

The Tusker Tribune



SOMERS MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWSPAPER

Issue Number 34

https://www.somersschools.org/Page/11489

SUMMER 2024

Proposed Battery Farm Electrifies the Opposition

THE LITHIUM

By Xavi Dosil Tusker Tribune Staff

My parents recently took me to my first community rally. It

was against the proposed BESS facility in Carmel. The more they spoke to others members of the community, the more I realized why we have to fight

against this. I posted and shared with the Class of 2028 to tell their parents.

The Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) is like a giant rechargeable battery for storing electricity. They come in all sizes. When there's extra electricity, like from solar and a wind turbings RESS stores it for later panels or wind turbines, BESS stores it for later

This proposed BESS (116 megawatts) site is a few feet from the Somers town line on Miller Street. It will also be 200 feet from most of Baldwin Place. Environmentally, this is a horrible idea.

According to Datahub WCGIS Westchester County GIS, there are streams that go from Miller Street (by the proposed site) to Shenorock Lake, down to the Amawalk Reservoir (see attached map). These streams continue to travel south the Croton Reservoir. This BATTERY PLANT leads to Jerome Park Reservoir in the Bronx for water distribution within New York City. According to the Westchester natural

resources Inventory, this is being built around Critical Environmental Areas and Important Areas for Rare Animals: https://

gis.westchestergov.com/apps/natural-resources-

inventory/explore.

There is also the concern of fires. When there is a fire, it cannot be put out by water. The instruction given to the local fire department is to let it burn out. Considering the size of the proposed plan, it would take weeks to burn itself out.

Continued on Page 3

Fly 'Old Glory' Today!



By Gianna Peanamanda Tusker Tribune Staff

Every year, Flag Day is celebrated on June 14th. It marks the adoption on the United States flag. In 1916,

President Woodrow Wilson created Flag Day to celebrate everything the American Flag stands for: liberty, justice, and uni-

To honor flag day across the country, people will have parades, flag raising ceremonies, etc. Although Flag Day is not an official federal holiday, there are organizations like the NFDF (National Flag Day Foundation) that work to promote awareness and organize special events throughout the week and on Flag Day.

Here are some facts about our flag:

• There have been 27 different versions of the U.S. flag. Each version has a different number of stars.

The flag's colors have official names: Old Glory Red, White, and Old Glory Blue.
Pennsylvania is the only state that

recognizes Flag Day as a state holiday.

The stripes represent the 13 colonies while the stars represent 50 states of the union

Nobody Knows the Real Flag Designer.
The US Flag Was the First Flag on the Moon.
Now that you know a little bit more about June 14th, maybe consider doing something today for Flag Day.

The Tusker Tribune is the online Somers Middle School Student Newspaper. It 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

Somers, NY, USA.

Any SMS student is eligible to write stories. If interested, please email Advisor Dean Pappas at:

DPappas@somersschools.org.
Tusker Tribune Website:
https://www.somersschools.org/Page/11489

Reporter/sContributors Giuliana DiMartino Xavi Dosil Tara Goodwin Laurel Knapp Gemma Krissoff Isabella Miele Francesca Palumbo Gianna Peanamanda Olivia Pelhank **Bree Rosenblum**

SMS 8th Graders Tackle Lithium Battery Farm Issue





By Isabella Miele and Bree Rosenblum Tusker Tribune Staff

Are you aware of what's going on in our town? If you haven't

already seen signs up around town, or heard people talking about its effects, then here's the answer. There has been word of a lithium battery farm being built. If this plan is approved, it would be right where Somers meets Mahopac in some of the woods near Somers Commons. The plan is to con-

struct a 116-megawatt facility less than 200 feet

away from residents' homes, concerning many. Here's a comparison: the 1 World Trade Center, the tallest building in the western hemisphere, uses a backup generator that needs only 8 megawatts for total power. This means the facility that is only a few minutes from all our houses will contain about 14.5 times more energy than needed for the tallest building. Putting these huge batteries in our woods will damage the environment because it requires cutting down trees.

