



# The Tusker Tribune

SOMERS MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWSPAPER

Issue Number 32

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

Spring 2024

18  
NEWSPAPER CLUB  
TUSKER TRIBUNE

## The Best Way to Survive on a New Planet Science/ELA IDU for 8<sup>th</sup> Graders



By Ruby McDowell  
Tusker Tribune Staff

At the end of a genetics unit, 8th-grade science, and ELA students gather in the library to research genetic engineering to determine the best way to adapt to the conditions on a new planet.

On one hand, changes made with genetic engineering technologies like CRISPR manifest quickly, leading to greater chance of survival. However, genetic engineering can be dangerous. Unwanted changes can make certain genes turn off, or they might take effect, but cause another problem.

Since side effects of genetic engineering are not fully understood, some students believe that natural selection is the way to go. During natural selection, mutations (random changes in DNA) are “selected” by nature. An organism that has a beneficial mutation will be most likely to reproduce and pass that trait to its offspring.

As time goes on, this trait spreads until the entire population has it. The only downside is that it takes quite a bit of time, however, in a new environment, we will evolve quicker because there is more reason to.



I chose to use natural selection because of the risks associated with genetic engineering. Gene therapy is safe and has been in use for quite some time. However, the type of genetic engineering used today is somatic. This type of genetic engineering targets specific cells and genes. These changes do not affect other cells in the body, so they cannot be passed down to offspring. Germline genetic engineering is done on an embryo. The changes affect every cell in the body,

as the development of the child is still at its earliest stages. The changed cells are duplicated and affect the sperm and egg cells. This means the changes can be passed down to future generations.

To survive on our new planet, we would have to use germline genetic engineering. However, germline is not in regular use, and the dangers are still unknown. Based on this information, I decided to use natural selection and research technologies to help us survive until we adapt.

Overall, so far, the Science/ELA IDU has been a wonderful exploration into the world of genetics and evolution. It is interesting to learn about different genetic engineering studies in science class and how to research and persuade in ELA. 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders, you have something to look forward to in 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

## Anticipating Summer at LBI is Half the Fun



By Allison Cardillo  
Tusker Tribune Staff

Summer is always fun! You can go to summer camp or play lots of sports. But my ultimate favorite is going on vacation.

I go to LBI (Long Beach Island in New Jersey) every year with my cousins. I make a lot of memories and the older I get, the more freedom I have. That is even more fun when I go with my cousins to get açai bowls and more.

We stay at this beautiful house and all 11 of us each get our own room. The house that we get is three houses down from the beach, which is amazing for lunchtime so you can go home and eat. Also, we have a giant pool, which is fun if the sun gets



too hot at the beach or for night swimming, which I do every night.

If you walk three houses down the other way from the beach, you're right in town. There's so much to do there. There's a fudge store and they have all different flavors, like cookies n' cream, chocolate and cinnamon and more. We also go to this waterpark every year which has amazing rides. My favorite ride is the one that can fit eight people in one tube, and we go in a circle, and then back down the slide. And of course, there is the basic Lazy River ride.

I've been going to LBI since I was one year old and I love it. If you want to make some memories with your family or friends, go to LBI.

## Lots to Look Forward to at SMS



By Elizabeth Alonzo Javier  
Tusker Tribune Staff

Dear Jackson:

Sorry! I found you in my yearbook. We are practically neighbors as well.

Well, I will get to the main point: Middle school. Where people say homework will just pile up increasingly (means more). Which is not true so do not fear. You get way less. Oh, and the best part is, YOU DONT HAVE WORDLY WISE!

In middle school, you have 3 trimesters. The first trimester, you will either have art, health, or technology. For example, if you have art first trimester, you will have health 2<sup>nd</sup> trimester, which leads you to have technology 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester. All trimesters are great! TRUST.

### Middle School Advice



*From kids who've  
BEEN THERE*

In middle school, we use this app called Schoology which we use to do mostly all our work on. We can contact people, and see what major events we have like tests, or culture day and presentations.

### ~Special & fun events~

In middle school, we have a culture day and on culture day, you bring in food from your culture. We usually celebrate this day by putting the foods people bring from their culture in the cafeteria, and when it is lunch time, you head to the cafeteria, and you get to try other people's food from their cultures. There is usually music playing in the background as well.

