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Café Connections at SMS!

Cafe Connections is a new initiative run by Ms. Mohl's SCIP class, with the support of related services. Every Friday morning, staff members can enjoy a fresh cup of coffee for just \$2, delivered to their classroom or office during period 2. Giancarlo Maltempi (above) is one of the students delivering the hot drinks.

Never Too Early to Start Competitive Swimming



By Nica Fried
Tusker Tribune Staff

Competitive swimming isn't just for seasoned athletes – many professional swimmers start their journey at a young age. It's common to see swimmers as young as 13 or 14 competing at national and international levels, making waves in the sport while balancing school and life outside the pool. These young swimmers show incredible talent, discipline, and maturity to compete alongside older and more experienced athletes.

For younger swimmers aiming to go pro, training starts early. Many join swim clubs or teams where they practice almost every day, sometimes twice a day, before or after school. Coaches focus on building strong fundamentals, like perfecting their strokes and improving their starts and turns. At this stage, the emphasis is on technique and building a solid foundation, but there's also a lot of focus on fun and keeping the love for the sport alive.

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How to Celebrate the Lunar New Year



By Olivia Pelhank
Tusker Tribune Staff

The Lunar New Year, also known as the Spring Festival, is coming up this coming Wednesday!

Sometimes, families will gather for an eight-course reunion dinner that symbolizes wealth in China. There are lion and dragon dances that are performed to bring wealth, health, and luck. The dances aren't the only lucky thing, though. Red is also considered lucky on the Lunar New Year. Parents will also hand out red envelopes with money to children.

Every year, the date changes. This year, the Lunar New Year takes place on Wednesday, January 29th. It's the Year of the Snake!

The Lunar New Year (might have) started with a fearsome beast. The beast was called Nian, which is the Mandarin word for "year". Apparently, Nian would attack nearby villages and take children and their crops once every year. Nian was scared away by the color red, loud sounds, and fire, hence starting the Lunar New Year. That was just a myth, but it is a fun story.

Anyway, to conclude, I hope you mark your calendars on January 29th for the Lunar New Year!



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Competitive Swimming

From Page 1

Life as a young pro swimmer can be intense. Balancing school, training, and competitions takes good time management and support from family, coaches, and teammates. These swimmers also need to maintain a healthy lifestyle, including eating nutritious meals and getting enough rest to keep up with their demanding schedules.



Many young swimmers also begin learning mental skills early, such as staying calm under pressure and bouncing back

from tough races.

Some young swimmers make their mark on the world stage at an early age. Athletes like Katie Ledecky and Ian Thorpe broke records and won medals as teenagers, inspiring others to dream big. Their success shows that age doesn't define ability – hard work, dedication, and passion can take young swimmers to incredible heights.

For younger swimmers who are serious about going pro, competitions like junior nationals and youth championships are stepping stones to bigger events. These meets are a chance to gain experience, test their skills, and get noticed by top coaches or scouts. It's also where many swimmers discover the importance of teamwork, even in what seems like an individual sport. Being part of a team helps younger athletes stay motivated and build lifelong friendships.

While the path to becoming a professional swimmer can be challenging, especially for young athletes, it's also incredibly rewarding. They learn discipline, resilience, and how to set and achieve goals – skills that will help them in swimming and in life. Plus, being part of the swimming community is



a unique experience. Swimmers cheer each other on, celebrate successes, and learn from setbacks together. For young swimmers dreaming of going pro, the most important thing is to stay patient, work hard, and enjoy the journey. Every practice and race is a step forward, and the possibilities are endless. Who knows? The next big swimming star might already be training at your local pool!

Lunar New Year Celebrates Spring



By Nica Fried
Tusker Tribune Staff

Lunar New Year is a major holiday celebrated in many countries in East and Southeast Asia, including China, Vietnam, Korea, and Singapore. It marks the start of the lunar calendar, which is based on the moon's cycles, and usually falls between January 21 and February 20.

The holiday is a time for families to come together, celebrate, and wish for good things in the year ahead. It is also known as the Spring Festival in China, as it marks the beginning of spring. People clean their homes to get rid of bad luck and make room for good fortune. Red decorations are put up everywhere because the color red is believed to bring luck and happiness.

Lunar New Year lasts for about 15 days, with many fun activities throughout the holiday. People often enjoy fireworks, lion dances, and parades, all of which are



meant to chase away evil spirits and bring good luck. The holiday ends with the Lantern Festival, where people light colorful lan-

terns and enjoy other festivities.

Each year in the Chinese zodiac is linked to one of twelve animals, like the rat, ox, tiger, and so on. People believe that the animal of the year can influence the personalities of those born in that year. For example, someone born in the Year of the Tiger might be thought to be brave and energetic.

Food plays a big part in the celebrations. Families eat special dishes like dumplings, rice cakes, and fish, which all symbolize wealth, happiness, and good fortune. Giving red envelopes filled with money is also a common tradition, especially for children, as a way to share blessings and well wishes.

Lunar New Year is not just about celebrations, though. It's also a time to honor ancestors and reflect on the past year. People express gratitude for family, friends, and all the good things in their lives. The holiday brings people together to share in the hope for a fresh start and a prosperous year ahead.

SMS Drama Club Presents 'Matilda, Jr.'