Now going along with how it may be built in the woods, lithium batteries are also known for their flammable properties. These batteries will be placed next to wood, which is also known for being extremely flammable. These two next to each other are a huge threat to our town along with towns near us like Putnam, Mahopac, and THE LITHIUM BATTERY PLANT Yorktown. If a lithium battery

fire, too and perhaps even cause a wildfire which spreads quickly and will destroy anything in its path. This could cause major damage to our towns and may even hurt people.

But fire isn't our only worry. Researchers have found that these battery farms, either when being built or in a leak, can cause pollution to our local reservoirs and sewers. Overall, lithium bat-

teries can cause many problems including catch fire, overheat, explode, pollute water, air, the envi-



ronment, and other problems that have yet to be discovered. These batteries haven't been thoroughly researched, meaning we don't know what other effects they could have.

Additionally. at a facility in War-wick, NY there was a huge fire. Scientists were on the scene and after they ran some air quality tests, they found that there were dozens of toxins in the air. This has caused many citizens to dislike this idea because they don't want to inhale these dangerous toxins.

WESTCHESTER

We also would



like to quote some of the words said by local Somers Middle School teacher Mrs. Kilmer. Mrs. Kilmer expressed her worries involving the battery storage facilities causing cancer. She was a cancer patient in the past and doesn't want anyone else having to go through that hard experience. She feels this way because these battery storage facilities have effects which have not been studied, meaning we have little knowledge of what it could do to citizens and the environment.

With all of what we have told you so far, we really wonder why we need these batteries. Which brings up the question one of the people we interviewed had. Isana C said, "Why would we need these batteries if in the past we haven't needed them? This really made us think about how many blackouts we really have in our town. After thinking, we couldn't remember many. And only

one occurred this year. Poster by Milo Unrath So, is it worth it to risk damdoes catch fire, it will set all the woods around it on aging so much for something we don't necessarily need? We believe this project is a bad idea and so do about 2,100 citizens in our town and towns near us who signed a petition against the battery facility. We know throughout this whole writeup, we have talked of our opinion on this matter, so I think it's only fair if we give you the other side, too.

Now the reason this battery storage facility may be built is because the area wants to reduce the number of blackouts and strengthen the area grid. They will do this by storing the electricity at off-peak hours and discharging the stored energy during peak hours. By doing this, it will help with making the grid more resistant, reliable and affordable. Since the lower Hudson Valley has New York City nearby and the city plus our area has many electrical needs, this will help to keep up with these needs. The batteries support the grid with backup power and makes power and electricity last longer too.

So, with all this information you have read about, what are your thoughts on the matter? Do you think this lithium battery farm should be built?



The Tusker Tribune Wall of Fame



Thank you to all of our splendiferous writers for another terrific publication year! 415 stories written by 70 students!!!!

Sophia Bernardi Charlotte Hein Ava Parkin Olivia Ball Gianna Peanamanda Simone Hennigan Juliana Cacsire Vivan Hernandez Julia Peanamanda Allison Cardillo Leila Herrera Maisie Pelhank Julia Carlson Olivia Pelhank **BobbyJarrett** Mackenzie Pico Natalie Chery Elizabeth Javier-Alonzo Gabby Cordero Hannah Jeon Susan Pucci Giuliana DeMartino Madison Kaplan Camilla Quinteros Davanna Diaz Kari Kellock Bree Rosenblum Jacob DiPasquale Laurel Knapp Brynn Robinson Noah Samuel Cole Dolan Gemma Krissoff Xavi Dosil Jon Lantz Juliette Savegh Alexa Ernst Jack Loscher Ava Schmidberger Olivia Ernst Ruby McDowell Ila Schoenberg Colin Evers Victoria McGee Daniella Spano Julianna Ferretti Sophia Mendoza Jaxon Ticker Sienna Ferretti Logan Ticker Isabella Miele **Keziah Ferry** Cecilia Morrisey Edwin Vasquez Michaela Gallo Shealyn Mullins Olivia Volpe Aleah Gosselin Sabeeka Mustafa Max Weinfeld Julie Genovesi Isabella Nevsky Josie Wilkinson Tara Goodwin **HannahWilliams** Megan O'Reilly Alice Orzechowski Lyla Hantzarides Nicholas Wintje Francesca Palumbo Cole Harney

Battery From Page 1

This will then pollute the air, water, and affect animals. There would also be a *shelter in place* order for the nearby communities.



