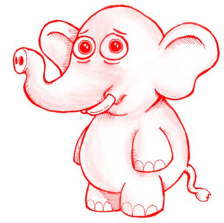


The Tusker Tribune

The Student Newspaper of Somers Middle School



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Winter 2018

SMS Food Drive 2018 Update



By Juliana Spano
Tusker Tribune Staff

Did you know that 200,000 people in Westchester County go hungry each day? Isn't that a crazy statistic!

It's sad that 200,000 people in our county are going hungry, but the Somers Central School District is here to help all those in need. For the past three weeks, our Advisory classes at SMS have been collecting food to donate to the Westchester Food Bank. The other three schools in our district are also collecting food donations.

This is the school's 26th Annual District-wide Food Drive. Over the years the Somers Central School District has collected over 1,000 pounds of food and several thousand dollars' worth of food, all of which is donated to the Westchester



Feeding the Community

Food Bank and that's why it's so important to donate because we want to keep our reputation as a school that gives back.

Next week is the last week to donate, so keep bringing food! The Advisory class that donates the most food wins a celebratory breakfast from Dunkin' Donuts for the students and coffee for the teacher.

The 6th grade classes in the lead are Mrs. Dulyk's class in first, Mrs. Bieber's class in second and Mrs. Schettino's class in third. The 7th grade classes in the lead are Mr. Pappas' class in first, Ms. Crispo's class in second and Mrs. Foglia's class in third. Finally, the 8th grade classes in the lead are Mrs. Holt's class in first, Mrs. Valez in second and Mr. Perillo's class in third.

So please help by bringing non-perishable food items such as canned food, pasta, oatmeal, peanut butter, etc. You can bring the items to your advisory teacher not just on Wednesday but any day during the week.

Important Lessons from Lockdown Drill



By Ezra Weinstein
Tusker Tribune Staff

Somers Middle School is a safe learning environment but, unexpected scenarios can occur.

An example of an unexpected scenario is a "lockdown". A lockdown is when an intruder enters the building who could possibly be a threat to us. Every once in a while, the school holds drills to practice lock down procedure in case this ever happens.

On Monday, a schoolwide lockdown drill was held in the morning. During a drill, students should remain quiet and move quickly. Halls are cleared and students shelter in classrooms with the lights out and the doors locked.

It's a different story if you're in the cafeteria or auditorium, however. Even though



Weinstein's Wisdom

you're supposed to remain quiet and move quickly, some students in my grade who were in the cafeteria and auditorium when the drill was announced did the opposite.

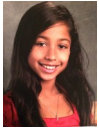
Instead of staying quiet and moving quickly, they were loud and pushed people around. Fortunately, a lot of the other students, kept calm and followed directions of teachers and staff. The reason keeping quiet and moving quickly is a big deal is because if an intruder is actually in the building and sees us or hears us, we can be in huge danger.

Some students don't think this is a big deal because there is a very slim chance it can happen. My tennis coach always tells me "Always expect the worst". The only reason we have lockdown drills is because there are people in the world that do crazy things or are mentally ill and aren't even aware of what they are doing.

It might seem like there is more bad than good but, if you are positive you can bring out the good in the world.



Aly Raisman's Empowering Message



**By Julia Wilkinson
Tusker Tribune Staff**

There are so many inappropriate things out in the world. One of them is sexual abuse. I would never think that something that bad would be in something so good. Like the sport of gymnastics.

My parents tried to keep me away from this. Every parent would. It is just so harsh and cruel, and it should never have been in the human race. But it is. Parents try to keep those harsh inappropriate things away from their kids as long as possible. Though sometimes, it just gets to a point when it gets in the way. Like when something they love gets involved with it.

