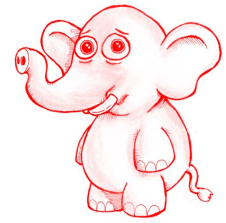


# The Tusker Tribune

## The Student Newspaper of Somers Middle School



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## SMS to Join Hands for Stoneman Douglas High School



By **Juliana Spano**  
Tusker Tribune Staff

**DISCLAIMER:** I will not mention the monster who stole 17 innocent lives but will focus on the victims and what we will do to show that we are there for Florida.

For one school in Parkland, Florida, Valentine's Day was not all love and happiness but a massacre that stole the lives of 17 innocent high schoolers and scarred the lives of so many more.

Stoneman Douglas High School started off its day like all other schools. The kids got off buses and filed into the school on February 14<sup>th</sup> like any other day. Unfortunately, it wasn't any other day; it was a day that will go down in history for one of the deadliest school shootings ever. The students went through their mornings with no problems but a little after 2:15 pm, terror struck, and people were left in shock.

**Jamie Guttenburg**, 14 was a competitive dancer and dance schools all around the U.S. are wearing orange ribbons on their jackets for her. **Alyssa Alhadeff** was also 14. **Scott Beigal** was a 35



year old teacher. **Martin Duque** was 14. **Nicholas Dworet** was 17. **Aaron Feis** was a 37 year old football coach at the school. **Chris Hixon** was a 49 year old athletic director for the school. **Luke Hoyer** was aged 15. **Cara Loughran** was 14. **Gina Montalto** was also 14. **Joaquin Oliver** was 17. **Alaina Petty** was another 14 year old killed. **Meadow Pollack** was an 18 year old senior at the school. **Helena Ramsay** was just 17. Lastly, **Alex Schachter** was 14. Another 14 kids were injured.



A lot of people have been talking about doing a walk out for 17 minutes for the 17 people who sadly lost their lives, but we at Somers Middle School are doing something a little different—we are going to hold hands and make a circle around the outside of the school to show that we will protect our school from gun violence.

While participating in this event, we will also be wearing orange and it will last 17 minutes. It will start at 10 am on March 14<sup>th</sup> and more details are to come.

Please continue to pray for the families and the victims affected by this senseless act of hatred.

# Willy Wonka—Behind the Scenes!



By Noah Volkman  
Tusker Tribune Staff

An adaption of the 1971 film *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory*, *Willy Wonka Jr.* is a musical using the same storyline and the same songs from 47 years ago.

Starting in mid-September 2017, director 7<sup>th</sup> grade math teacher Mrs. Racioppo lead auditions with “Drama Mama” Maryanne Martabano. Those who signed up for drama club were given the choice between snippets of “Think Positive”, “I Want It Now”, and “I’ve Got a Golden Ticket!” (the majority chose “I’ve Got a Golden Ticket!”).

As most people were nervous and jittery, Mrs. Racioppo calmed everyone’s nerves by informing that all members who auditioned would be in the musical. A few weeks later, a call-back list was posted on the SMS website. A call-back is if the director or co-directors need a second look at you to see you read a character’s line or sing part of a song. The next week, a cast list was posted and the characters of *Willy Wonka Jr.* were born. About 95% of 6<sup>th</sup> graders were casted as Oompa Loompas/Ensemble, whereas 7<sup>th</sup> graders had the same chance to get a lead role as 8<sup>th</sup> graders.

Starting in early October 2017, rehearsals started with simple warmups and main songs. In the early stages of rehearsals, students stayed after on Tuesdays and Thursdays usually until 4pm. Then as the weeks went by and the show crept closer and closer, more elements of the musical came into play. Choreography, blocking, speaking lines, on-stage/off-stage, etc. Rehearsals went on once or twice a week until the holiday break in December 2017-January 2018.

After break, it was in with the New Year, in with new information and singing and choreography. We started putting together whole company numbers with



singing and all of the other elements without costumes or sets, because Stage Crew had still been creating them. We started having more and more rehearsals for longer times (until 4:30pm) as the show

was a month or so away. Until about late January 2018, rehearsals were of mixed crowds and Monday through Friday until 4:30pm. Two weeks before the show (Jan. 29-Feb. 2), all *Willy Wonka Jr.* performers were expected to stay after school all week until 4:30, past the late bus at 4pm, and be off-book (without a script) for every single song, or number.