The fire department in the area do not have the training or manpower in our communities. There is a BESS in Warwick that is 12 megawatts and burned for almost two weeks. There were shelter in place issues. But what will

happen to our environment? Our pets? Schools? Neighborhood?

For months the town of Carmel has not allowed Somers residents to speak about the BESS Proposal. Our own Ms. Kilmer spoke at the town board and has been fighting for us since.

Thank you Ms. Kilmer!

On June 19th, Car-

mel is hosting a Public Hearing for the Battery Storage Moratorium (a temporary prohibition of an activity.) Anyone who can go should show up or pass any important information to support a mora-

torium to someone who is attending.



Spirit Week Brought Out Some Cool Styles





By Giuliana DeMartino
Tusker Tribune Staff
The spring-summer of 2024 Spirit Week was such a bast! SMS students in all grades dressed up uniquely to match the themes.
The theme to start the week was Pajama Day.
Pajama Day took place on Monday the 10th . People were dressed in styes from unicorn onesie to plain plaid pants.
The next day was Soccer Mom vs BBQ Dad. This day was defiantly a hit and would be fun to do next year. I felt like the winner was BBQ Dad. The outfits were so creative and cool

creative and cool.

We made it halfway to Jersey Day. Let's show some team spirit! Students, and teachers too, wore their favorite sports team jersey or their team jersey. I felt like I saw a lot of football jerseys.

Summer vacation started already with Beach Day. Many students wore cute sunglasses, sun hats, and flower leis. My favorite was that someone wore a

pineapple float.

Finally, Decades Day. No matter if it was 1980s or 1800s, the outfits were creative. We got all the decades in all the grades. I loved Spirit Week. I hope we can do a lot of the themes next year. What do you think about this Spirit Week?



























June is LGBTQ+ Pride Month!

By Gemma Krissoff Tusker Tribune Staff

June is LBGTQ+ pride month, which is a time to learn about LBGTQ+ people and history. Also, it is a time to commemorate

the struggle and impact of queer people. During pride month, queer people and allies celebrate the fight for queer rights. In this article, you will read about 4 successful queer people.

SOPHIE

SOPHIE was a transgender woman and a singer. She remained anonymous until 2017 when

she published one of her songs, "It's Okay to Cry". She was one of the first transgender musicians to be nominated in the Grammy Awards. SOPHIE also made music for other artists, some of which are Lady Gaga, Madonna, and Charli XCX. Unfortunately, SOPHIE passed away from a fall in 2021. Yasmin Benoit

Yasmin Benoit is an aromantic and asexual

model and activist. She is one of the first Black alternative models as well. For her, being a model was challenging because she was in a domain with Eurocentric beauty standards which was mostly white. She has also worked to help asexual and aromantic people with AVEN, the Asexuality Visibility and Education Network.



Hayley Kiyoko Hayley Kiyoko is a songwriter, singer, director, actor, and dancer. She is also lesbian and works to help young queer people. She has also spoken about mental and physical health.

Kehinde Wiley
Kehinde Wiley is a painter who makes art celebrating Brown and Black people. In

2018, he was chosen to paint a portrait of Barack Obama for the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery. That makes him the first Black gay artist to paint something for the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery.