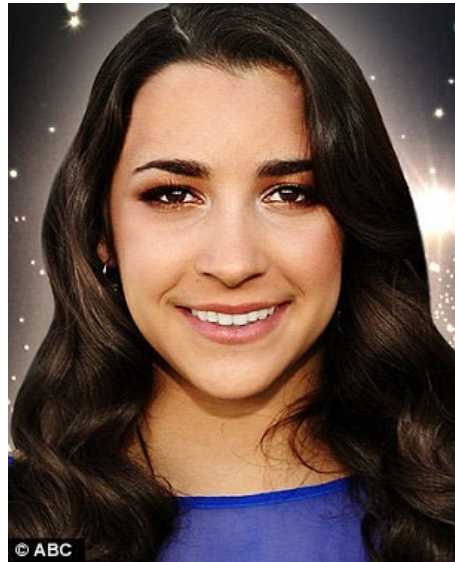
For me, gymnastics got involved. I am on the Dynamic Gymnastics 2017-18 Level 7 US-AG (USA gymnastics) team. So, gymnastics is a pretty big thing in my life. I follow events online, in magazines, everywhere. But some things I didn't understand, or really knew much about.

It started the year after the Olympics at the Elite Gymnastic P&G Championships, when I was watching the Championships on live TV. The Final Five (2016's USA Olympic Winning Team) was watching in the stands.

The team consisted of Gabrielle Douglas (2012 Olympic All Around Champion), Madison Kocian (2016 Olympic Uneven Bars Silver Medalist), Laurie Hernandez (2016 Olympic Balance Beam Silver Medalist), Simone Biles (2016 Olympic Vault Gold Medalist, Balance Beam Bronze Medalist, Floor Exercise Gold Medalist, All Around Champion), and Aly Raisman (2012 Olympic Balance Beam Bronze Medalist, Floor Exercise Gold Medalist, 2016 Olympic Floor Exercise Silver Medalist, All Around Silver Medalist).

While the camera was fixed on them speculating, the commentators mentioned an odd thing. *Aly Raisman is representing USAG gymnasts and stopping sexual abuse.*

Oh. I thought. *What's that?* I aimlessly ignored it and continued on watching the event. More recently, last week I was training at Club Fit Jefferson Valley's pool, and glanced at the TVs



by the gym. On the screen, I noticed Aly Raisman performing a speech in a courtroom. *Funny* I thought.

But the very next day, I discovered what Aly was saying at the courtroom, what the commentators had meant that the Championship, and more importantly, what had been going on, for thirty years.

Fifty four-year-old Larry Nassar was the USA Gymnastics National Team Doctor, Michigan State Team Doctor, and the United States Olympic Team Doctor. The first report of Nassar's abuse was 30 years ago, in 1998. His criminal acts continued for many years, manipulating gymnast after gymnast.

Aly Raisman was at a gymnastics competition in Australia about a year before the 2012 Olympic Games when Nassar was recommended to treat her aches. Nassar took advantage of the mandatory treatments, and made Aly and countless others feel uncomfortable.

As uncomfortable as it was, Nassar told the girls that it was necessary to heal the pain. So the girls bit back their objections and let Nassar continue. No one spoke up about it, because he was a doctor. Children have been taught at a young age to trust doctors, so why won't they trust an Olympic Team Doctor?

The "survivors" of Nassar's actions were heard discussing the issue by a coach in a training camp in Texas. That's when Aly realized what Nassar had been doing the entire time. Manipulating thousands of gymnasts.

Evidentially, Aly was destined to do great things. Go to the Olympics in London. Go to the Olympics *again* in Rio. Speak up for the survivors of Nassar's abuse. The speech she presented in the courtroom at Nassar's trial was a victim impact statement against him. She delivered a powerful speech, talking about how Nassar manipulated gymnasts, and how gymnasts were still strong, and thriving, and reaching for their dreams.

After Aly's speech, and the speeches of hundreds of other gymnasts, Nassar was sentenced to a lifetime in prison.

Continued on page 6

The World Ends Next Tuesday



**By Olivia Biolsi
Tusker Tribune Staff**

Imagine this: a total stranger walks up to you on the sidewalk and says, "Hey! How's yer day goin'?" Well, guess what! It doesn't matter anymore 'cause the world ends next Tuesday!"

What would your first thought be? *Get out of my way, crackpot.* Then the little 5-year-old inside you would stop and consider the guy for a split second. *Wait. What if he's telling the truth!?* *Mooooommy!*

Your train of thought would then crash and burn with the simple solution that this guy escaped from a hospital for crazy psychopaths somewhere and that you should keep on walking down the street as if nothing happened.

