

The Tusker Tribune

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85



Cellphone Ban Risks Kids' Safety



By Lauren Rosenblum
Tusker Tribune Staff

Did you know Governor Kathy Hochul is proposing a cell phone ban in New York schools?

During her speech, she says that she knows how cell phones can cause so many distractions, and teachers across the nation say that cell phones in classrooms are a huge disruption.

About 95% of students have access to their



phones and get up to about 250 notifications per day. In my opinion, I don't think Governor Kathy Hochul should ban cell phones at school in the future because if there is an emergency or something you need to tell or ask your parents, then you can contact them on your cell phone.

Also, if you need to ask them something immediately, this way you can contact them a lot quicker than using the school phone.

How do you feel about this cell phone ban? Do you like this idea or do you not like this idea?

Famous People Spent Time At Pilgrim State



By Felicity McCormack
Tusker Tribune Staff

Editor's Note: This is part 2 of a two-part story on the Pilgrim State Hospital.

During its time, Pilgrim State saw many different people, some who became famous. Naomi Livergant Ginsberg, the mother of the poet Allen Ginsberg, suffered with schizophrenia throughout most of her life, and died at Pilgrim State Hospital in 1956.

Pilgrim State was also referenced in his famous poem "Howl." Arguably the most famous patient of Pilgrim State, however, was Beulah Jones. She was admitted to Pilgrim State when

she started to hear voices and was convinced she was the queen of Scotland. Her family originally thought that she was only going to be there for six months, but she was there for years. In 1953, she was given 15 rounds of electroshock treatment throughout 10 weeks (about 2 and a half months). At some point, she was also given a lobotomy which left her as "child-like" as described by her grandchildren.

Pilgrim State Hospital is no longer in use today, although there is a smaller center still used by the state today called the Pilgrim Psychiatric Center, where they deal with people who are criminally insane. That being said, Pilgrim state was the largest mental facility in the world, and no other has since passed it for size. A lot of the old buildings were destroyed, and a large part was demolished in 2003, with the medical/surgical building being demolished in 2012.

Continued on Page 3

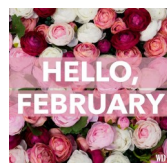


February's All Heart!



By Elizabeth Alonzo Javier
Tusker Tribune Staff

February 8th is a national heart day. (And it is my sister Samara's birthday—she is in first grade and is turning 7 but that is not the point.)



While February is known to be full of paper hearts and chocolate, it has a few things going for it, despite being the shortest month on the calendar. February gets to the heart of the holidays that educate and makes us giggle at the quirky ones, too.

February isn't just about love; it's deeper than you think. First off, let's cover a little history of the second month in the year.

Continued on Page 2

STAR Students: January 2025

Grade 7:



Emily Walker



Cole Dolan

Grade 7:



Sophie Pasquet



Felicity McCormack

A STAR award stands for STudents who Are Role models. The students pictured here were caught doing something that deserves the STAR recognition for the month—from common courtesy, to helping another student or staff member, to standing up for someone or cheering them up!

Valentine's Day—A Sweet Mystery



By Allison Posadas
Tusker Tribune Staff

Valentine's Day is a holiday all about love and romance, has a super interesting history and it's a bit of a mystery!

I do not know exactly where it started but I have a few guesses. One story says it's about a Roman priest named Saint Valentine. Long ago, the Roman emperor didn't want soldiers to get married, thinking single guys made better fighters, so Saint Valentine secretly married couples anyway.

Because of this and how he eventually died February 14th, that could be one story, but it is



hard to know if this story is completely true.

Another idea is that Valentine's Day is connected to a supercold Roman party called Lupercalia. This was a party about celebrating having babies' and it involved matching up men and women. Some people think the church later changed Lupercalia into Valentine's Day giving it a new Christian meaning. But again no one knows if these stories are completely true!

To conclude, Valentine's Day's journey from its possibly pagan roots to the modern day celebration highlights the dynamic nature of tradition. This holiday has transformed while retaining its core message of love and connections!