This year, the 6<sup>th</sup> grade orchestra and 6<sup>th</sup> grade chorus played for this special day in the cafeteria and the kids got to see us perform. Take it from me, since I am in orchestra and chorus, it was a great and nervous feeling to play up in front of the lunch group, but once we started playing, it was giving great vibes and not bad vibes.

### Lockers & lunches

Lockers. The key is to not stress when you cannot open your locker or if the person under your locker is not giving you space to open your locker. The first bell rings. You have three minutes to get to your locker and get to your next class. The three minutes feels long so do not worry.

Lunch is great here in middle school. On Mondays, just like at SIS, we get chicken nuggets or popcorn chicken. Tuesday, you get real pizza from a Pizzeria, not daddy pig bold pizza (no hate or anything just not of fan of dads' pizza lol)

### ~Just a message 4 you~

Whenever you feel down, just remember this like I remembered this when someone told me this:  
"The human spirit is stronger than anything that can happen to it"

*I hope you take my advice*

~Elizabeth Alonzo Javier (Jasline's sister from Bus G)



*Students in  
Mr. Mullaney's social  
studies class took a field  
trip to the Elephant Hotel  
to see the new statue  
of "Old Bet" that graces  
the front lawn of the  
building.*





## College Football is Coming Back to the Gaming World!



**By Cole Dolan  
Tusker Tribune Staff**

EA Sports announced that NCAA 25 would be coming out on July 16<sup>th</sup>. This is huge for the sports gaming industry as the last college football game came out in 2013.

After fighting a lawsuit surrounding name, image, and likeness, they have since then been licensed with NCAA football and can produce a game. Many people are hoping that it is different



from Madden, the professional football game. Even though there would be different teams, it would be boring to have the same graphics and mechanics.

College football has so many teams and all of the 134 FBS teams will be in the game. Hopefully, the game can be a success for EA because fans really want to start playing with their favorite teams so EA cannot mess this up. I know I am getting my pre-order in to play with my favorite team Notre Dame, but will you be playing NCAA 25?

## Get Ready for Some Exciting Changes, 5th Graders!



**By Olivia Pelhank  
Tusker Tribune Staff**

Dear 5<sup>th</sup> graders....

Next year you will be going into the magical world of SMS! Now it can seem stressful going into a new school, but I promise you are going to love it just as much as I do.

Your first day will probably be stressful. It was like that for me and all my friends. Everything changes. Lockers, different classes, white team or red team, carrying backpacks, and much more will be different. But you have so much more freedom!

The teachers are sweet and don't worry about not getting to class perfectly on time for the first day of school. Also, I know going into a whole new school seems so stressful, but most of your classes will be in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade hallway.

And don't worry about your locker. On my first day, I couldn't

open my locker. I was so late to class. But a teacher helped, and I was fine. I promise you will love SMS. Here are some benefits on why middle school is so amazing:

- Different teachers. All your classes will be with different teachers!
- Different classes. All your classes will be with different kids!
- You have WIN period. WIN is basically just "What I Need." You have the freedom to book what you want to do at WIN every day.
- No dismissal. You can walk with friends, head to the library, or stay after school in a club. No one dismisses you.

There are many more benefits of middle school, but these are my favorites. So, don't be scared to go to middle school! Instead, be excited!

### Middle School Advice



*From kids who've  
**BEEN THERE***

## Managing Time in 7th Grade



**By Gianna Peanamanda  
Tusker Tribune Staff**

Dear any 6<sup>th</sup> graders:

Hi. My name is Gianna. I am in 7<sup>th</sup> grade and thought I would tell you a little bit about 7<sup>th</sup> grade, since you will be here soon.

When I first got to 7<sup>th</sup> grade, the work was a lot harder. There were so many tests coming up and I couldn't keep up! I needed to find time to study for all these tests to pass, and still do what I like to do.

So, every day when I got home from school, I would sit down, get something to eat, do homework, and then study. I would study for 30 minutes per test a night. For example, if I had 1 test

coming up, I would study for 30 minutes a night. Two tests, an hour a night and so on depending on the number of tests there are. This would assist me so much because it keeps up with schoolwork. In addition, would have the whole rest of the day/night to do what I love to do and feel prepared for any tests coming up!

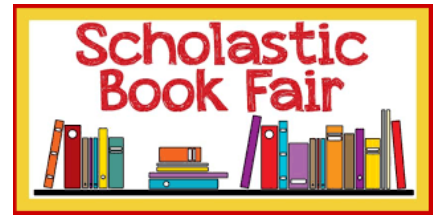
If you don't really like the way I organize my schoolwork, I'd really suggest on finding a way that fits you best! I hope you have an enjoyable 7<sup>th</sup> grade and this helps out with keeping up with your schoolwork!

