

JUNE 2024



SOMERS CENTRAL
SCHOOL DISTRICT
NEWS FOR FAMILIES

TUSKER NATION

Congratulations, Class of 2024!



The Class of 2024 graduated on Monday, June 24, 2024, despite strong storms the night before that knocked out power and caused classes to be canceled for the rest of the district.

Ferretti Named Student of Distinction



Liam Ferretti (center) with his family and PNW BOCES Assistant Superintendent Lou Riolo (far left) and Career Academy Principal Mike Sowul (far right).

Almost two years ago, Liam Ferretti made a choice about his future. Despite his age, he was decisive, committing himself to learning a skill that had the potential to be valuable and financially rewarding for years to come.

The Somers High School student, who graduated on June 24, 2024 enrolled in the Construction/Electricity program at PNW BOCES' Career and Technical Education Center and quickly found his niche. He became a determined student, focused on a future career as an electrician.

On Tuesday, May 28, 2024, the Somers Board of Education honored Ferretti as a PNW BOCES Student of Distinction during its meeting in the Somers Middle School auditorium.

"I'm really proud that I was able to earn this award," Ferretti said. "I'm glad that all of my teachers thought I was deserving of it."

Ferretti's teachers raved about his effort. Larry Marino, a Construction/Electricity teacher at the Tech Center, said, "I am confident that Liam has a bright future ahead of him because of his strong work ethic, dedication, and incredibly positive attitude. I know he will succeed in his future endeavors, and he is an ideal student to be chosen as Student of Distinction."

Ferretti was joined by his parents, Douglas and Patricia; sister Keira; PNW BOCES Assistant Superintendent Louis Riolo; Career Academy Principal Michael Sowul; and English teacher Meredith Markolovic.

Ferretti said being an electrician is "always in demand," but he quickly found that the skill was also something he enjoyed.

"I knew I wanted to pick up a trade," he said. "I picked this up and stuck with it because I liked it. But this skill is one that I will always have to use in the future."

At the end of the school year, Ferretti was awarded the Peter Simone Jr. Construction scholarship. Somers classmates Michael Aiello received the Insite Engineering, Surveying, & Landscape Architecture scholarship, and Roberto Gonzalez received the Mahopac Auto Paint & Supplies scholarship

Sealing Success with Biliteracy



Fifteen Somers High School students achieved the Seal of Biliteracy this year. See the article below for the names of students. [Click here to watch several students speaking in their newly acquired language.](#)

¡Felicidades! Congratulazioni! Félicitations!

Congratulations to 15 World Language students from Somers High School. These seniors have successfully completed the requirements of the New York State Seal of Biliteracy (NYSSB) this year.

"I'm proud of myself and my classmates who received the award," Nicholas Crecco said. "This represents the hard work and dedication to studying a second language over the last six years."

The NYSSB recognizes high school graduates with a high level of proficiency in English as well as one other world language. NYSSB also helps these bi-literate students stand out to colleges and employers, gives them the skills they need to succeed in the 21st century, encourages diversity in a multicultural and multilingual society, and recognizes the importance of world language education.

“I have learned so much more about the Italian culture and traditions on top of learning the language itself,” Nicholas said.

Students pursuing the NYSSB are required to create two portfolios showcasing their best work, usually seven to ten examples, in both English and the target languages. They also must create two presentations, one in English and one in their World Language, each five to eight minutes long, and then present them to a panel of teachers made up of English and World Language teachers from the high school and middle school this year.

“My presentation in Italian was a cultural comparison of the life of teenagers in the United States and Italy,” Nicholas said.

An announcement was made by Mr. Bayer. Students celebrated with a cake and were given a small gift to commemorate their accomplishments. This is the second cohort of SHS students to achieve this form of recognition for studying a second language. Recipients of the NYSSB will have a seal affixed to their diploma and will wear a medallion during graduation.

“To students trying to pursue the Seal of Biliteracy,” Nicholas said, “I would tell you that you must be dedicated to your studies in the language. Working toward the Seal is a lot more than just showing up to class every day. It is about embracing the language and culture and being involved in the language after school and after class.”