Conclusion

In conclusion, queer people have an enormous impact on the

world, and not just during pride month. If you would like to learn more about queer people and their rights, one of the sources I used, glad.org, has a lot of information about that. Happy pride month!

https://www.orchestrasforall.org/blog/lgbtqiamusicians-who-totally-rock-our-world

- https://www.npr.org/2021/01/30/962374050/soph ie-electronic-musics-transgressive-pop-star-<u>dead-at-34</u>
- https://www.glad.org/search/? s=lbgtq+leaders

Two Degrees by Alan Gratz: A Book With a Bigger Message

By Laurel Knapp Tusker Tribune Staff A Truely Amazing Book In the book <u>Two Degrees</u> by Alan Gratz, you follow four kids in

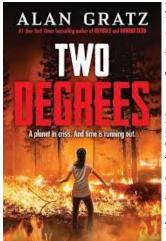
their fight to survive against three climate disasters caused by global warming. Akira must try to survive in one of California's massive and destructive wildfires, while Owen and George must survive a polar bear encounter in the Canadian Tundra, and finally, in

Miami, Natalie finds herself in the middle of a devastating hurricane! Connections form between these three stories, and the result is astounding: a book that makes you want to come back for more.

bout Global Warming

Did you know that if the Earth gets 2°C warmer than before industrial times, then extreme weather conditions – that cause peril to many and cause others to lose their homes and





belongings – will be more frequent. The earth will come to a tipping point that can-not be reversed, if humans keep releasing greenhouse gases into the atmosphere.

According to carbonbrief.org, the Earth will be 2°C warmer in about 19 years. So, we must act fast. If everyone tries to do something to help solve the disaster of climate change, then we might be able to stop climate change before it destroys the planet that we currently call home: Earth.

About the Author

Alan Gratz is known for writing amazing young adult historical fiction novels. Some of his other novels include Refugee, Ground Zero, Allies, Grenade, Project 1065, and Prisoner B-3087.

If you like Two Degrees, I highly encourage reading these other novels.

His novel Refugee has been on the New York Times bestseller list for over four years, and a lot of other books he has written made the list this year as well.

Soon-To-Be 6th Graders: Don't Worry About Middle School!

By Gemma Krissoff Tusker Tribune Staff

Hello, 5th graders. As you know, you will be in middle school next September, which can be scary! As a 6th grader, I will

tell you about middle school (It will not be as bad as

you think!).

I think the reason I found middle school so scary was because books and TV made it seem that way. For example, I read a comic book where the

main character was in a middle school that seemed dreadful. In the book, there were bullies left and right, tons of homework, and horrible teachers. Somers Middle School is not like that at all! I can't guarantee you on the bully part, as I don't know your grade, but the teachers are nice, and you will not get a truckload of homework.



The only homework I got was some IXL, reading, and sometimes a science or French assignment. However, you might get more homework than me, depending on your classes. For example, my friends who are taking Spanish got more homework than me (I am taking French). But don't let that discourage you from taking Spanish, as my friends got a normal amount of homework and still had plenty of free time after school.

In 6th grade, there are two teams: the White Team and the Red Team. You get different teachers depending on what team you are on. I am on the White Team, and most of the teachers I have are super nice. And none of the teachers I have are downright mean.

After the 2023-2024 school year, the ELA

teacher on the White Team will be retiring. This means that if you are on the White Team, I can't tell you whether your ELA teacher will be nice. But if the new ELA teacher is mean, you will not have them for the entire day. My friends who are on the Red Team said that the Red Team teachers are nice, also.

Most of the classrooms are close together and easy to walk to. You might get lost or not know where your classes are at first, but you will get used to it soon and remember

where all your classes are. Also, for the first days of school, the teachers will forgive you if you are late be-cause they know you might forget where the classrooms are.

When I was starting 6th grade, I was really scared about not being able to open my locker or forgetting the code. I soon found out this

wasn't a problem, though. You will get used to using your locker, and if you forget your code, you can look at the papers with your schedule that you get at the beginning of the year. Your code will be written there, and if you lose the paper, you can get it printed again. Some teachers also have a key that can open any locker.

Another great part about SMS is that there

are a lot of options for clubs. You can join sports clubs, drama, art club, and more! You can also write for the school newspaper, the Tusker Tribune. Also, if you are not in lunch and recess with your friends, you can see Mr. Arnett and he can switch your lunch for you.

In conclusion, 6th grade will not be as hard

as you think. You will have lots of amazing teachers, not much homework, and lots of club options. I hope you have a great summer and 6th grade!

Father's Day is This Sunday

By Olivia Pelhank Tusker Tribune Staff

Father's Day is coming up this Sunday! A day to celebrate and honor the fathers who love and appreciate us!