**By Nica Fried
Tusker Tribune Staff**

I'm thrilled to announce that this year our school will be presenting *Matilda Jr.*—a fun, heartfelt, and inspiring musical that I know you're all going to love.

This production is based on Roald Dahl's beloved story about Matilda Wormwood, an extraordinary young girl with a sharp mind and a fearless heart.

Despite growing up in a family that doesn't appreciate her intelligence or creativity, and attending a school ruled by the cruel and intimidating Miss Trunchbull, Matilda finds ways to stand up for herself and inspire those around her.

With the encouragement of her kind and caring teacher, Miss Honey, and the support of her friends, Matilda learns that even the smallest per-



son can make a big difference.

The show is packed with lively and memorable songs, such as "Naughty," where Matilda reminds us of the power of taking control of our own stories, and "When I Grow Up," which beautifully captures the dreams and aspirations we all share. One of the most exciting numbers is "Revolting Children," a bold and energetic anthem about standing up to injustice that's sure to be a crowd favorite.

This production is a fantastic opportunity for everyone involved. Whether you're performing on stage, working behind the scenes, or supporting the cast as part of the audience,

you'll experience a story that is both entertaining and meaningful. At its core, *Matilda Jr.* is about courage, kindness, and the power of standing up for what's right.

I hope you'll join us in making this production a success, and I can't wait for you all to see the

Fun Foods to Eat



**By Giuliana DeMartino
Tusker Tribune Staff**

After a long day of playing in the snow or at school, you probably get hungry and want a snack. Here is a list of some fun snacks and candy to try!

Swedish candy

- Everyone loves candy, whether it's chocolate or gummies, Swedish candy has a big variation. Swedish

candy is like a sugary marshmallow gummy it is so delicious. In New York City there is a store called Bon Bon. There are four locations in the city, and you can order your favorite candy online! I would 100% recommend trying Swedish candy.



Tanghulu

- Tanghulu is fruit on a stick dipped in melted sugar. It hardens up and turns into a sweet treat. It is crunchy and delicious. You can make this at home with melted jolly ranchers. You must try Tanghulu!



Dubai chocolate covered strawberries

- The viral Dubai chocolate strawberries were what most people wanted when they went to the Bryant Park Winter Village in New York City. It is strawberries covered in the viral Dubai chocolate, which is chocolate, but in the inside is like a pistachio coconut sauce. I have never tried Dubai chocolate covered strawberries, but I want to.



Dalgona cookies

- Dalgona cookies went viral after the hit Netflix k-drama "Squid game" got released. I wouldn't call Dalgona cookies exactly cookies; they are more like candy. Dalgona is a combo of melted sugar and baking soda with a shape in the middle you have to cut out or not. To make Dalgona is pretty hard, but people manage to make the famous "Mona Lisa" cookie with complicated triangles. From a friend I heard that Dalgona is very good and that you should try it when you get the chance.

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Philosophy: Is Your Red My Red?



By Leo Mundis
Tusker Tribune Staff

Introduction

Philosophy, the study of the fundamental nature of reality, including existence, knowledge, and metaphysics, is a growing and forever-changing field that has both plagued and enriched individuals for millennia.

One of these prodding questions concerns whether matter is primary in existence, and independent of thought or perception, or if senses and consciousness are instead the fundamental things that material world depends on. Essentially, what is first and foremost in existence—physical matter, or thoughts?

Scenario

A shopper strolls into the large and busy market, where plenty of fresh fruit lives. Cherries, raspberries, strawberries, apples—all delicious and gorgeous red. They buy a Gala apple and hold it up to the light of the afternoon sun. If that's not red, what is?

Well, that's the question—if that's not red, what is red?

Do we share the same view of colors? If it was someone else holding that Gala apple, would they see a different color even if they also called it "red"?

Is your red the same as my red?

Think for a moment and see which perspective you align with more.

• Perspective 1: Materialism

Materialism is the notion that, as previously mentioned, matter, objects, and processes occurring

throughout the world are independent of the human mind, and primary when it comes to existence. What this means is that because "red" has an innate quality, and red light has one specific frequency (4.28×10^{14} hertz), assuming that the functions of the brain and eyes are the same in two people, they will see and experience the same color.

Of course, every human's biological makeup

is a little different, and a materialist would typically acknowledge this, leading them to usually proclaim that "Your view of red is similar to, if not the same as my red, but it is the same color nonetheless."

• Perspective 2: Idealism

On the contrary, idealism is rooted in our thoughts and senses, and that the material world is simply a manifestation of what we think. They generally argue that the real world is just a mental construct. Of

course, this construct includes color and light! Idealists believe that because color perception is simply perception, what two people view as red could be completely different, and that there is no way of confirming nor denying if two people see them the same.

They say that red could be a unique experience for everyone, and color is nothing more than a mental entity.

Conclusion

The question might not have a clear answer, but that's what opens fascinating discussions about how we see and experience the world. Whether our reds are the same or not, the real beauty of colors is in the way they connect us and spark our curiosity about one another.



Fun Foods

From Page 3

French hot chocolate

- French hot chocolate it's not food, but a drink. It is the best hot chocolate I have ever had. It is so creamy and tastes like pure milk chocolate. You can get French



hot chocolate in a shop in the city called Angelina Paris. They have two locations. If you want to have the best hot chocolate ever, try French hot chocolate.

These fun foods seem pretty good in my opinion. I want to try them all. Would you try any of these cool foods and candies?