So just for a minute, assume the psychopath hospital didn't exist and that this random guy was telling the truth. What would you *do*? If the world really was about to end, would you book a flight to Disney World or invent a rocket to take you far, far away? Would you visit everyone you'd ever known and recite a well-planned farewell address? Or would you curl up into a ball and suck your thumb?

All good options, by the way.

Stories aren't one thing. In fact, there are so many kinds of them, I won't even try to list them. But the most important thing to remember about a story is that it can always come true. Even the ones with unicorn jellyhams.

This story could never ever ever come true though, probably. Just for the heck of it, though, read it and see what this particular perfectly completely totally normal person does in the face of death and total obliteration.

One perfectly completely totally normal day, you were out walking in the late afternoon sunshine. This guy comes up to you and smiles a toothy smile. "Guess what!" he says, "the world ends next Tuesday!"

You are at first a little taken aback by this remark. Quickly recovering, though, you carefully step around him and continue about your day as usual. But that night, as you lie in bed, your mind wanders. Everyone has that odd sensation where they feel as if their brain is sucking up all the things that happened that day and putting them

into dreams. That's what you feel as you slowly drift off. But an alarmingly clear picture of the man you saw earlier that day crops up in your vast sea of thoughts, and he won't go back under the surface. "The world ends next Tuesday!" he says.

You hardly sleep that night. Tossing and turning replaces the calm of an ordinary night. When the sun climbs high enough into the sky, just enough so that it peeks out shyly from behind a hill, you jump out of bed with a feeling you've never really had before (especially on a Monday morning). What is it... strength? Not really. Bad breath? Very likely, but far too common. Could it be... motivation? Yes! That's it!

You feel motivated in a way you never really have. If the world really was coming to an end, however unlikely, you weren't going sit in bed and watch the sun rise! You're going to get up and do the things you always say you'll do tomorrow.

First up: brush my teeth! Done.

Climb a mountain! Exhilarated, you barely stop to pack a bag and leap into your car. As you drive, you think about what it will feel like to have finally done the impossible and STOP being a procrastinator. Wow! You say to yourself, Today I'll finally climb a mountain.

You arrive at the foot of Mount Tall. Tirelessly you fight your way to the top and triumph over the world. "I DID IT!!!" you scream miraculously. In awe of your own victory you stand and breathe in the feeling of completion.

As you near the bottom of the mountain, your elation in having done what you'd always put off until the next day is boundless. Now you are eager to move on to bigger, better things! Seeing as the world is ending, why should you wait to go parachuting out of a jet?

You book the next fight on a 747 and fasten your parachute. Twenty minutes later, you're high in the air, plummeting to the ground at a million miles per hour! You pull your parachute and softly land on the grass.

Next up: become a gazjillionaire! All you have to do is be a good rapper. Soon you're living in a mansion with an ice cream stand in your bedroom.

Are you satisfied? Nope!





Scythe by Neal Shusterman

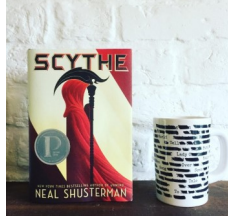


**By Max Harkins
Tusker Tribune Staff**

I have finished reading the book *Scythe* by Neal Shusterman. It is an odd book; it is in the future, science fiction, and about when the humans conquer death. There is no pain, sickness, or suffering.

The way we keep the population limited is the reason there are Scythes. Scythes are average people selected based on showing courage, justice and integrity in their everyday lives. Scythe's jobs are to glean (kill) the people whom they randomly select, but Scythes can only be killed by suicide or by other Scythes.

Citra and Rowan are selected to become

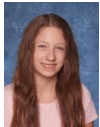


Scythes to Honorable Scythe Faraday. They need to keep up with the everyday tasks as Scythes and learn all the necessary things to become Scythes. But just when they get used to the routine of things, Scythe Faraday mysteriously gets gleaned.