Father's Day is on the third Sunday of June every year, which is the 16th this year. It was first proposed by Sonora Smart Dodd of Spokane, Washington, in 1909. Her dad was a civil war veteran, and he had raised her and her five siblings after their mother died in Childbirth.

For children, Father's Day is an amazing day to celebrate the fathers or father-figures in their lives! According to the website vedantu, "Father is the best example of a superhero. A father me in celebrating Father's Day this Sunday to apworks tirelessly day and night for his family so that preciate all that fathers do for us!

he can educate his children well and support his family. To give respect to this hard work, we celebrate Father's Day every year."



I cannot wait to celebrate this holiday to give back to the fathers in our lives who care and protect us. So, join

The Rock Wall Climb!



By Francesca Palumbo Tusker Tribune Staff "We have arrived to our destination," said the GPS that day

We made it Lake

George, yay!"

When my parents checked in, me and my brother saw a sign;

It said that there is a rock wall to climb!

We noticed it was open for 1 hour a day;

But we still wanted to go and play!

We went after we finished settling into our hotel room;

And we were the first ones online and zoom!

It was time to go on, for the first time It was so hard, it looked like we had never climbed. Then I did it!!!!

The next day, we tried again;. But we made it no farther We saw someone make it to the top; Did we make it look harder?

The next day, the hour flew by; Did we make any progress, if not, why?

I woke up the next morning with the same confi-



dence I had; But I still didn't make it and I felt really sad.

The last morning of the vacation, the last chance to make

We waited on the line, and it was finally my turn;

I made it the farthest I've ever done before.

But no, I was going to do more;

And more,

And more,

And more. I finally made it to the resting

point; I was so high, I felt like I can

fly

I made it to the top! My brother was so close and jumped to try to make He missed by just an inch!

I jumped my way down the wall, feeling like I would never fall.

Then on the ride home, I watched the videos and pictures my mom took of me. In my head I thought, this could never be!

Juneteenth Holds Great Symbolism



By Tara Godwin Tusker Tribune Staff

Why do we have a day off next Wednesday? On June 19 of every year, we celebrate Juneteenth.

What is Juneteenth? Juneteenth is the celebration of when all black enslaved people were freed in the year 1865. On Juneteenth of that year, about 250,000 slaves were officially freed.

You might be wondering, weren't enslaved people freed in 1863? Yes, this statement is true but not entirely true. The Emancipation Proclamation freed slaves on January 1st, 1863. Due to the

time period, phones were not widespread, so Union soldiers near where the proclamation was signed spread the information by word of mouth.

The Emancipation Proclamation was signed



in Washington. Texas was more than 1,400 miles (about half the width of the United States) away. According to the website Kesa Kivel Studios, "Why had it taken so long for Texans to be notified?" the Union Army was not in control in this state, and some of those in power deliberately withheld the information of the emancipation in order to keep the economic rewards of slave labor in place for slaveholders." Some people were just so cruel and decided to not welcome the information and instead turned it away.

What are some ways to celebrate Juneteenth? Most families

celebrate Juneteenth with musical performances, family cookouts, and faith services. Overall, Juneteenth is one of the most important days in American culture.

Summer Means UEFA Eurocup 2024!

By Xavi Dosil Tusker Tribune Staff

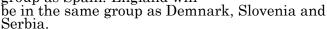
As school ends and summer begins, there is a soccer tournament that is beginning. The 2024 edition of the UEFA Eu-

rocup is starting today in Germany. 51 matches across one month will decide the champion of European soccer. The tournament will be live on FOX, FS1, Fubo Sports and all matches on Vix for \$5. This will preview two teams playing in the Euros.

