

NOVEMBER 12, 2024



SOMERS CENTRAL  
SCHOOL DISTRICT  
NEWS FOR FAMILIES

# TUSKER NATION

## Class of 2025 Valedictorian, Salutatorian Named *"We Hugged, Laughed, and Smiled"*



*Somers High School's Class of 2025 Valedictorian Natalia Tellez (right) and Sara Hanford (left).*

When Somers High School senior Natalia Tellez was named Class of 2025 valedictorian and Sara Hanford was named salutatorian, they were not only honored, they were also thrilled for each other.

The longtime friends learned of their achievement when they were called to the school office where they were greeted and congratulated by a group of administrators.

"I had no idea until I saw my close friend Sara walk into the office too," said

Natalia. "They then told us, and we hugged, laughed, and smiled. We were really proud of each other. I was truly and wholeheartedly honored."

"I did not expect to be chosen," said Sara. "It came as a complete surprise!"

Principal Peter Rodrigues praised the students for earning the honor.

"We extend our heartfelt congratulations to Natalia and Sara for their exceptional dedication and for achieving this esteemed recognition," he said.

Upon receiving the news, both students immediately contacted their families. Natalia called her parents, then her two older brothers.

"All of my family has told me that they are incredibly proud and happy, and some were even a little speechless," she said. The family celebrated the news with dinner at their favorite restaurant and surprised Natalia with a cake.

Sara texted her parents and sister when she learned the news.

"My family and friends were very proud of me," she said. "I got lots of congratulations."

Natalia and Sara's friendship started in third grade when they played sports together. Their friendship deepened when they were in the same classroom in fifth grade. They've been friends ever since, taking many classes together and spending time together inside and outside of school.

The weekend after they received the news, Sara and Natalia celebrated together at a local restaurant, reminiscing about their memories together over the years.

"The Somers school community has helped me achieve this accomplishment by introducing me to genuinely amazing teachers who care about you beyond who you are as a student," Natalia said.

Sara added, "I have received overwhelming guidance and support from my teachers over the years. They've always been very generous with their time and have created a positive learning environment that has helped me succeed."

After high school, Natalia plans to go to college and study either political science, law and government, or international relations. Sara plans to continue her education in college, focusing on a healthcare career.

## Guess the movie!

You have to love these Spirit Week movie posters, each made by one of the four grades at Somers High School. But can you guess the four films represented?

To be honest, it's not hard. (One of the titles is right there in the poster.) But if you need help, find the answers at the bottom.

Those familiar faces are administrators at the school, plus an appearance by one furry member of the SHS family, Vader the therapy dog.



The class posters and the movies they depict are, from the top: Freshmen, *Inside Out*; Sophomores, *Star Wars* (to be precise, *Episode IV, A New Hope*); Juniors, *High School Musical 3: Junior Year*; Seniors, *The Great Gatsby*.

## Seen Around Somers



The six new tennis courts at Somers High School are finished and in use. The varsity girls tennis team initiated the courts when they hosted Yorktown and Brewster on Oct. 21.

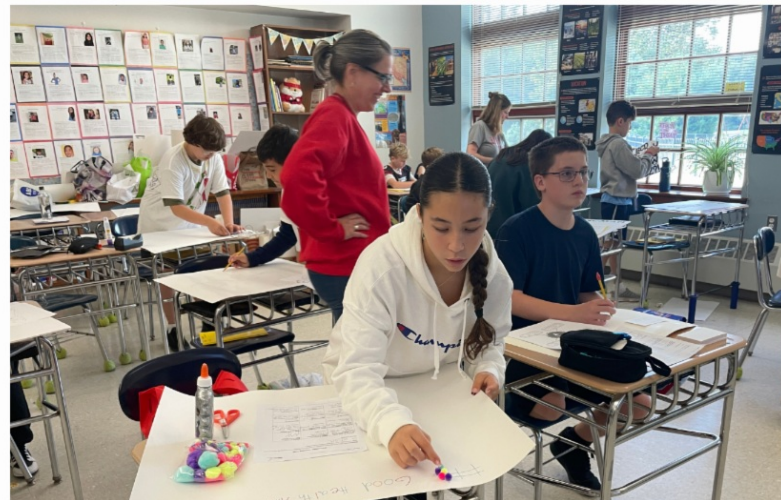
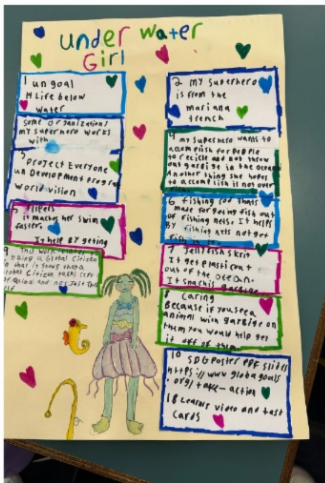
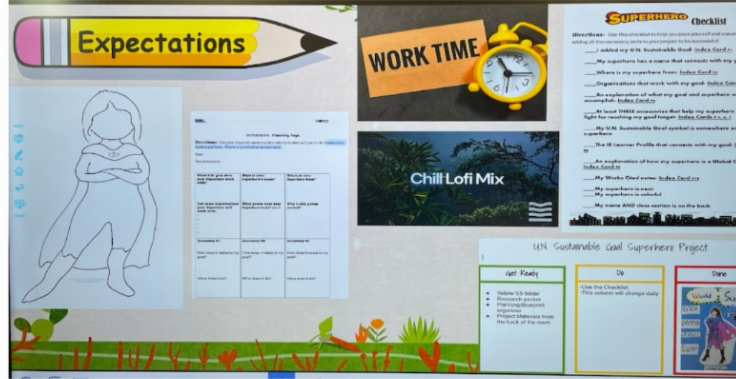


