

OCTOBER 1, 2024



SOMERS CENTRAL
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TUSKER NATION

First-Ever Homecoming Bash Kicks Off Spirit Week



The Homecoming Bash at Somers High School (SHS) on Sept. 19 kicked off Spirit Week with games, music and food. The Bash was presented by the SHS Student Council and sponsored in part by Partners in Prevention. On other Spirit Week days, students and staff came dressed as tourists, in 1970s garb, wearing sports jerseys, and more.

Somers High School Students Get National Recognition



Jimmy Gallivan (right) with Student Council advisors Brenda O'Shea and Kevin Rodgers.

Somers High School was off to a great start in September, when junior Jimmy Gallivan was named to represent New York State on the new National Student Council and seniors Luke Armstrong and Emma Gordon were named National Merit Scholarship semi-finalists.

Gallivan is serving as Somers High School Student Council president this year, but his appointment to the national council gives him a much larger stage. The National Student Council was formed this year by the National Association of Student Councils. Each year, representatives will be chosen from 25 states and several territories.

"I'm honored to have been chosen to represent the concerns and ideas and perspectives of New York State on the national level," Gallivan said.

Gallivan learned that he had been chosen Sept. 10. The members were chosen by the state Student Councils; Gallivan joined New York State's council a year ago.

"Jimmy has a great combination of traits that make him an amazing leader," said Brenda O'Shea, the Somers High School student life coordinator. "He is hard working, a good listener, and has a positive attitude."

Gallivan will be invited to help run the National Student Council Conference in Chicago in early 2025. In March, the national council will travel to Washington D.C. to meet with members of Congress, the Department of Education, and possibly White House staff.

Armstrong and Gordon were among 16,000 National Merit semi-finalists designated nationwide. They were chosen from 1.3 million high school students who began the process in their junior year by taking the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test.

"This prestigious honor is a testament to Luke and Emma's unwavering commitment to their academic endeavors, and Somers is immensely proud of their remarkable achievement," said Somers High School Principal Peter Rodrigues.

Armstrong's goal is to become an astronautical engineer and "develop the technology to progress humanity further into space," he said. Of his Somers education, he said, "The rigorous path supported me and my academic goals, making me well prepared for the National Merit Scholarship Competition."

Gordon aims to continue developing her craft as a writer, "while also exploring other disciplines such as applied mathematics and neuroscience to help enrich my perspective," she said.

"It is an incredible honor to be recognized nationally as one of a very small group of high school seniors who have been named National Merit semi-finalists," she said.

The semi-finalists, representing the highest-scoring students in each state, now advance to the finalist round. Winners will be announced in April and July 2025.

"Jimmy, Luke and Emma exemplify the excellence and potential of a Somers education," said Somers Interim Superintendent Harry LeFevre. "We are incredibly proud of them, and I'm eager to see what they will achieve in the future."

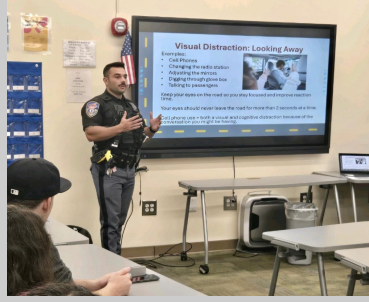


Somers High School seniors Emma Gordon and Luke Armstrong have been named National Merit Scholarship semi-finalists.

Seen Around Somers



ELA 7th graders gathered in the Somers Middle School library recently to discuss their summer reading and recommend books to each other.