### Middle School Advice



*From kids who've  
**BEEN THERE***

*The SMS PTA Scholastic Book Fair was held earlier this month in the SMS Library. As in the fall, SMS Library Media Specialist Megan O'Connor organized a Book Fair essay contest. Students submitted essays in a competition where one winner from each grade will be awarded a \$20 gift certificate to the book fair. We are featuring several of these essays in this week's Tusker Tribune. Each submission has the Scholastic Logo you see here inserted in the story:*



## Spring in NYC



**By Susan Pucci  
Tusker Tribune Staff**

I leaped out of bed and ran to my window. The sun was out, and there was not a cloud in the sky! Flowers were blooming everywhere, and it was a perfect spring day!

I got dressed and went into the kitchen to find a big Saturday breakfast of waffles and strawberries! Perfect for spring!

"Good morning, sleepyhead!" said Ma as I stumbled over to the table.

After we ate, my older sister came in too, and we all got our shoes on and took the elevator to the lobby of our building.

"Why don't you girls take a walk around Central Park, and I will stay here and make some lunch!"

"Okay!" we shouted and ran outside.

We just walked around for a while, and then, while we sat on a bench and talked about school and things, an old woman approached us.

"Nice spring day it is, huh?" she said in a country accent.

"Uh, yeah," we said and started to walk away.

"You know," she sat down, "When I was a girl, my Mama used to take me to the park all the time on days like this. But of course, in Alabama, it's much hotter, and I mean we always had rain, but this here is a nice clear day."

"Yeah," we nodded our heads.

I checked my watch. "Eleven o'clock, we better go!" I said and jumped up. My sister followed as we said goodbye to the old woman who now seemed to be lonely.

I breathed in the scent of fresh flowers one last time as we entered our apartment building.

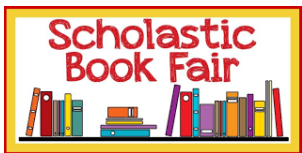
"That was a good morning," my sister sighed.

"Yeah," I agreed, "especially when that woman told us about Alabama!" We giggled.

"Happy spring!" called our doorman.

"Thanks, Bob!" we replied as we went to the elevator.

It really was a good spring day.



## The Magic World of Spring

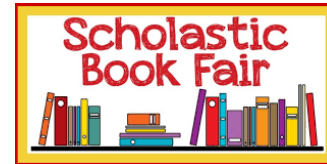


**By Olivia Pelhank  
Tusker Tribune Staff**

Today is the first day of spring.

The best time of the

year,  
When  
spring is  
over,  
I'll proba-  
bly shed a  
tear



Spring is when flowers bloom.

And the cold goes

away,  
Spring is  
when  
there is  
unlimited  
ice cream,  
Every sin-  
gle day!

So I get  
ready to  
breathe,  
The great  
spring  
air,

And enjoy the yearly,  
Amazing spring fair!

And I brush my teeth,  
And do as I'm told,  
But when I step out-  
side,  
I realize it's cold!

But I run to,  
an ice cream truck,  
Maybe I just have,  
Some really bad luck?

I order vanilla,  
Without a doubt,  
Only for them to tell

me,  
That they are out!

I get kind of sad,  
And want to scream,  
Because they don't  
have,  
My favorite ice cream!

I don't let it  
get to me,  
And run to  
the fair,  
With the  
wind,  
Blowing my

hair!

I see some people,  
That look mad,

But its  
spring,  
So how  
could you  
be sad?

The tickets  
are free,  
For every-  
one,  
I'm so ex-  
cited,  
To have  
some fun!

I head to a ride,  
And start to sing,  
And then he says,  
"It's not working!"

I start to wonder,  
How can that be,  
Wait is that a dead  
flower,  
That I see?

Wake up, wake up,  
wake up,  
I hear my mom scream,  
And then I realize,  
It was all a dream!



## 'Springing' into February



By Julie Genovesi  
Tusker Tribune Staff

"Hi Eli!" screamed Saidie up at my bedroom window. Saidie was my only friend.

It was February 3, my least favorite day of the year; My birthday. Everyone thinks that their birthday is the best, but ever since last year, I have been dreading this day.