The students awarded the Seal of Biliteracy:

Spanish: Angie Ayoubi, Taylor Luks, Ava Lulgjuraj, Aiden Meza, Celeste Taday

Italian: Christian Brooks, Ally Camardella, Nicholas Crecco, Sienna DeMarinis, Angelica Salinas, Susie Signorile

French: Alex Bian, Khyla Cohen, Anthony Fusco, Andre Possante

□ Seen Around Somers □



Somers High School students from Tusker 101 classes visited fourth and fifth graders to share information about digital citizenship, cyberbullying, digital wellness, and digital safety. Students developed lessons and created activities and games to encourage student participation.



The ground is broken and the renovation is underway at the high school baseball field. Junior catcher Joe Dwyer and junior pitcher Rhys Carway are looking forward to playing their senior season on the turf field, a surface that will also provide more weather-proof field space for many youth teams. The softball field ground-breaking is up next!



Twenty-five Somers Middle School students completed all five tests in the Elementary and Middle School Mathematical Olympiad. Students practiced for the Olympiad during math club as well as during occasional W.I.N. periods throughout the year. Leo Mundis placed first and ranked in the top 2% of all 80,000 participants globally.

Snail Project Catches on Quickly



Lily Lassen created a cozy home in a shoe box for her snail, complete with a special snail carriage.

Escargot are family, not food.

Eighth-grade students studying French at Somers Middle School adopted “snails” as part of their year-end review. The snails were actually shells provided by their teacher that students could then decorate to make their own. Some chose to paint their shells, while others glued on googly eyes. Each snail turned out as unique as the student who adopted it.

“My snail’s name is Lucy and she lives in my mug,” said Niamh O’Connor.

Each student filled out an adoption form in French, answering questions about themselves, how they would care for their new snail, and what kind of snail they were hoping to adopt. Once their adoption paperwork was approved, all students took an Oath of Adoption and promised to care for their snails.

“We also had to answer questions about things that make us responsible owners, such as what will they eat and what will they do,” Lily Lassen said.

Another part of the assignment was to build a new home for their snail. Students were able to express their creativity by using a variety of objects and containers. Some students opted for simple plastic containers outfitted with natural materials such as rocks and grass, while others picked more elaborate containers like a large coffee mug, a shoe box, and a lunch box. Many students added personalized decorations to make their snails feel welcome.

“Her name is Collette,” said Hazel Sledzik. “There was a question about what my snail would like to do. I said she’d like to listen to music. I decorated my snail house with pictures of albums I like.”

Finally, students created baby books of places where they took their snails. Snails were taken home, around the school, to different classes, the park, restaurants, and even on vacation. Along the way, students took pictures of their snails to add to their baby book and then included captions in French about the picture.

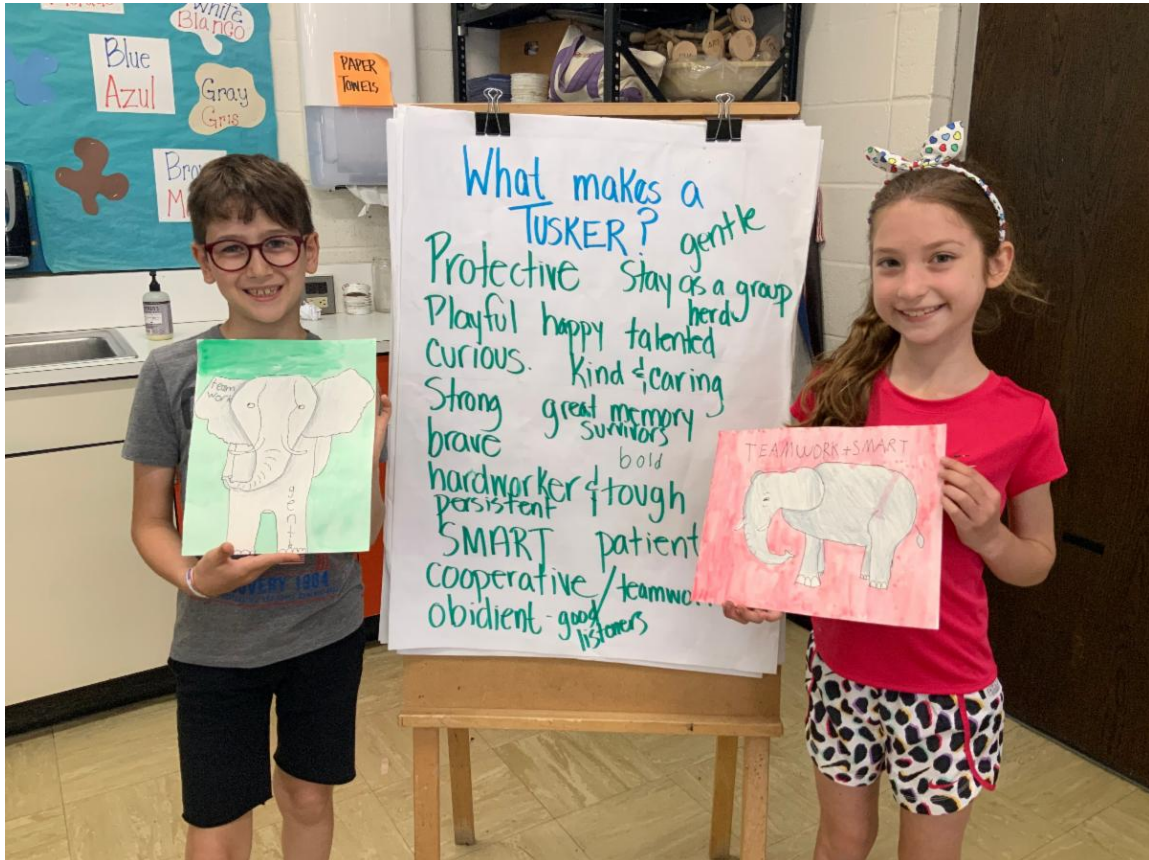
“On Memorial Day I was in a beach community in Connecticut,” said Hazel, “and I brought my snail. It was fun finding spots to take pictures with her on vacation.”

