contribute to society or support themselves.

Thank you for your time.

Andrew Tatela

A Hero Veteran's Story



By Natalia Tellez
Tusker Tribune Staff

On May 22nd, it was Living History Day at Somers Middle School for seventh graders. 6th grade social studies classes went and got a chance to speak and learn from some wonderful veterans. Students learned about submarines, past wars, and even



some of the veteran's stories and lives. One of the veterans was called Edmund Cook and, in this article, you will learn his amazing story.

Edmund Cook was born in Lithuania, which was occupied by Germany, and sadly separated from his family during World War 2.

He and a few other kids under the same circumstances were living on the streets for at least one year, all at age four. Barely four years alive and they were stealing food, finding leftovers in dumpsters, and finding shelter in bombed out buildings.

One day the little kids were trying to steal food once more when an American soldier caught them. At first Edmund thought the soldier would punish them. After all, all he had seen growing up was death. Instead, the soldier pulled out a piece of chocolate and that small action changed his life.



During his presentation, Edmund Cook said that he owed his life to that soldier and that from that day forward everything went uphill for him. He then went to a Red Cross Camp and five years later, he was adopted by a family. Edmund learned English and went on to get a master's degree from Fordham University.



After that, he went back to his hometown, Germany, and served in the Army for a little while. When Ed came back, he joined several veteran's center and helped soldiers suffering from PTSD from the Iraq war, collected clothes for veterans, helped out veterans in need of medical treatment, and overall worked tirelessly for every veteran. Then, for the past 30 years, Edmund Cook has participated in the Boys State Program for Ossining Post 506 American Legion where he inspires high school boys.

Overall, Edmund Cook's story certainly wasn't an easy one, but it comes to show, just like the amazing veteran visitor told us, that no matter what, if you don't give up, you can make a difference. Just like Edmund Cook did.

Honoring our Military Heroes



By EvaMarie Mastrantoni
Tusker Tribune Staff

Have you ever wondered what is the difference between **Memorial Day** and **Veterans Day**? Each one of these holidays honors a different group of people that served in our military. Both Veterans Day and Memorial Day are national holidays where schools, banks, and the federal government are closed. But what is the difference between the two?

Memorial Day is celebrated on the last Monday in May. This year it was on May 27th, 2019. Memorial Day honors the people who died while serving in the military. Some of the customary traditions for Memorial Day are, attending a parade, decorating or putting a flag on a grave site, or remembering a soldier who you know or someone else knows. I attended Somers' Memorial Day parade this past weekend.

Town officials, veterans, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, baseball and softball teams, twirlers, and the Somers Lions participated in a parade from Somers Middle School to Ivanhoe Cemetery. At the cemetery, there were speeches, stories of war, and wreaths placed on the town's military monument.

Veterans Day is celebrated on November 11. This year, November 11 lands on a Monday. Veterans Day honors everyone who served in the military, even the ones who died while serving. Some of the customary traditions for Veterans Day are, buying or wearing a poppy flower, thanking veterans that you see or know, or attending a parade to honor all the veterans in the world.



So, now you know the difference between Memorial Day and Veterans Day. Any way you celebrate, you honor men and women who serve in our military and who have fought for our freedoms. They are equally important holidays and days of honor.

Did you know there is even a third holiday honoring people in our military? Yup, it's **Armed Forces Day**. Armed Forces Day is observed on May 18th and it honors anyone currently serving in our military. While it is a national holiday, our schools and government offices are open. Makes me think... shouldn't Armed Forces Day be as big of a celebration as the other two? What do you think?



It's Not Too Early to Plan Winter Snowboarding!



By Jessica Rosenberg
Tusker Tribune Staff

Snowboarding is a recreational activity and Winter Olympic and fun sport that includes going down a snow-covered mountain, hill, or slope while standing on a snowboard that is on both of your feet.

Snowboarding was inspired by skateboarding, sledding, surfing and skiing. Snowboarding began in 1965. The creator of snowboarding was Tom Sims. It was first included in the 1998 Winter Olympics in Nagano, Japan. Snowboarding was one of five new sports or disciplines added to the Winter Olympic program between 1992 and 2002. The top 10 places are: (With places associated with the mountain-where to go if you want to go there or learn about it.)