Saidie, my one-and-only friend, was knocking on the door. She had a giant box in her hands wrapped tight in shiny blue paper. "Hi Sandy," I yelled. "Come in, the door's open." Sandy was my nickname for her, just like her nickname for me was Eli. I called her "Sandy" because the first time we met was on the beach, when we were both only 3 years old.

My name is Elina. I am 12 years old (13 today), and I am the world's most introverted introvert. I had been sitting on my bed doing the best thing in the world before Saidie had come—reading. It was the only thing I would do besides go to school, except for in spring. Spring is my favorite season, I love to go outside, sit under a tree, and watch the beautiful world around me. My only birthday wish was for spring to come early, but that was impossible... right?

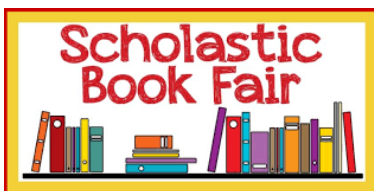
"Eli, what is up?" asked Saidie. "I came over so that we can do actual fun stuff before the class comes."

"Thanks. I really don't want this to be like last year," I responded.

"Carlos isn't coming this year. Don't worry," she assured me. Carlos was my enemy last year. He had done something horrible, so I switched to a private school. The private school was better, but there were some mean kids there, too. Plus, my mom would always try to hang out with my class and me, and I did not think that was cool. Also, my mom always ran my birthday party. Every year it was the same. She would invite the whole grade to our house using the pink paper invitations, run five competitions, and the winner would get a bunch of candy. Worst of all, she would make everything sports theme. I HATE SPORTS!

All I wanted to do for my birthday was text Saidie, to come over and talk about books that we read. My mom was the reason that Carlos had ruined my life last year. Carlos was my friend, or at least I thought we were friends. He had secretly been working with my mortal enemy since third grade, Maya. Maya had always wanted to make me feel like a disgrace, so during my birthday party last year, she did.

I was sitting at the table, waiting for Carlos or Saidie to show up so that I could start the party.



They would always come early because they knew that they were the only ones who I wanted to be there. "DING!"

I ran to open the door. I looked outside and I immediately frowned. It was Maya. I told her to go away, but instead she said the one thing that I thought I would never hear from Maya!

"I am sorry about being so mean to you and I want to be friends."

I was so surprised that she said that.

"Okay, Maya," I said, "Come in."

In a few minutes we were sitting at the table waiting for the other guests.

"Sooo," she said, "What should we do?"

"I don't know," I replied, "Do you want to teach me how to play some sports? I have never really tried them."

"Well then, I need to teach you how to play soccer!" she said.

"Alright, let's do it," I responded, "It's too cold outside since it's winter, so we have to do it in the basement."

"Don't you sometimes wish that it was spring early?" she asked.

"Yeah. I love spring."

Maya was about to start a sentence when the doorbell rang again. This time it was Carlos. But behind him was the whole grade. That's when my party went wrong. It was Maya's job to distract me while Carlos got everything organized, then Carlos gave everyone a sign to show to me. Most of them were about how bad I was at sports. Some were about how I had no friends, and Carlos held the worst one and read it to me at the same time.

"You will never be good enough."

"ELI!" screamed Saidie. "Snap out of it."

"Okay. It was just a memory," I said.

"Elina!" screamed my mother. "I'm so sorry dear, your party is cancelled because of how cold it is. Also, no one responded when I asked if they were coming or not. Also, Saidie has a family emergency and needs to go home now."

"Sorry," Saidie sadly responded, "My mom just texted me to come home because my uncle died."

"Okay Sandy," I replied, "It's fine."

I didn't sleep much that night. I stared up at the ceiling, wishing for spring to come early. I missed the sweet songs of the birds chirping, I missed the nice scents of the delicate flowers as they bloomed, I missed sitting under a tree, reading my books. But most of all, I missed going to the lake in our backyard, and being alone there to do whatever I wanted. I drifted off to sleep, dreaming of all the wonders of spring, and I couldn't wait for it to finally arrive.

*Continued on Page 6*





## A Spring Poem



By Juliette Sayegh  
Tusker Tribune Staff

When spring comes  
around,  
All the people in town,  
Get up and shout,  
The festival's now.

As the flowers bloom,  
We come out of our room;  
The festival is the here,  
And the people draw near  
To see ...