Rowan and Citra now have to train with different Scythes in a contest against one another. Whoever gets the best "record" or is the best trainee is appointed has to glean the other. But as both Citra and Rowan decide to unravel the mystery of the gleaning of Scythe Faraday, unexpected twists occur, preventing them from disentangling the truth from the lies.

This book is an overall great book that I recommend you read as soon as possible.

Too Many Tests?!?!



**By Grace Stoner
Tusker Tribune Staff**

I don't know about you but studying for tests and quizzes really stresses me out.

Do you ever think that maybe teachers give too many tests?

I think they are not needed at all. If you think about it, they are not really needed. If they teacher spends days or even weeks on a topic and throughout those days or week, you do multiple worksheets and assignments on that topic, why do you then need to take a test?

When you think about it, each of those worksheets that you do is like a mini-test because it is the same thing that would be on a regular test. Those worksheets are often even graded like



a test so why do you also need tests on top of all that?

Also, if you do badly on one test, it can bring your grade down by a lot because they weigh more even though they are the same thing that you do in class every day.

Studying causes kids a lot of stress. I know personally when I get home at 8:30 from other activities, I

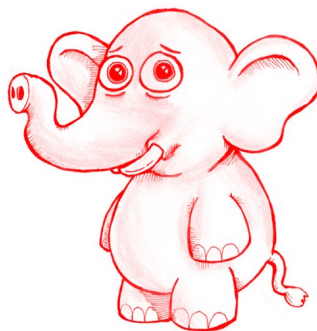
have no interest in studying and worrying about a test that I have the next day.

In my opinion tests are unnecessary and your grade should just be based off of everyday work like worksheets and mini lessons, instead of having to get a good grade on one test.

Also, some days you just have an off day and I don't want that to affect me for the rest of the quarter.

**The Tusker
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Some Quick Observations of Super Bowl LII



By **Sasha Reyes**
Tusker Tribune
Staff

Super Bowl LII (52) just passed. The Philadelphia Eagles and The New England Patriots played in U.S. Bank Stadium in Minneapolis, MN last Sunday.

In the first quarter, the Eagles were winning 9-3. The Patriots needed a recovery. The Patriots were losing badly with a score of 21-12 at the end of the second quarter.

The third quarter, I guess, was their booster with the score of 29-26, but still, the Eagles were winning.

The Patriots tried so hard with 7 more



points in the fourth quarter but were still losing 41-33. The Patriots played their hardest, which did work out in the end. The Eagles, on the other hand, played their hardest, which paid off in a 41-33 final victory. It's the first Super Bowl Championship for the Eagles.

Eagles fans, of course, went wild, and even overdid it a bit by overturning some cars and climbing on the canopy of the Ritz Carlton Hotel, causing it to collapse.

The official parade today was more tame, even if Anheuser Busch gave a free can of Bud Light beer to everyone who was lining the parade route!

The World



For the next few days, you live completely in the moment. Wilder and wilder stunts pop into your head by the minute, and in your eagerness to do them all, you forget that there's only so many things to do in this life anyway.

And within the next three days, you have done everything there is to do. Everything. Mountains have been climbed, books have been written, and rainbows have served as sidewalks. Tests have been taken, soup has been made, and songs have been sung. Nothing is left to do, but you don't feel the way you thought you would.

Living like this for days was not really what I expected it to be, *you think*. The satisfaction in completing all these crazy stunts isn't there. It's more of a hunger to dream up something crazy and go bungee jumping off a cliff or something.

And the world ends tomorrow.

The next day when you wake up, the sun is shining brightly through your elephant-sized window, and the birdies are singing, and your butler is holding a tray of hand-squeezed orange juice and a million other breakfast items (the orange juice being the most important). The world is still here.

For a moment, you simply stare out the window. But all you really see is questions and doubts popping up in your mind like daisies. If the world really isn't going to end today, you



think, then all my last-minute scrambling to cram so many desires into such a small amount of time has been for nothing.

"I guess life just isn't meant to be lived in a week," you tell your butler. "Since I've done it all, there's nothing left. I don't want to die; I want to drink my orange juice and keep living. But besides the drinking of orange juice, I have no purpose." So you drink your orange juice, rub your eyes, and go back to sleep.