The Chiefs Face the Eagles



By Olivia Ball
Tusker Tribune Staff

The Kansas City Chiefs face the Philadelphia Eagles in the 59th Super Bowl on February 9th at 6:30 pm. The Chiefs played the Buffalo Bills in the AFC championship to get to their 3rd Super Bowl. They beat the Buffalo Bills at Arrowhead stadium 32 to 29. On the same day, the Eagles destroyed the Washington Commanders 55 – 23.

If the Chiefs win the Super Bowl, they would be the first team ever to win three consecutive Super Bowls. Although the Chiefs are favored to win by 1.5 points, the Eagles are a tough team, and it is still anyone's game.

The Chiefs have some star players on their roster, including Patrick Mahomes and Travis Kelce, a dangerous duo. Although Kelce is older,

don't underestimate his abilities. Their running game is also top notch with Isiah Pacheco and their brand-new rookie, Xavier Worthy. This speedy rookie's first touch of the ball in an NFL game was a touchdown against the Baltimore Ravens. Don't forget about the defense because with Chris Jones, the Eagles will need to be careful.

The Eagles have some phenomenal players as well, that the Chiefs will need to watch out for if they want to take home their third Super Bowl win. One of the major players is Saquon Barkley. He joined the Eagles in 2023 and is one of the best running backs in the league. A.J. Brown and DeVonta Smith are also great receivers on the Ea-

gles. Their quarterback, Jalen Hurts, is good, too.

This match-up will likely to be a real nail biter like the game two

years ago where the Chiefs barely won. Their kicker, Harrison Butker, sealed that game winning field goal. Unlike two years ago, the Eagles are now the underdogs, and the Kelce brothers will not be facing off against each other.

If you plan to watch the 49th Super Bowl game, make some fun snacks, invite a few friends and tune into Fox, NFL+, Fubo, Hulu, YouTube TV or Tubi. The singer for the halftime show will be Kendrick Lamar and a special appearance will be made by SZA, so put on your team's jersey and enjoy the game.



February From Ppage 1

February joined the calendar with January around 700 B.C. During the ancient Roman festival Lupercalia, celebrants used thongs made from goatskin in purification rituals, which took place during the month, earning it the name "februarius".

February wasn't always the second month of the year. When Numa Pompilius first added February to the calendar in 700 BC, he placed it at the end of the calendar. That's right, February was the last month on the calendar. February is also known for its holiday, Valentine's Day! Which is a great holiday, as well!!

AI Will Never Replace Human Artists and Authors



**By Gemma Krissoff
Tusker Tribune Staff**

If you have ever Googled something, you probably have seen “AI overview” in the search results. Well, the AI overviews are stolen writing from journalists and authors. AI is also doing the same thing to artists: stealing artists’ work and putting it into a computer to generate a new thing. And AI is also bad for the environment. Continue reading to learn about how AI is negatively impacting our lives.

As I said, AI is stealing from artists and authors. To generate an AI image, the AI is trained on thousands of images made by real artists, which means that the AI looks at art posted on social media and replicates it. AI can do the same thing with animations and literature. AI can even copy the exact style of an artist or studio.

Since AI is so advanced, you would think that the AI generated images would look amazing, but you’d be wrong. You can usually tell when something is AI generated because the person generated has a deformity, the background has a weird detail, or the image just looks bad. For example, look at this AI generated image in the center of this page. (Source: Asahi.com)

As you can see, the image is, to put it plainly, ugly. The dog has 5 legs, the feet are deformed, the dog looks underweight, etc.

As I was saying earlier, articles written by humans are used to generate AI overviews. For example, a writer on Wired.com said that an AI overview plagiarized their article.

AI can also get a lot of things wrong, alt-



hough since AI overview came out, there have been improvements. One example of AI overviews being inaccurate was an article about what mushrooms are safe to eat. The article was mostly correct, but a lot of details were missing, which could lead to someone eating a poisonous mushroom. Also, AI also has grammar and spelling errors.