Somers Middle School students not enrolled in a performance class now take two years of general music instead of one. As Principal Jennifer Mangone explains, exposure to the arts increases brain productivity, critical thinking, mindfulness, and social-emotional wellbeing.



Vader the therapy dog brightens the days for Somers High School students. The beloved labrador-shepherd mix is about five years old.

# Sixth Graders Create Superheroes To Battle Pollution, Inequality and More



*Sixth graders addressed the world's trickiest problems by creating superheroes to make life better for all.*

If the world's sustainability challenges such as clean water, improved health and quality education require superhuman efforts, the sixth graders at Somers Middle School are here to help. In social studies, they explored the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development goals and created superheroes to tackle the problems.

Mia Klein's superhero defends life below water, helping animals and making waste in the ocean disappear.

"She has a watch that notifies her if the ecosystem is in danger," she said.

Milania Chiazese's superhero can "cure people and help people who struggle with health."

In the lesson, students employed their International Baccalaureate learning profile attributes and practiced being principled.

"This project gets the students to be risk-takers as they create and design their superhero," said Mrs. Jacqueline Dolan.

Take Natalia Steiner's caped superhero, who fights for gender equality.

"When the cape is moving, it will give women the same amount of money as men," she said. "The necklace will give girls more confidence, because girls get treated poorly and bullied. And she has shoes, so when my superhero walks, she will give girls an education, because a lot of girls still don't get to go to school."

# A World Cup Tournament Where Fun Is the *Gooooaaal!*



*Fourth graders formed teams, studied countries in the World Cup, then competed for the title.*

Cheers filled the Somers Intermediate School gymnasium when teams of fourth graders faced each other in a Soccer World Cup tournament.

The students had spent time building on skills they'd learned in third grade. They worked on improving their ball control, handling, dribbling, and passing, as well as increased communication among teammates.

"We're going to try as hard as we can," said student Lana V.

The tournament capped their physical education lessons on soccer. Each of 10 five-member teams represented a different country that has played in the official World Cup. Teams created posters about their represented countries with fun facts, the country's flag, and the country's most recent year in the World Cup.

Isabella V. said, "We're going to play again and again until someone plays in the gold medal match."

After a rotation of three-minute games – with ties broken by rounds of *rock, paper, scissors* – England and Australia faced off for the Gold Medal, cheered on by their classmates.

The score: Australia 1, England 0. The end result: the students had a blast!

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## 3-D Touches Help Apple Art Pop Off the Page in Second-Grade Art Class



*Second-graders showing their art class apple basket.*

At Primrose Elementary School, second graders created construction paper baskets of apples with some lifelike touches and a three-dimensional element in Eileen Olsen's art class.

Once Ms. Olsen showed them a completed basket, it was their turn.

"They must design the basket themselves using art as a way to think both creatively and with ingenuity," Ms. Olsen said.

Creating baskets of brown paper that popped off the blue background challenged the students' fine motor skills by requiring them to bend and fold the paper strips and glue them properly to form an outward arc. The baskets were filled with apples of red, green and yellow paper.

Following Ms. Olsen's direction, they used crayons to add lifelike details, layering on lighter or darker colors to add shading and highlights to their apples.

"I put a seed onto the red one and then I shaded it," said Lola M. "I don't know how many apples I'll make. It depends on how much room I have."

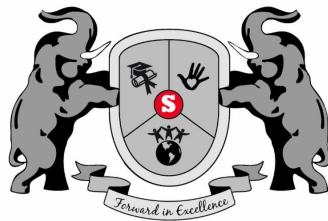


Fall has been quite busy for our PTAs! **Primrose** PTA had their Fall Book Fair, celebrated custodians with treats on National Custodian

Day, and enjoyed great weather for another successful Holiday Happiness. **SIS** PTA also hosted their Book Fair last month, which culminated in their Birthday Party celebration. Fifth graders enjoyed their VIP party, and the haunted trail and trunk-or-treat were big hits. The **SMS** PTA's first swag fundraiser was a great success and sold over 150 items! **SHS** PTSA got into the Halloween spirit with their Get Boo'd fundraiser. On top of closing out a great fall fundraiser on Shopfund, **SEPTA** also hosted a fun Pottery and Pizza Social for students last week.

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