ENGLAND

England has been in 5 of the last six Euro Cups. Between 2008-2014, they were not a good

team. Not making the euros in 2008 began their downfall, but in 2018 with them having a good run in the World Cup, they are now a team that is favored to win the Euros (+350). After they almost won the Euros in England in 2021, they are looking to avenge a loss that was against Italy, who is going to be in the same group as Spain. England will be in the same group as Dome



SPAIN

Spain is a team that is full of european glory. They have won the 1964, 2008 and 2012 European Cups and are looking to win a 4th European Championship. They are in the toughest group of the whole championship, drew against Italy, Croatia and Albania. Albania is not the biggest threat to Spain but Croatia and Italy are huge threats. Croatia was defeated by Spain in the Nations League final last year and Italy won the Euros in 2021 but Italy did not qualify for the World Cup the next year. Spain lost to Morroco in the round of 16 3-0 on penalties so this will be interesting for Spain.

Match Schedule

June 14
Germany vs Scotland, 3 p.m. (FOX)
June 15
Hungary vs Switzerland, 9 a.m. FUBO
Spain vs Croatia, 12 p.m. (FOX)
Italy vs Albania, 3 p.m. (FOX)
June 16
Poland vs Netherlands, 9 a.m. (FS1)
Slovenia vs Denmark, 12 p.m. (FS1)
Serbia vs England, 3 p.m. (FOX)
June 17
Romania vs Ukraine, 9 a.m. FUBO
Belgium vs Slovakia, 12 p.m. (FS1)
Austria vs France, 3 p.m. (FOX)
June 18
Turkey vs Georgia, 12 p.m. FUBO
Portugal vs Czechia, 3 p.m. (FOX)
June 19
Croatia vs Albania, 9 a.m. (FS1)

Germany vs Hungary, 12 p.m. (FS1) Scotland vs Switzerland, 3 p.m. (FOX) June 20 Slovenia vs Serbia, 9 a.m. (FS1) Denmark vs England, 12 p.m. (FS1) Spain vs Italy, 3 p.m. (FOX) June 21 Slovakia vs Ukraine, 9 a.m. FUBO Poland vs Austria, 12 p.m. (FS1) Netherlands vs France, 3 p.m. (FOX) June 22Georgia vs Czechia, 9 a.m. FUBO Turkey vs Portugal, 12 p.m. (FOX) Belgium vs Romania, 3 p.m. (FOX) June 23 Switzerland vs Germany, 3 p.m. (FS1) Scotland vs Hungary, 3 p.m. (FOX) June 24 Croatia vs Italy, 3 p.m. (FOX) Albania vs Spain, 3 p.m. (FS1) June 25 Netherlands vs Austria, 12 p.m. (FS1) France vs Poland, 12 p.m.

(FOX)

England vs Slovenia, 3 p.m. (FOX)

Denmark vs Serbia, 3 p.m. (FS1)

June 26

Slovakia vs Romania, 12 p.m. (FS1)

Ukraine vs Belgium, 12 p.m. (FOX)

Czechia vs Turkey, 3 p.m. (FS1)

Georgia vs Portugal, 3 p.m. (FOX)

BRACKET STAGE - ROUND OF 16

June 29 Match 1, 12 p.m. FS1 Match 2, 3 p.m. FOX June 30 Match 3, 12 p.m. FOX Match 4, 3 p.m. FOX July 1 Match 5, 12 p.m. FS1 Match 6, 3 p.m. FOX July 2 Match 7, 12 p.m. FS1 Match 8, 3 p.m. FOX
QUARTERFINALS July 5 Match 1, 12 p.m. FOX Match 2, 3 p.m. FOX July 6 Match 3, 12 p.m. FOX Match 4, 3 p.m. FOX **SEMIFINALS** Match 1, 3 p.m. FOX July 10 Match 2, 3 p.m. FOX EURO 2024 FINAL July 14

Final, 3 p.m. FOX

Tim McArdle from the Somers VFW came to SMS today to present the Patriot's Pen contest winners \$50 checks for their outstanding essays back in the fall. Pictured here are Abigail Florentino, Julia Markolovic, Valentina DeSantis, and Ben Shubert. Also pictured is Jackson Markolovic, who got in the photo to lend moral support to his sister, Julia. And in the separate photo, John Jackson, who missed the original photo, was also recognized.









Have a terrific summer! Let's do this again next year. THANKS to all the writers who made our newspaper the very best it could be!