There are many ways AI is bad for the environment. It uses lots of water, it releases greenhouse gases, and it needs rare minerals, which are often mined unsustainably. And lastly, AI generated images and articles are worth less than human-made art because AI can’t replicate human emotions and ideas. Human-made literature and artwork has meaning, but AI just scans and replicates already existing work.

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Service Club Brings Joy to Ronald McDonald House



**By Mia Klein
Tusker Tribune Staff**

The Service Club went on a field trip on Tuesday February 4th. We went to the Ronald McDonald House of the Greater Hudson Valley. This is for the families of a child who is in the Westchester Medical Center, right next door, or for children at the Blythe-dale Children’s hospital.

Why pick here? This hospital provides a greater amount of care than many other hospitals. Also, paying hospitals bills and burning gas can become very expensive for the parents. So, this house is completely free for those who stay there, and it provides everything they need.

The Ronald McDonald house gets all its supplies from donations (80%) and McDonalds (20%). The families are escorted by the helicopter with only the clothes on their backs and



what’s in their pockets. This means they rely on the house for food, clothing, sanitation and more.

That’s where we come in. The volunteers sign up and go and make a meal for the people there. We made make your own taco salad scoops. Afterwards we took a tour and really got into how important these houses are. It even helped the Raimondi family by housing the mom. This place houses people from other continents. They are housing people from Egypt, Netherlands and more. The house provides everything anyone needs there, from a kids play area, to a themed room just for you.

Anytime you feel like you want to help, just give a little to people who really need it and it will make a huge difference, even if it doesn’t always feel like it.



Experiencing Outreach Firsthand



**By Sofia Mendoza
Tusker Tribune Staff**

On Sunday, January 26th, I went to Bedford Community Church to serve food to the homeless. My mom and I volunteered to make some food dishes, set up, serve food to the homeless and clean up the area of the church where the homeless would be eating dinner and sleeping for the night.

Aside from my mom and me, there were four other people from the church who were volunteering to do the same. The program with which the church was working with, was an organization called Emergency Shelter Partnership, or ESP, that works throughout Westchester County to provide food and shelter to homeless men and women during the cold winter months.

From November to March, ESP collaborates with different congregations throughout Westchester that graciously host and shelter the homeless for a week or more throughout the winter months. ESP is in charge of contacting the homeless that are interested or in need of the program. They pick them up at night and drive them to the congregation where they will be staying for the night. They also have a supervisor who stays with the homeless overnight in case they need anything or any problems arise, and then ESP drives them back early in the morning around 5-6 am to the town center/ police station where they go back to staying in the streets and looking for warm places to stay during the day until they get picked up again the next night.

Before the people came, Danny, who was one of the volunteers, prayed for the homeless to enjoy their time with us and for us the servers, to open our hearts with kindness and make the people feel welcomed and loved. He told us that he had learned three main things about the homeless who came to stay for the night and how they felt. He said that the men and women had been, first, very thankful to have a warm place to sleep at night and at least one guaranteed meal for the day. Second, they felt happy to be able to get a good night's sleep, being able to sleep in a safe place without fear of what could happen to them on the street. And thirdly, and most importantly, they really appreciated all the love, kindness, and respect that they had received while coming to the church.



They appreciated being treated like a normal human being and not differently from anyone else. Being warmly welcomed, spoken to, and being treated with respect had made them feel happy because during the day many times they felt ignored, feared or looked down upon by others.

My mom and I brought fruit, lots of bananas, apples, and clementines that could last for a while in case they wanted to save it and eat it for the next day. We also brought potato flautas, rice, and some chocolate candy for them. I was happy to see that there was lots of food that many people had cooked and provided for the homeless.



When the people arrived, there were 28 men and one woman. Their ages range from young to old; some were sick or injured (an eye infection, a regular cold, a broken leg, etc.), while others seemed perfectly fine. We smiled at everyone and everyone smiled back politely. We offered to shake the hands of anyone who was accepting of it. My mom said it was important to shake their hands because many homeless people don't experience human touch sometimes for months at a time, and they usually don't live with or near their family members, so a simple handshake or hug could mean a lot to them. And then we served quickly served them food.