Applying to adopt an escargot and creating a baby book was an engaging, innovative method to

help students review the material they learned this year.

“It helped us review a lot of older words from earlier in the year because we had to answer questions on the adoption papers which were all in French,” Madison Kaplan said.

What Makes a Tusker?



Sam Barkoe and Vlora Ivezaj show the elephants they created to define what being a Tusker means to them.

What makes a Tusker? That's the question that third-grade students at Somers Intermediate School were asking themselves as they created their “Tusker” elephants in art.

Students started by watching a documentary in class to explore the different personality traits of elephants in the wild and made note of the traits that also represented a Somers Tusker. Traits included things such as being cooperative, curious, strong, persistent, and gentle.

“We used the video to help us see an elephant's character traits,” Amelia Goodwin said.

“I learned that they're protective and kind,” Lana Vega said. “They like to work as a team, and whenever they look for food or water, they go as a group.”

Students were then asked to draw realistic elephants on practice paper, focusing on the elephant's physical features. They could choose to do either a side or front view. Students started by splitting the paper into four quadrants, then drew their elephants to fill the paper, using photos of real elephants for reference. Once they were happy with their practice drawing, students copied it onto watercolor paper. The backgrounds were watercolor painted, and the elephants were colored with colored pencils and then outlined in Sharpie to stand out.

“I picked the front view,” Savannah Perez said. “It seemed easier for me and more graceful.”

The final piece of their project was to decide what attributes from real-life elephants were the most important for their Tusker. After selecting specific attributes, the students added those words to their Tusker artwork, and the results were hugely successful.

“I love art because it taught me that I can make mistakes,” said Amelia, “and I can still make something beautiful.”



Parents give their attention to the experts on stage before gathering around the tables to learn all about different topics.

Students were on hand to share their expertise about a variety of subjects at the recent Expert Fair at Primrose Elementary Schools.

"I'm an expert at Bob Marley," Evan said. "He's a good singer."

First-grade experts prepared for the big event for weeks, putting together their displays, writing and illustrating a book filled with their knowledge, and gathering hands-on examples to show visitors. Displays included photos, stickers, collector cards, stuffed animals, sports equipment, and toys.

"We made books about what we're an expert on," Gabby said. "I liked the writing the best."

The Expert Fair was held in the cafeteria. As visitors arrived, they were greeted by experts handing out tickets, they were guided to the venue by sign-holders, and they were ushered into the fair by ticket collectors. Once everyone was assembled, student speakers kicked off the event with a welcome message before each student got a turn to announce their expertise.