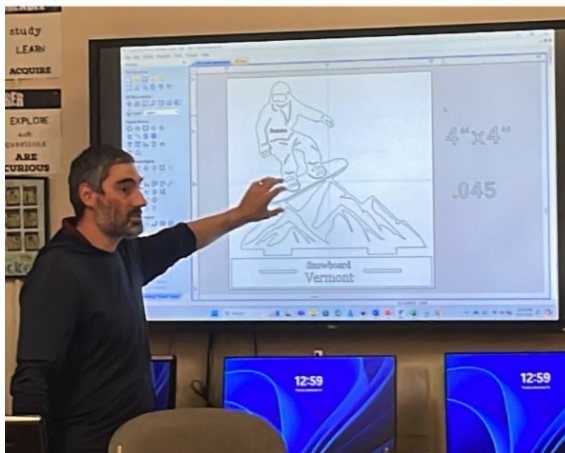
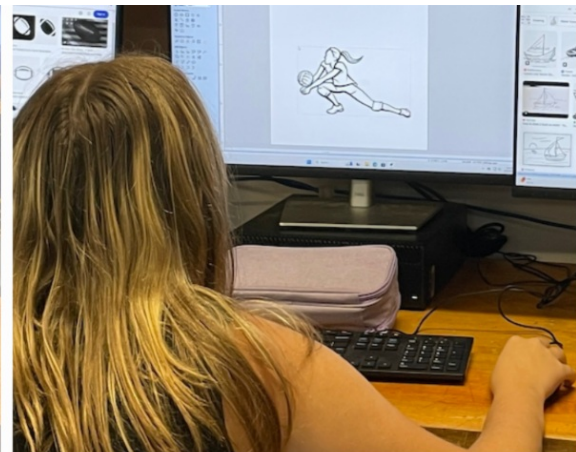


Officer Matt Laccetti joined the Somers High School team as the new Student Resource Officer. Here, he is seen teaching a lesson on distracted driving.



More than 60 clubs recruited new members at the Somers High School Club Fair recently. Members showcased their clubs with displays, pamphlets, and treats and offered information to interested schoolmates.

Eighth-Graders Add New Dimension To Laser Cutting Software Skills



Eighth graders increased their skills with laser cutting software by creating stand-up cutouts from photos they merged into their own images.

Eighth graders in a recent tech class took their VCarve laser cutting software skills to a whole new dimension when they created clear plastic cutouts from merged photos and precision-cut stands for them.

The students had gained experience with the software earlier, but this was their first time creating something that could be displayed upright with the use of a stand.

"This year we're leveling up to learn how to make models that will be created with multiple pieces fitting together," said teacher Matthew Lugo.

To create their new projects, each student chose at least two Drawing Interchange File Format (DXF) pictures from the internet that they then merged into one image. Once they had selected their photos, students used Bitmap to trace the outline in VCarve, correcting imperfections in the lines along the way.

"DXF images we use are all black and white so that it's easier for VCarve to outline," said student Ashleigh W.

Students also designed the stand that would hold their cutout. That meant ensuring their measurements were correct in the software so that the printed pieces would fit together properly. Designs and stands were laser cut out of clear sheets of plastic that looked like glass.

Students also watched videos of laser printing projects for inspiration. The final creations were as unique as the students designing them.

Students were allowed to choose any pictures they liked. Some students chose sports they played, such as volleyball and football, or nature-inspired images like a beachscape and a day-and-night yin-and-yang. Others chose images that had more sentimental meaning.

"I chose the 777 because it was my dad's lucky angel number and the cross because my dad passed," said student Ariana C. "I made it as something to remember him by."

Third-Graders Certified In Book Borrowing Skills



Students earned their Book Borrower Certification, in part, by properly and neatly organizing book shelves.

Borrowing books from the library is a key skill for students to learn, and the third-graders at Somers Intermediate School (SIS) picked it up so well that they all earned their Book Borrower Certification in Kenneth Behling's library class.

"Responsible book borrowers follow the rules of the library, leave the shelves nice and tidy for others to use, and treat library books gently so everyone has a chance to enjoy them," said Mr. Behling.

They learned how to search the library shelves for the books that interested them, including where the different genres are kept. And they also learned what to do with the books they decide they don't want to check out. As part of their test, students were tasked with fixing a shelf of disorganized books so the students who used the library after them could find the ones they wanted.