Many of them spoke Spanish, and I was glad that I know Spanish and could communicate with them in both English and Spanish. They ate a lot of food, and I was happy that they really enjoyed our flautas and rice because by the end of the night, our trays were empty, and almost all the fruit had been taken! Then we had to clean up quickly so that they could all place their sleeping bags down and go to sleep for the night because they all had to be up by 5 am to get ready to leave.

They carried all their belongings in one garbage bag which was kept at the church in the daytime. Before the people came, Danny told us about how doing this was very important because last Monday, one of the homeless men had missed the vehicle that brought them to the church and without anywhere to go because all the doors were locked, ended up freezing to death outside. This was very sad to hear. Unfortunately, I found out that it is not a rare event and happens every year to many homeless people who are unable to find shelter in the winter.

I enjoyed helping out and seeing how important serving others in need is. This experience taught me to be thankful for what I have, and it also taught me that homeless people are just regular people like you and me who are just going through a rough patch in life. There are many organizations throughout the United States that help feed the homeless. I would like to do this service again in the future and I encourage everyone else to try it as well at least once in your life.

What's the Mystery Behind Groundhog Day?



By Lila O'Connor
Tusker Tribune Staff

What's the history behind ground hog day?

Imagine you are a ground hog peacefully hibernating in the dead of winter, when all of a sudden, a hand grabs you and pulls you out of your dreams (kind of how it feels on Monday mornings).

You come out to see a bunch of flashing lights and news reporters. You guessed it, it's Groundhog Day. Why do we do this to poor Phil and other groundhogs across America?

In 2015, Punxsutawney Phil bit his handler, which shows how much Phil does not want to be out here in front of hundreds of people at 6 am.



You might think that Groundhog Day started in the early 1900s, but it dates to the celebration of Candlemas in German speaking areas of Europe, where the badger was what is now the groundhog. Candlemas is a holiday celebrated throughout Europe. In Hungary they would do something similar with a bear. It is related to the idea that clear weather on Candlemas means a longer winter and clouds mean spring is coming.

Eventually when German people settled in America, they brought the idea of ground hog day with them. The first official ground hog day celebration was held on February 2nd, 1897, and has continued ever since. This year Phil saw his shadow which means 6 more weeks of winter. Which is oh so dependable!

Punxsutawney Phil Speaks Up!



By Maisie Pelhank
Tusker Tribune Staff

Hi, it is me, Punxsutawney Phil! To people who do not know who I am, I am the groundhog for Groundhog Day. And no, I do not take autographs. If you did not know already, February 2nd, was Groundhog Day! Groundhog Day is a day that America has been celebrating for centuries! And it continues that way, whether you like it or not.

As you all should know, there will be six more weeks of winter! Yay! Is what no one says. I'm actually getting a lot of hate about it. Like guys it's not my fault! But let us think on the bright side—more snow! This means sledding, skiing, making snowmen, snowball fights, and snow days! Nothing better than waking up, dreading to go to school, and then checking your phone and realizing today is a snow day! No school! And do not forget delays! Whether it is a one hour, two hours, or three-hour delay, it is amazing! I mean, I have never been to school before because, duh, famous groundhog, but I couldn't imagine spending my entire day learning.

Since we are starting to get along, I think we should share some fun facts about each other! I will go first! I have been alive since 1887! It is a groundhog punch that keeps me alive and looking so well. I also have a beautiful wife named Phyliss! As you know, my name is Punxsutawney Phil. I was named after King Phillip! I like to go by Phil for short. You can call me that. Every summer, I have a sip of my magical punch, and I get seven years added to my life! I speak groundhog-nese. Lastly, I am never wrong. My predictions are always correct, but sometimes they are just misinterpreted.

That's enough about me, let us hear about you! Oh, sorry I do not speak English . . . how am I writing this? My translator. Duh. I am a celebrity. I do not really have any groundhog friends but some-

times I will see the wannabe Me's here and there. So, my six translators are very much necessary.