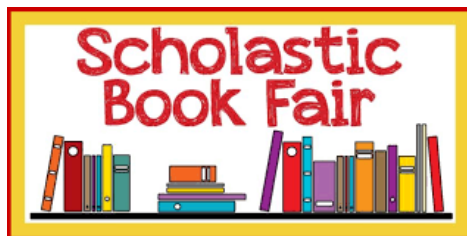
The games and the rides,  
The toys and the slides;  
The food is without a  
doubt,  
The best they have to  
give out.

But one thing is wrong,  
There is no song,  
Without a song,  
We can't sing along.

The birds don't tweet,  
There is no beat,  
The people cry,  
They look in the sky,  
And the birds don't fly.

Everyone is sad,  
Except Mr. Smiley, he is glad.  
He hates when people laugh;  
He wants to split them in half.

But then he looks to see Tina and  
Lina,  
They are happy and chatty.



Mr. Smiley would be sad,  
And the people are glad.

How the tables turned,  
When the song got burned.  
They made one up,  
As they gained some luck.  
At the end they got an ice cream  
truck.

So now they sing and  
dance;  
Cause they got a second  
chance;  
They can go to the festi-  
val, relax;  
And see...

The games and the rides,  
The toys and the slides,  
While eating the food  
which is without a doubt  
The best they have to  
give out.



Tina and Lina make their own  
music;  
The people come to see how they  
did it;  
It turns out they used their voic-  
es;  
It was like a virus.

'Cause it spread from door to  
door;  
From house to house,  
Everywhere,  
Even to a mouse.

As the song grew,  
The people knew,

### Reporters/Contributors

Allison Cardillo  
Giuliana DeMartino  
Cole Dolan  
Julie Genovesi  
Charlotte Hein  
Elizabeth Alonzo Javier  
Laurel Knapp  
Ruby McDowell  
Cecelia Morrissey  
Francesca Rose Palumbo  
Gianna Peanamanda  
Olivia Pelhank  
Susan Pucci  
Juliette Sayegh

### Springing From Page 6

"Elina come downstairs right now!" yelled  
my mother.

"Coming!" I screamed back. I quickly looked  
out the window, expecting snow, but instead saw  
daffodils, lilies and daisies. I saw green grass grow-  
ing, and the trees had magically grown green  
leaves. I was stunned, and I quickly threw on a  
jacket and put on my shoes, so that I could run out-  
side. I ran through the tall grass and rushed to my  
favorite reading spot; under the huge oak tree that  
made us have shade throughout our whole yard.  
My book was already there!

I spent most of the morning reading, and  
then ran inside. I threw off my jacket and changed

into shorts and a tee shirt. I rushed to the lake,  
where I saw deer, birds, butterflies, and many oth-  
er animals. Of course; there were also all kinds of  
flowers and spring plants blooming there too. My  
birthday wish had come true.

"Elina!" Called my mother, "Saidie is back!"  
"Saide!" I exclaimed, "I'm coming!"

Later that day, we kept walking through  
that beautiful spring wonderland, wondering how  
it had happened.

"Sandy, my only birthday wish was for it to  
be spring," I said.

"Why don't you open up my present now?"  
she responded.

"Once I am done enjoying this we can." I re-  
plied.

## Garden Games



**By Francesca Rose Palumbo**  
**Tusker Tribune Staff**  
"Ring, Ring," said the last bell at the beginning of

spring.

We rushed out of school, and came up with an idea that's pretty cool.

Let's garden in the beautiful spring weather, and let's clean our yard.

Every feather.

"Ring," said my alarm clock the next morning.

I groaned because I knew school would be boring.

I waited till the end of school, when me and my friends passed the pool.

Time to garden

What should we plant first?

Let's plant tomatoes.

I want to plant potatoes.

Let's plant both.

And watch their

growth.

We planted them all, and went to bed so happy it wasn't fall.

We woke up and looked outside, to see our fruit wasn't in sight.

"What happened to the fruit?" said a guy named Luke

"I don't know."

"We must go."

"The bus is here."

"We haven't missed it in a year."

In the middle of lunch, we all gathered in a bunch, and discussed about the missing fruit

All we could see is what used to be the root.

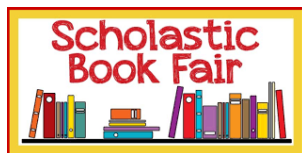
We woke up the next morning and looked out the window what did we see... our food was back.

What the heck?

After the longest day of school, we all felt like fools, until we had an idea—let's sneak out at night, and see what's in sight.