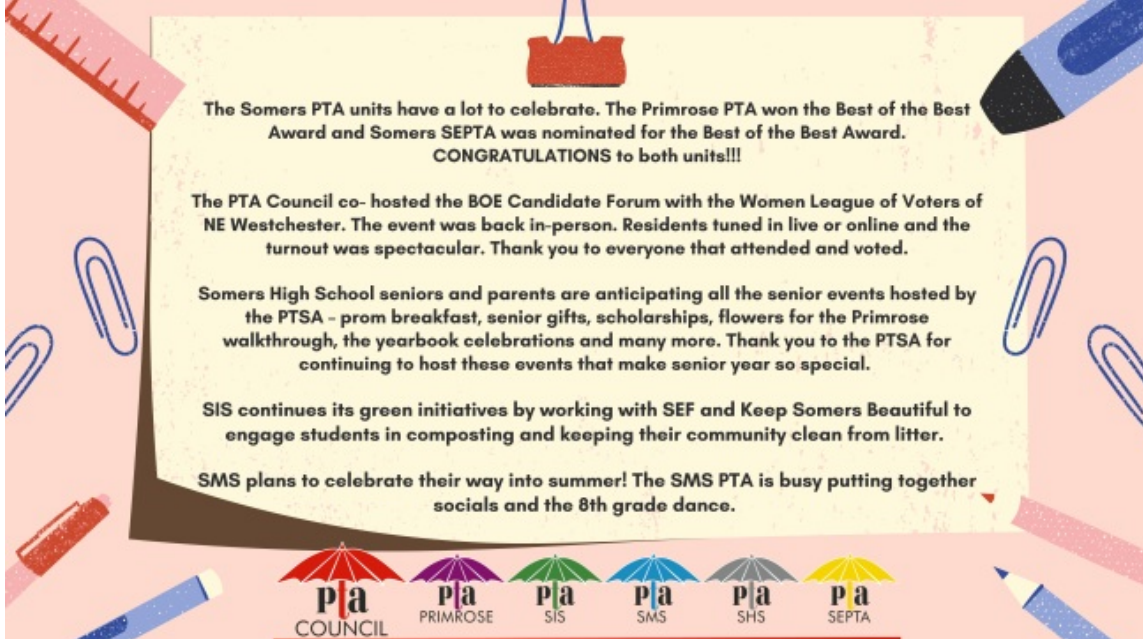
"I brought in my Pokémon cards and some stickers," Anthony said. "I added two Pokémon that I created."

During the fair, students shared their knowledge with family members, fellow students, and school faculty and staff. Topics included sports, hobbies, activities, pop culture, and places. The first to visit each expert were the family members invited, followed by family members of other students. Finally, the students were invited to visit their fellow experts' stations, allowing them to learn more about what their classmates had been working on.

"I built a giant Lego person for the Expert Fair," said Rocco. "His hat opens and then a little Lego person can go inside."

Students did a wonderful job showcasing their expertise and sharing their passion and knowledge with friends and family. Everyone learned something new at this year's Expert Fair!





The Somers PTA units have a lot to celebrate. The Primrose PTA won the Best of the Best Award and Somers SEPTA was nominated for the Best of the Best Award. CONGRATULATIONS to both units!!!

The PTA Council co-hosted the BOE Candidate Forum with the Women League of Voters of NE Westchester. The event was back in-person. Residents tuned in live or online and the turnout was spectacular. Thank you to everyone that attended and voted.

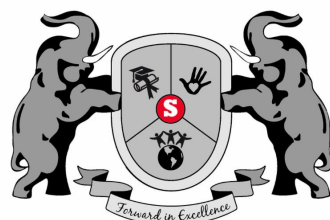
Somers High School seniors and parents are anticipating all the senior events hosted by the PTSA - prom breakfast, senior gifts, scholarships, flowers for the Primrose walkthrough, the yearbook celebrations and many more. Thank you to the PTSA for continuing to host these events that make senior year so special.

SIS continues its green initiatives by working with SEF and Keep Somers Beautiful to engage students in composting and keeping their community clean from litter.

SMS plans to celebrate their way into summer! The SMS PTA is busy putting together socials and the 8th grade dance.

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Somers Central School District
250 Route 202
Somers, New York 10589
914.277.2400

www.somersschools.org



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