Since you cannot tell me facts about yourself, I am kind of out of things to say. Um, I can tell some funny hedgehog jokes? I've been told I joke like a dad. No idea what that means, but I think it is a good thing? I think they call it "dad jokes" but I am definitely not a dad.



Here is a good one—what do hedgehogs eat? Prickled onions! Now is when you laugh. I think I have had one of those before; they are huge green and spiky right? I can not think of any others right now. Hm. Oh wait, I remember something another famous celebrity said to me because, duh, I am famous. Two toothpicks are hanging out in a forest when suddenly they see a hedgehog passing by. One of them shrugs and goes like, "Hmm, I didn't even know they had public transportation here." Wait. Hey! That was mean! Taylor Swift probably did not mean offense by that, so I am going to forgive her. But something a lot of people do not understand is that hedgehogs are extremely sensitive about their spikes. The uncool, infamous hedgehogs sometimes get left out because of their spikes.

Before I left my sister for the famous life, she wanted to fit in, so she cut off all her spikes. It did not work, though. But it was ok because she grew them back and started hanging out with some other hedgehogs where we lived together in Pennsylvania.

By the way, if you get confused about all the hedgehog jokes, my family is all hedgehogs, so I like to talk about them. Yes, I was adopted. But that is no reason to make fun of someone! Always be kind, and this time I am being so for real. It is mean to be mean, and you get nothing out of it, so what is the point of it? The kindness you put into the world will always have a way of getting back to you. Bye humans! Hope you learned a little bit about Groundhog Day!

Many Prognosticators for Groundhog Day



**By Felicity McCormack
Tusker Tribune Staff**

A tradition that has been happening since 1886, Groundhog Day is perhaps one of the most iconic American holidays, with tens of thousands of people coming out to celebrate each year.

There are many groundhogs who look for their shadow every February 2nd, but perhaps the most famous is Punxsutawney Phil, a resident groundhog of Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania. Even though Phil is the most famous, however, that doesn't mean he's the most accurate. In fact, he's only got an accuracy rate of 35%!



A groundhog who is more reliable is Chuck of Staten Island, New York. He's got an 85% accuracy rate, much more reliable than Phil. As a matter of fact, out of 71 groundhogs, Chuck has the highest accuracy rate of all.

This year, Phil saw his shadow and predicted six more weeks of winter, but Chuck did not see his shadow and predicted an early spring. Who do you think is right? A groundhog with an 85% accuracy, or a national icon?

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Every Online Person Should Read This Book



**By Allison Posadas
Tusker Tribune Staff**

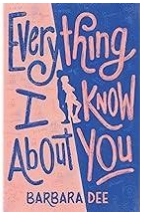
The book Everything I Know About You by Barbara Dee talks about how the things we share online can affect our friendships and relationships.

Imagine if everyone could easily see all your photos and posts. How would that make you feel?

This book helps us think about what we share and why, and how it might make other people feel. It teaches us about being careful with our information online and being kind to others.

This book uses real life examples to show how things can be misunderstood online, and how important it is to think before we post or share. It encourages kindness and careful consideration of other feelings, teaching kids the behavior and building healthy relationships.

In conclusion Everything I Know About You is a worthwhile book for middle schoolers, offering valuable insights into responsible online behavior and the importance of thoughtful communications in building healthy relationships, both online and offline. It's a practical guide to navigating the complexities of the digital world with empathy and respect.

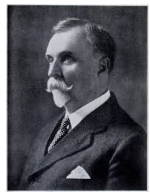


Pilgrim From Page 1

A lot of the original farmland was turned into Suffolk Community College, and an additional 462 acres (about twice the total floor space of the Pentagon) was bought by Gerald Wolkoff with plans to build Heartland Town Center, an apartment complex. These plans have since been cancelled.