We all planned a time, at about 9, we would go outside behind a tree, and try to be very sneaky.

You will not believe what we saw.



And no, the fruit was not raw, everything we planted is alive.

They started to whisper,



"Did the humans see you?"

And started giving each other high fives

"I don't think so"

"Phew"

"Boo!" we said to see what they would say.

"AAAAHHH!"

"We are not trying to hurt you in any way."

"But we have learned that humans like to eat us."

"Let's just stop all the fuss."

This is crazy, the fruit is alive!

What will we do?

They think we're a threat to their kind.

"Maybe you can be our friends."

"We can protect you from any humans."

"You will protect us and want to be our friends?"

"We thought this is how our story ends."

"We would love to be your friends."

"But you can't tell anyone about us, deal?"

"Deal."

The sun was rising so we

rushed inside, still shocked about what happened last night.

At lunch we checked every fruit we got, just to make sure it wouldn't end up in a pot.

When we came home, we went to our garden to ask our fruit what they do every night.

"You know we escape?"

"Yes, we do."

"Well, we like spring, too."

"We're confused."

"We like to see the flowers and the beautiful trees."

"All the caterpillars and all the bees."

"Everybody in a good mood."

"All the barbeques with all the food."

"That's what we love about spring."

"But we thought you would eat us, that's the thing."

"But we are fruit, and we will rot."

"After spring we must go somewhere not as hot."

"So, you're leaving us?"

"No, we can be back next year."

"You will have something to look forward to, so don't fear."

After school we rushed home fast, to see all the fruit waiting in the grass.

"You made our spring fun, instead of looking at the pool, wishing there was sun."

"We must go inside now, but see you next year, have a great summer, and always cheer."

"Bye"

"Bye!!!!!!"

**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 e-mail Advisor Dean Pappas at:

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



## Head East



**By Laurel Knapp  
Tusler Tribune Staff**

The suffering of winter was over. No more huddling under my quilt for warmth in my non-heated shack I call home. No more pangs of hunger and once-a-day meals that tasted like tree bark. No more frostbite or flu. The greens, yellows, pinks, and purples of Spring chased all those gray, white feelings of sorrow away.

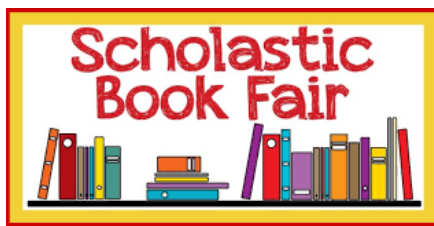
Spring also brought a long hike through Creekwood forest. The frozen lake six miles away from my shed would soon be melting, and when the lake melts, I must be there. No question about it.

I slid on my hand-sewn coat and hauled my backpack over my shoulder. I headed out the door, walking toward the rising sun. I felt my heart of coal burn with the need, the pressing need to be at the lake when the time comes. The wildfire of this need rises and inflames my head once again. There was a break in the trees, and a meadow spread wide before me. The meadow was beautiful. Birds chirped overhead, wildflowers in all colors dotted the long, green grass. Butterflies and bees buzzed around happily. Spring brought great colors, but great adventure as well.

The directions to the lake were quite easy to follow, head east and in six miles, the lake will be waiting for you. Waiting for you like a dog looking out the window watching for their owner, wishing for their owner to return. About a mile away from the end of the meadow, I saw the stream with a big log across it – the three-mile mark. I sat down, filled my canteen, and splashed some cool stream water over my dirt-streaked face.

The flow and trickle of the river rushed in a way that made me think of a lullaby from when I was a kid, in my parents' arms while they sang me off to sleep: "Stars shining bright above you, night breezes seem to whisper I love you, birds singing in the sycamore trees, dream a little dream of me..."

I set off on my hike again. By now, it was midday, the sun high above me. I took out my compass to make sure I was still walking to-



ward the lake. The needle pointed north, and I headed east. Then it suddenly grew darker, probably because a cloud came over the sun I thought. A twitch off to my left, a swoosh off to my right, and a branch – the color of dark chocolate, with moss growing along the graceful swirls of the bark – flying straight for me.