As far as I know, this perfectly completely totally normal person is still lying there in bed. I doubt they will ever wake up again. When the world ends, it won't mean a thing to them. But I think it's safe to say that we can all learn a lesson from this person.

Life really isn't meant to be crammed into a week, especially when the world ends next Tuesday. So live life in the moment! Let it flow. Do what you desire, but keep in mind that it won't be everything you thought it'd be if you feel so pressured to get it over with.

Take this lesson and use it. Don't ever feel that orange juice is the only thing you have to live for. This person's life wasn't really wasted, yet it is important to recognize that it shouldn't be relived. You never know when the world will end; much less your level of satisfaction when it does.

Just in case, though, make sure there's enough satisfaction to live off of forever. Good luck!

Michael Jordan Continues to Set the Standard



**By Nick Herzegovitch
Tusker Tribune Staff**

He is arguably the greatest basketball player of all time! He has so many awards under his belt. He has won six championship rings, six final MVP's, five regular season MVP's, made 14 all-star games, got three all-star MVP's, made 10 all-NBA first teams, won a Defensive Player of the Year award, won two Slam Dunk contests, holds 10 NBA scoring titles, and has retired his number on three teams.



Just to name the important ones. Did you know that Michael Jordan was picked three in the 1984 NBA draft? Crazy, right? The number one pick was Hakeem Olajuwon, also in the NBA Hall of Fame with Jordan. The closest one to MJ's level is LeBron James. He is on the Cleveland Cavaliers. He has won three NBA championships and five MVP's. Did you know that he wore three numbers? Numbers 23, 45, and 12! Just remember that Michael Jordan is the best player of all time and that he will never be forgotten.

Raisman



Aly mentioned all the countless lives that were abused, and it was all the jury needed to hear.

Nevertheless, the damage had been done. So many gymnasts were manipulated, because they wouldn't speak up for themselves. So this is what I am here to tell you. I understand



that during your entire childhood, you may have been taught to trust an adult such as a doctor. But if anything feels wrong, don't be afraid to speak up. You need to find your voice, even when a tricky situation is at hand. Horrible events occur when someone is

afraid to express a concern, so don't make this mistake.

Aly Raisman showed in her speech that the USA gymnasts were strong and wouldn't be foiled by people such as Larry Nassar. Though it isn't just USA gymnasts, but everyone. We are stronger together. There is a Mexican saying from *Quiet Power* by Susan Cain that states *Together we are more*. It is true. Every time someone reaches out to others for support, the world becomes a better place.

So think about this moving on with your day: *You've been given a voice, so use it.*

Commercials Make Super Bowl Memorable



**By Anthony Moschides
Tusker Tribune Staff**

As we all know, the Super Bowl was played on Sunday, February 4th. We saw the underdogs, the Philadelphia Eagles, win their first ever championship in franchise history over the favored New England Patriots.

The Eagles, from the beginning, played more aggressively and were leading into the final minutes. Tom Brady got the Patriots very close in the 4th quarter, but a great defensive play caused him to fumble and the Eagles recovered the football. That was pretty much the game winning play, and the final score was 41-33 Eagles.

While the game was competitive, let's cut to the chase and look at another thing that kept viewers interested – the commercials! For some, commercials are the best part of the game.

Companies that advertise during the Super Bowl

spend on average between \$5 million and \$15million. The cost of each commercial is different based on the order it is shown during the game. My personal favorite this year was by Amazon. It was hilarious to see ordinary people asking Alexa questions, without



Alexa responding as usual, but by alternative people with snappy comebacks. That one made me laugh a LOT.

Companies like Budweiser and Doritos have been advertising during the Super Bowl for many years, and it's exciting to see what creative ideas they come up with. Some ads are funny while others are informative and serious.

There is no doubt that because of the major money being spent, companies do a ton of research to decide whether to participate. This year over 103 million people watched the game, and that meant a lot of great advertising and viewership. All I know is, I'm glad these commercials are part of the Super Bowl experience!