There is now a Long Island Psychiatric Museum to teach about these facilities that once spread all over Long Island. This museum has artifacts from the psychiatric centers of Kings Park, Central Islip, Pilgrim State, and Edgewood. It was flooded on November 5, 2020, and was closed for restoration, but is now open to the public again, but it is extremely limited, and people must call ahead.

Interestingly, Pilgrim State was named after the New York State Commissioner of Mental Health,



Charles W. Pilgrim. Also, remarkably, the movie *Murder: By Reasons of Insanity* was filmed in Building 14 of Pilgrim State in 1985. Despite the efforts of many people, electroshock therapy was still being used in America into the 21st century. In the decline of Pilgrim State, some abandoned buildings were used as a prison around the 1980s, with about 596 prisoners in 1982, and the prison was closed in 1983.

In conclusion, Pilgrim State had an interesting and eventful use from the time it was built to today.

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<https://sms.somersschools.org/student-life/activities/tusker-tribune-newspaper>

Friendship is to be Cherished



**By Allison Posadas
Tusker Tribune Staff**
My heart beats fast, a joyful
sound,
As

Valentine's Day is coming around.
A special day, a time to share,
The love and warmth beyond compare.

With gentle smiles and tender touch, I
Cherish you, oh so much.
Your presence bright, a guiding light,
That makes my world so warm and
Bright.

Through stormy days and sunny skies,
Our love endures, it never dies.
A bond so strong, a faithful promise,
My love for you, I pledge it now.



The laughter shared, the tears
we've
Cried, have connected memories,
side by
Side.

So, raise a glass, let's celebrate,

This
Special day, this happy fate.
My Valentine, my love.
Forever yours, year after year after year.

And in your eyes, I see then gleam, Of a
love that's more than just a dream.
Al love that's real, a love that's true.

And in your smile, I see the light, Of a
Friendship spinning ever bright.
A bond so strong a feeling true.
My friend, I'll always cherish you.

The K-Pop Phenomenon



**By Nica Fried
Tusker Tribune Staff**

K-Pop, short for Korean Pop, has exploded from South Korea into a global sensation. Known for catchy tunes, slick choreography, and stunning visuals, it has captivated millions worldwide.



The genre took off in the 1990s with Seo Taiji and Boys, blending Western styles with Korean lyrics. By the 2000s, big entertainment companies—SM, YG, and JYP—were training idols to perfection, leading to the rise of groups like BTS,

BLACKPINK, EXO, Stray Kids, and BIGBANG. These idols go through years of intense training in singing, dancing, and even languages before making their official debut.

K-Pop's success is driven by the "Big 4" agencies:

- **SM Entertainment** – Pioneers of the idol system, home to EXO and NCT, known for futuristic concepts and storytelling.
- **YG Entertainment** – Focuses on hip-hop and individuality, producing BIGBANG and BLACKPINK.
- **JYP Entertainment** – Emphasizes strong performances and self-production, leading groups like TWICE and Stray Kids.
- **HYBE Corporation** – Originally Big Hit, made BTS a global phenomenon and expanded by acquiring other labels.

Social media and streaming platforms like YouTube, Twitter, and TikTok have fueled K-Pop's global reach. Fans, known as ARMY (BTS), BLINKs (BLACKPINK), STAYs (Stray Kids), and VIPs (BIGBANG), play a huge role in streaming, voting, and promoting their idols, making K-Pop

fandoms some of the most dedicated in the world.

Beyond music, K-Pop influences fashion, beauty, and social movements. Idols endorse major brands, set global fashion trends, and often use their platforms to speak on important issues.

The genre constantly evolves, with new groups and sounds keeping things fresh and exciting. K-Pop isn't just music—it's a cultural powerhouse that continues to break records, unite global fans, and redefine entertainment on a massive scale.



On the eve of January 5th, children throughout Italy wait for la befana (the good witch) who delivers candies for the good children and coal for the naughty ones.

Italian students at SMS brought in wrapped gifts and were distributed by la befana herself! Students learned the importance of la befana and this cultural holiday celebrated each year! Viva viva la befana!