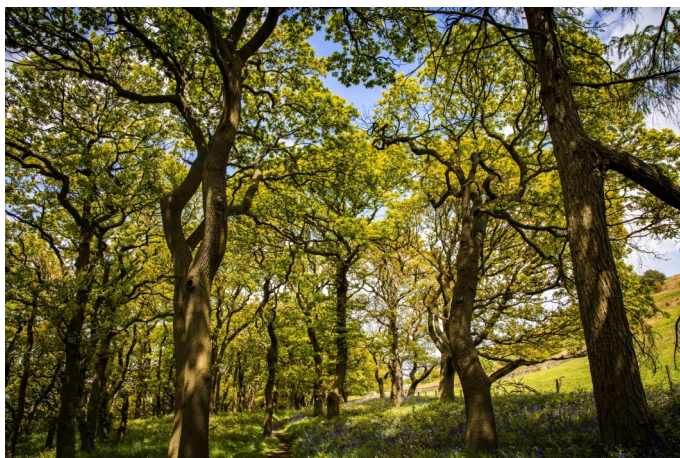
BOOM! The branch hit me in the stomach. "UUUH," I grunted in pain. It felt like I would never get up, it felt like the air would never return to my lungs, it felt like something deep inside me was broken: my hope. Then suddenly the whole forest submerged me in a cold embrace of darkness. The trees seemed to be saying, come to the darkness, give in, give up, come to the darkness.

I took off sprinting in the direction I thought was east—I had lost my compass when the branch hit me—but the thick forest branches grabbed my ankles and swept my feet out from under me. They started dragging me into the unexplored territory of the woods as my backpack bumped, scraped, and bounced along my back, eventually falling off. I struggled and fought with all my

might, but I could not beat the stunning power of mother nature, no matter how hard I tried.

Stars shining bright above you, night breezes seem to whisper I love you, I hummed, thinking back to those days where I felt as peaceful and safe as a bear deep in its den, hibernating the winter away. Suddenly, the branches relaxed as if the sound of my humming flooded their senses in a sleepy sensation. The hold on my ankles released and I made a run for it. I saw the break in trees, and beyond that I saw the lake – as beautiful as I remember it. I passed the wall of trees and was on the hill overlooking the lake. Joy filled me, joy that I had not felt in a long time. Birds singing in the sycamore trees, dream a little dream of me....

But then I felt a strong tug on my arm. I looked back, and in horror realized a branch—only as thick as a pencil—caught my wrist and was dragging me back. I must get to the lake. Must.





## Spring As a Dream



By Charlotte Hein  
Tusker Tribune Staff

Sleepy, Dreamy, and blue

Dreams

*Slowly*

*Drifting*

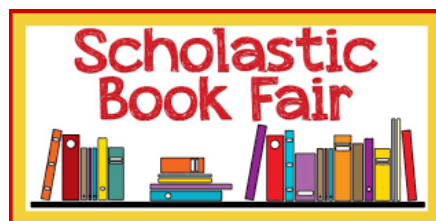
Opened eyes and palm trees dancing in the distance  
slowly rocking from side to side  
BURSTING through the door happiness slowly

Spilling

the door                      Through  
shifting through all the bloomed  
flowers and sunny skies, breaking though every  
last bone in every gray corner you lay your tired  
eyes on, Tears of joy and sadness slowly take over  
you rushing through your body and blood every  
memory comes to life                      Every

Single

One  
Leaving me alone but surrounded by my potential  
which is the worst thing that could happen  
I call this the wonders of spring  
Something I lose when I wake up



## Who is my mom?



By Francesca Rose Palumbo  
Tusker Tribune Staff

My mom is my hero; my mom is the bomb! My mom is the sweetest; my mom's not the greediest.

My mom is hard working, but always has time for cooking! My mom is the best mom you will ever find; she is 1 of a kind!



My mom is so pretty, she would do anything for us... even The Gritty!

You help us with bathing, you always wash my hair, and even when I don't think so, you are always fair! Without you, we would all be screwed, even when I'm in a bad mood!

You plan all our vacations, and wash all our clothes, so today we will make sure you do none of those! You are the funniest mom I know, and you always glow!

That is my mom, she's the best without doubt, and all the amazings about her will never run out!

Love,  
Frankie

## You Can Still Join Tusker Tribune! Just Write!



By Elizabeth Alonzo Javier  
Tusker Tribune Staff

Mr. Pappas. A super funny teacher and cool to hang out with after school at Tusker Tribune. He is sweet and kind to all students. He is so fun to be around. Super thoughtful about all the students he works with which is how all teachers should be (Not saying all teachers are bad).