The next week was Tech Week (DUN DUN DUUUUNNNN).

Tech Week is when all of Drama Club and Stage Crew are expected to stay after school from the 2:58 bell until 8pm at night! Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday! They provide dinner for Tuesday and Wednesday if you pay extra for it (Tuesday was sandwiches from the Route 100 Market



and Wednesday was pizza from Froggy’s Pizza). Monday was a BYOD Day; Bring Your Own Dinner.

If you were not onstage or in the wings waiting to be onstage, you were somewhere in the auditorium quietly doing homework, reading, or something else (playing games—wait, what? (you heard nothing)). Since there was two casts as some roles had to people playing the same role, we ran through the entire show, lines and lights and all with one cast, the Gum Drop cast, and then we switched and ran through the show with the Candy Cast. We did it back and forth from Monday to Tuesday.

On Tuesday though, instead of sitting in the auditorium, we were sitting in the same spots we would be sitting in for the real deal on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday afternoon and evening. 6<sup>th</sup> graders sat in the chorus room and 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders sat in the band room. As we were supposed to have rehearsal that Wednesday, February 7<sup>th</sup>, it had gotten canceled due to a snow day with 6-12 inches of snow falling in Westchester County. As a result, all Drama Club members stayed “after school until 4:30 on Thursday, have a siesta on the couch, eat dinner, and then come back at 6:30 for the show, and the same for Friday,” said director Mrs. Racioppo at Tuesday’s rehearsal.

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*Photos Courtesy of TapintoSomers/  
Somers Record*



# Big Playoff Game for Girls' B-Ball



**By Aleksiana Rukaj  
Tusker Tribune Staff**

It's that time of year folks! The 7<sup>th</sup> grade girls are preparing for the exciting playoff game against Byram Hills that will be taking place tomorrow night!

As a Somers basketball player, myself, this can be a very stressful or a very exciting time. Mostly, it's both!

I interviewed my fellow teammate, Alexis Aakjar, to see her take on this entire situation. "I haven't really thought



about it. In the past, I tried to keep an open mind and I always thought of the game as a normal game because that calmed me down. I was never too nervous for the games!"

As a two-time championship winning team, us girls are determined to make it back to the top. It might be more challenging, though!

Our first game is against a hard team, but we all believe in our self's! That's all for tonight, everyone! See you next time!



## Eragon by Christopher Palioni



**By Max Harkins  
Tusker Tribune Staff**

The book Eragon is about a teenager named Eragon who lives on a farm with his brother, Roran, and his uncle, Garrow. Eragon is a hunter, and while he was hunting for deer, he found a stone. After trying to break it, sell it, and find out the mystery of it, he went to bed and heard a popping noise.

He went to see what caused the noise, and



found out that it was a dragon. After a few days, he goes and flies with it, only to find his farm in ruins, because of an attack by the Ra'zac, a race of beings that feed on humans. He has to go on an adventure with Brom, a storyteller to find the Ra'zac.

This book is a very good, adventurous book, and one of my favorites. I would highly recommend this to everyone, and I hope they enjoy it as well.

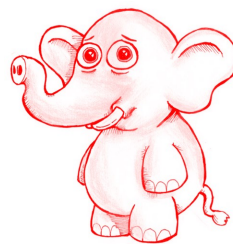


## Willy Wonka

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Unfortunately, when I woke up on Wednesday morning, pumped up for the snow day, I came down with a really bad cough and cold. As it progressed, I could barely breathe and needed to go to the doctor's for a strep test, a flu test, Tamiflu prescription, a doctor's note to get out of school for the rest of the week, nebulizer medication, etc. In summary, I got the flu at the worst time possible. As it turned out, I had the flu for five days and missed all four shows and the cast party. My family was going to come to the final show on Saturday night, but they didn't want to make me feel bad so they gave the tickets up to someone else, which kind of sucked.

In conclusion, it takes a lot of time, effort, patience, and energy to make Willy Wonka Jr. as fun and energetic as it was.



The Tusker Tribune is featured online and 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  
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Any SMS student is eligible to write stories. If interested, please e-mail Advisor Dean Pappas at [DPappas@somersschools.org](mailto:DPappas@somersschools.org)

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