#10 Keystone—Colorado

The resort spread across three mountain peaks has 20 lifts and two gondolas shuttling boarders to more than 3,000 acres of terrain. As and on top of that, Keystone is only an hour-and-a-half ride from Denver International Airport, so you can spend more time riding and less time traveling.

keystoneresort.com

#9 Vail—Colorado

Vail's 5,200 acres of skiable terrain and large terrain park attracts athletes from all over the world—and that includes some of the best boarders. From endless bowls on the back of the mountain to the three halfpipes and 12 runs in the terrain park, Vail has something for boarders of every level, regardless of their riding style. I have been here and it's a lot of fun.

vail.com

#8 Mount Baker—Washington

Set in the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, this mountain is as wild as its roots. With an average annual snowfall of 641 inches, Mt. Baker is one of the snowiest mountains in the world; a major draw for powder hounds—someone who likes a lot of snow. The mountain also hosts an awesome snowboard race.

mtbaker.us

#7 Aspen/ Snowmass—Colorado

Between these two Colorado mountains, there's enough terrain, park and powder to satisfy any boarder. While Aspen mountain maintains its classic challenging terrain, Snowmass offers almost 4,500 vertical feet with all the bells and whistles. You won't run out of terrain here, but when you're worn out for the day the après ski scene is top-notch.

aspensnowmass.com

#6 Stratton—Vermont

Quality snow, well-maintained trails and 5 terrain parks make Stratton a top pick for boarders. One of the best and biggest in Vermont, Stratton was the first mountain to allow snowboarders in 1983 and the mountain was also the first to offer snowboarding lessons. Stratton has been called the birthplace of snowboarding and it's certainly worth a visit this season. Even three decades after initially opening the slopes to boarders, Stratton is a snowboarding haven full of history and if you're into the competitive side of snowboarding, catch the U.S. Open live on Stratton's slopes. I was also here, and it is so pretty. It was so much fun, and I hope to go back here someday.

stratton.com

#5 Whistler Blackcomb—Canada

Whistler Blackcomb took the number one spot on our best ski resorts list this year and it's not hard to see why. This wildly popular ski area is made up of two side-by-side mountains, which combined provide the most boarding terrain on the continent. Each of the mountains offer astounding vertical drops, 16 alpine bowls, more than 200 marked trails and six different terrain parks. Add the average 458 inches of pure dry powder annually and you've got the recipe for perfect days out on the mountain. Consider the incredible backcountry terrain, the après amenities and the Peak-2-Peak Gondola and this mountain is hard to beat. This was my favorite trip. I went with my family friends and they left in the middle, but it was so much fun, and I would never change that experience.

whistlerblackcomb.com



Continued on Page 5

End of Year Calendar!

June 3rd:	8 th Grade Science Exam
June 5th:	Chorus/Orchestra Concert
June 5th:	½ day for students
June 6th & 7th:	Earth Science Lab
June 7th:	Mentoring Breakfast
June 12th:	ALP Trip to NYC
June 13th:	8 th Grade Dinner Dance
June 14th:	8 th Lake Compounce Trip
June 17th:	6 th Grade Field Trip
June 18th:	Rain date for Splashdown Trip
June 19th:	Algebra Regents
June 20th:	Earth Science Regents
June 21st:	Geometry Regents
June 21st:	7 th Grade Splashdown Trip
June 21st:	8 th Grade Graduation Practice
June 24th-26th:	½ day of school for students

June 24th:	FLACS Exam
June 24th:	6 th & 7 th Grades SS and Science Final exams
June 25th:	6 th Grade ELA and Math exam
June 25th:	7 th Grade Math and World Language exams
June 25th:	8 th Grade Graduation @2:00pm
June 26th:	Last Day of School – ½ day (11:30am dismissal)