"Did you do that on purpose?" one student asked as he watched Mr. Behling switch around books on a shelf until they were out of order, fallen over, and pushed to the back of the space. "Why did you just set some rules and then break them?"

In response, Mr. Behling showed the students how to return the shelf to the way it should be – neat and in proper order. "We keep the books right to the front edge of the shelves so that everything stays nice and orderly," Mr. Behling said. Then invited the first set of students up to reorganize a bookshelf.

Working in groups of three or four, and with Mr. Behling's, students stood books up properly, moved them to the front edge of the shelf, and returned misplaced books to their correct spots. Once they'd completed the shelf, they were deemed "Book Borrower Certified" and were rewarded with time to explore the library to find their first selection of the new school year.

Students were allowed to choose any book that was appropriate for their reading level. Some students instantly looked for a popular series they were in the middle of, some were drawn to graphic novels, and still others searched for the perfect stand-alone story that sparked their interest. By the end of the period, each student had passed their test and successfully selected a book to take with them.

In the course of the lesson, they learned how to navigate the library, which is important for third graders who are new to SIS. Now these students not only know how to check out a book from the library, but also where to find it, how to treat it while borrowed, and how to properly return it.

Skills learned in Library class are lifelong skills that Somers students will use in their school library, public libraries and with their own book collections. This lesson also helps Maryjean Lugo, the SIS library clerk, manage book checkouts, keep the collection organized, and assist Mr. Behling with instructions.

Kindergarteners Warm Up to Start School Year



Kindergarten students stretching.

Warm-up exercises, stretches, and games got kindergarten students moving in physical education class early on at Primrose Elementary School.

The newest members of the Primrose community were introduced to their teachers, classrooms, and specials, including physical education in the gym during

the first few days of school. Their lessons focused on skills needed to be successful with future, more challenging activities.

"Be safe, try your best, and have fun!" said Coach Marta Parker. "Those are the main rules in the gym."

The class started with a series of warm-up exercises including bicycle legs, ski jump, and mountain climbers, designed to get students moving their bodies. Coach Kevin Mallon led the class by describing and demonstrating each exercise. Students focused on one exercise at a time, moving their bodies and strengthening their minds.

Once everyone was warmed up, students played the Listening Game. Not only does this game teach students how to listen to and follow instructions in a busy, fast-paced environment, but it also teaches the most fundamental rule in gym: move safely.

"Moving safely means no holding hands, keeping your head up, and looking where you're going," Coach Parker told students.

The Listening Game moves through six levels of increasing difficulty, starting with the simplest way to move throughout the gym safely: walking by themselves and freezing when the music stops. The game continues up the levels through walking backward, galloping, balance walking on the painted lines, hopping on one foot, and finally skipping. With each new movement, students' balance and coordination were challenged, they had to focus harder, and they had to listen more intently.

When asked what they worked on in class, Mikey said, "Being good skippers." "It was fun," Leo added.

By the end of the game, not only had their abilities to move around the gym safely increased but so had their smiles and heart rates. Students were then led through a series of stretches and cooldown activities including the letter V stretch, butterfly stretches, and side toe touches to help them transition back to being ready for classroom learning.



As we begin the school year, all five PTA units are busy gathering membership and already planning events! **PTA Council** hosted a Welcome Breakfast for all district staff and teachers as they returned to campus last month. **SEPTA** welcomed Meghan Febbie, new Assistant Director of Special Services, to its first Coffee and Conversation in September. This year's freshman class received treats at freshman orientation, courtesy of the **High School PTSA**.

The PTSA also helped seniors ring in their final year with a full spread at Senior Breakfast. The **SMS PTA** has already launched its first fundraiser, and had a successful 6th Grade Social with music and games. All **SIS** students received homework planners from the **SIS PTA** as they began the school year. Birthday Party planning

is also well under way! Not to be outdone, the **Primrose PTA** was quite busy in September, welcoming back teachers and staff with a Teacher Treats event, and hosting their annual Back to School Picnic for families with food, music, and activities.

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