Mr. Pappas is a great teacher just like every other teacher at SMS.

Tusker Tribune is an awesome club to join, not just because of how great Mr. Pappas is but because you have all the freedom to go on and author stories to express your life or anything you would like to write about. It is just a vast experience.

Tusker Tribune Club is an exciting time to socialize with Mr. Pappas. So, think about joining Tusker Tribune, a place where you can express and show your life feelings.

So, take some time to think about joining Tusker Tribune!



## A Harry Potter Experience in NYC



**By Giuliana DeMartino**  
**Tusker Tribune Staff**

N.Y.C It was a beautiful Saturday. I was extremely excited because I was going to the city with my best friend, Cece.

The first thing we did was go to the Harry Potter Experience. It was four blocks away from the Vessel building and one block away from the famous Empire State Building. At the entrance, there was a store and an empty line. We went to the line and got bracelets. We went up the stairs and made a profile for the experience. I was a Gryffindor. We went past the doors to take pictures. You can get a wand they had in a basket, but I had my own wand I got at Universal when I went there.

When we were done, we walked to another line. My sister accidentally took a wand, so I made her put it back. We went through more doors and ended to a room with a Hogwarts trunk and the first US copy of Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone movie. One of the workers said that the door was locked and that we needed a spell to unlock it. I raised my hand and said, "Alohomora."

"Correct" she said. "What house are you in?" "Gryffindor," I said.

"20 points to Gryffindor" she said and the door behind her unlocked.

There was another room where you could find your name on the Marauder's Map. I found my name and my friend Cece's name. A video played and then we were free to walk around the experience.

The first area was the grand area that had all the houses and the outfits of the actors who played in the movie. There was the sorting hat, and I took a picture by the Gryffindor area. We when to the next room and it was the wand room where we learned a famous spell: *Wingardium Leviosa*. We walked further down the hallway and ended up in the famous great hall. We did not eat any food LOL, but I took a bunch of photos.

My favorite thing in the Great Hall was the floating candles. This was probably the funniest part of the experience—potions. Cece and I made a love potion. We went to the Divinations area, where I looked into a crystal ball.

My sister's favorite room was Herbology, where we got to pick up a Mandrake. I didn't like it because the sound was lagging a lot. Then we went to the sports section where we played "Quidditch" and saw the Goblet of Fire from the Wizard Tournament. I took a picture of the Golden Snitch.

After the sports area, there was the Chamber of Secrets, Deathly Hollows, and the Horcrux display. We ended up at the office and it led to the gift shop. We all got candy. We got out and started walking to the Harry Potter store to get butterbeer. (By the way, you should try it).

On our way, we saw the Portal to Dublin. It was cool. We went to the store and got butterbeer with butterbeer ice cream. After we had lunch, we went on the subway to Times Square, I saw a rat. We went to the M&M store and because it was Fleet Week, my dad did pull ups with the Marines who had a tent set up. We took the subway back to Hudson Yards and got boba tea and left. I had a great time in the city.



**By Cecelia Morrissey**  
**Tusker Tribune Staff**

One Saturday on Memorial Day Weekend, I went to the city with my friend Giuliana. The car ride there was a lot of fun but the journey ahead was much more fun.

We went to a Harry Potter experience, saw clothes that they wore in the movie, saw creatures and rooms that looked just like the real ones. We took lots of pictures and ate lots of candy.

After we got out of there, we went to another Harry Potter place and got butter beer a drink from Harry Potter and it was good—you should try it.

After that, we went to a restaurant and ate food but what we saw on the way to the restaurant was amazing! It was a "portal". Not a real one but that's what they call it. It is like a giant Facetime from one city to another so we can see them and they can see us. It was a "portal" to Dublin!

After we waved to the people, we decided to go out to the M&M store for M&M's.

We passed navy people and street dancers. Once we got there, I rushed to get M&M's while Giuliana's little sister went to the bathroom. Giuliana and I looked out the window at all the people passing by while we waited. We looked at them as they crossed the road, took calls, comforted their kids. We watched them do everything. Then her sister came out of the bathroom, and we left. Then we went to the mall to get a Boba tea and hang out before we left.

Once we were done, we went out to see a live singer at a beautiful park. We walked around getting samples of drinks and seeing crochet flowers that I really wanted but couldn't get. We got to the car with salted pretzels and bags full of stuff ready to tell everyone of our amazing adventure. We drove back talking about all the fun we had and all the fun we will have next time.