Snowboard

From Page 4

#4 Northstar California Resort—California

This Lake Tahoe mountain is a standout for intermediate downhill boarders and park rats alike. With a total of 7 terrain parks and 97 downhill trails (with 60 percent of those marked intermediate) Northstar is the place to take your riding to the next level. Experts shouldn't dismiss the seemingly easy terrain; there are challenges and access to backcountry terrain is a short hike away. northstarcalifornia.com

#3 Breckenridge—Colorado

Four terrain parks, two halfpipes and 187 trails lie within Breck's 2,908 acres of skiable terrain. Boarders can expect plenty of intermediate and expert terrain on this classic Colorado mountain (which hosts the Dew Tour) and when the riding is done for the night the après scene has its own gems to offer. breckenridge.com

#2 Schweitzer—Idaho

The largest ski resort in Idaho is among the best on the continent for boarders. Chutes and

bowls abound on 2,900 acres, not to mention some of the best tree skiing in the country and the view is almost as stellar as the terrain. Overlooking Lake Pend Oreille, Schweitzer is in a prime spot to collect 300 inches of snow annually and the powder doesn't just serve the downhill boarders. The 50-acre Stomping Grounds Terrain Park has something for every level rider.

schweitzer.com



#1 Mammoth Mountain—California

Mammoth is a snowboarder's mecca. The tallest ski mountain in California is home to 3,500 acres of snow-covered terrain—and an average of 400 inches of powder annually—and though the mountain is great for beginners, you won't have to look hard for challenging trails. If the park is your scene, Mammoth is the place to be. An astounding

total of nine terrain parks sprawl out over 100 acres. Those parks are home to three different sized halfpipes, one of which is among the biggest in the world—no other resort in North America has a better variety of halfpipes. With an incredibly long season (November to June, typically) and the perfect combination of sun and snow, Mammoth is a perfect spot for boarders of all backgrounds.

mammothmountain.com

Hip-Hop's Hottest 12-Year-Old Influencer



**By Noah Volkman
Tusker Tribune
Staff**

Record labels are always looking for new and innovative ways to promote their acts. From dance challenges to viral memes, anything is on the table when it comes to breaking an artist's music – even asking a 12-year-old for some help.

Seth Vangeldren, a social media influencer with over 600,000 followers on Instagram. His videos dancing to songs have raked in millions of views – and it's quite lucrative. His manager told Rolling Stone Magazine, "we've had six-figure deals so far...It's basically for campaign things, like helping roll out new singles or singles that may've already been released by making one or two Triller videos."

Seth's dancing first went viral in February 2017 during a high school basketball game. The video of him dancing was posted to social media spreading like wildfire, being retweeted over 50,000 times. He built up a following on the popular lip-syncing app TikTok but eventually settled on a similar called Triller. TikTok, Triller and Dub-smash are turning songs into hits – like Lil Nas X's "Old Town Road" and Ava Max's "Not Your Barbie Girl" – something I covered earlier this school year.

He's received a number of co-signs – like joining Rich The Kid on stage at Rolling Loud

and most recently revealing that Drake is following him. Labels working with influencers to help songs go viral is part of artist development – something covered in an interview with Rostrum Records VP of A&R Nicole Plantin about in mid-April.

She said, "The conversation, "Oh, this artist went viral, it was organic." Which no, most of the time and often, that's not the case.

And it's not just Seth pushing songs – there are hundreds of other influencers doing the same exact thing. For instance, Chicago rapper Calboy's track "Envy Me" became a top 40 hit on the back of the #NayahXTweaking challenge. She spoke in an interview about it starting it in February.

Nayah said, "when I heard it I was like, "Oh I can dance, I can snap to that..." and

then like, I just basically went off after that. I just made moves comprehended to the sound." It's unclear whether or not Cal paid Nayah for the promotion, but Seth reportedly gets offered up to \$1,000 for a track. When it's all said and done, Seth says he doesn't want a career in the music industry – instead telling Rolling Stone that he wants to work for NASA and go to space. Until then, he'll keep dancing his way onto your feed.

Editor's Note: Click on this link for a video of Seth dancing at a Spruce Creek, AK high school basketball game:

<http://www.viewpure.com/WLps8c03NxQ?start=0&end=0>



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