

The Tusker Tribune

SOMERS MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWSPAPER

Issue Number 24

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

SPRING 2025

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Spring Break!!!! We MADE IT!!!!



By Elizabeth Alonzo Javier
Tusker Tribune Staff

Sigh.

We finally made it to spring break! and there's only three months (47 days) left of school! Can you believe how fast this year has flown by?

Eighth graders leave middle school and enter high school! Seventh graders enter 8th. We have new 6th graders coming in!

As spring break approaches, we get more and more excited. As we look forward to sitting by the pool or maybe even just sitting at home with



the air conditioner on. Having the TV on or reading a book with a tall glass of orange juice. You can have a picnic, you can visit national parks or spend your parents' money, (my favorite thing to do—hahahaha).

Consider a mix of relaxation, local exploration, and maybe even some volunteer work or catching up on hobbies. You can also get cozy in which you can spend time with a good book, watch movies or TV shows, or enjoy your favorite comfort food, or even take a break from screens and focus on real-life activities and conversations. Or treat yourself with some self-care.

Laughter Has So Many Benefits



By Olivia Pelhank
Tusker Tribune Staff

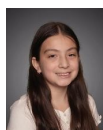
Last week, I wrote a story about National Humor Day/Month that will occur next week, on April 19th (which you should read) but I just found out that April 14 is National Moment of Laughter Day!

April is filled with these humorous holidays . . . quite literally. According to originator Izzy Gesell, "Laughter comes right after breathing as just about the healthiest thing you can do. It relieves stress, instills optimism, raises self-confidence, defuses resistance to change, and enhances all your relationships."

I talked about this a bit more in my article about National Humor Day/Month, but I think it's super crazy to think about. I mean, when I laugh, I barely even think about it. It just comes naturally. And I know this isn't the same as others, but it's just crazy to think that by doing something as simple as laughing, you're doing much more for your body than you think, in the best way possible. So happy National Moment of Laughter Day!



Appreciate Nature This Spring



By Allison Posadas
Tusker Tribune Staff

Nature, in all its glory, surrounds us. From towering mountains to sprawling oceans, from dense forests to sun-drenched meadows, it's a breathtaking spectacle of life. The air is filled with the songs of birds, the rustle of leaves, and the gentle hum of insects. These sounds create a symphony of nature, a constant reminder of the intricate web of life that connects us all.

Plants, the silent architects of our world, play a vital role. Trees provide oxygen, homes for animals, and shade on a hot day. Flowers, with their vibrant colors and delicate fragrances, attract pollinators like bees and butterflies, ensuring the continuation of plant life. These plants also provide food and shelter for countless creatures, creating a balanced ecosystem.

Animals, in all their diversity, add another layer of wonder to nature. From the majestic lion to the tiny hummingbird, each species plays a unique role in maintaining the delicate balance of the natural world. Predators control prey populations, preventing overgrazing and maintaining biodiversity. Herbivores, in turn, shape the landscape through their grazing habits.

Unfortunately, human activities often disrupt this delicate balance. Pollution, deforestation, and climate change are significant threats to the health of our planet. It's crucial for us to understand the importance of nature and take action to protect it. Simple acts like recycling, conserving water, and planting trees can make a real difference. Let's work together to ensure that future generations can also experience the beauty and wonder of nature.



History Makes Us See, Think and Wonder



**By Allison Posadas
Tusker Tribune Staff**

Do you like history? Well today I'm going to talk about historical things that happened and what I wonder.



Do you know about the **Dancing Plague** that happened in 1518? Well, it started off in Strasbourg, Germany, with a girl named Frau Troffea, and she got the urge to uncontrollably dance on the streets. She silently spun around to the beat of an imaginary drum. She suddenly passed out, and then she got back up and kept on dancing.

Two days later more people joined her uncontrollably and without

stopping!

Over 400 people joined them. Surprise!

They all ended up dying from the lack of food, water and from pure exhaustion.

*Fact—the average number of people who died each day was 15.

The dancing plague lasted two months. Then, the streets of Strasbourg were empty again, as if nothing ever happened. I'm really curious, I wonder what started the dancing plague?

Do you know who **Anne Boleyn** was? She was Queen of England and the second wife of King Henry VIII. Well, here are some facts about Anne Boleyn.

- When Anne Boleyn was beheaded, her eyes were moving, and her mouth was mumbling. That's crazy to think about!
- Anne Boleyn didn't have 10 fingers like everyone else; she had 11!
- Anne Boleyn was the first queen to be publicly executed.



Part 2 is coming soon!

Easter Follows Many Traditions



**By Elizabeth Alonzo Javier
Tusker Tribune Staff**

What is Easter? Easter is a Christian holiday celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ, marking the triumph of life over death and offering hope for salvation. It is a time of joy and reflection for many. It is celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ, a pivotal event symbolizing victory over sin and death, and the promise of eternal life and new beginnings.

What is the history behind Easter, you may be asking? Well, let me explain. Easter is related to



Jewish Passover. There are many beliefs, and not everyone celebrates Passover or Easter.

Some traditions followed in some churches are prayers, extra services, and resurrection celebrations. Symbols that represent easter are Easter eggs, which represent new life and rebirth, rabbits, representing fertility, and lambs, symbolizing Jesus as the "lamb of god".

While Easter has Christian roots, it also has some connections to ancient Pagan ceremonies. Some non-religious things that non-religious people do are Easter egg hunting, dying eggs, decorating eggs and hosting parties. What do you do?

Easter is a Mix of the Old and the New



**By Allison Posadas
Tusker Tribune Staff**

Easter, a big holiday for lots of people around the world. But did you know it's a mix of old ideas and newer Christian beliefs?

Long ago, even before Christianity, many cultures had spring festivals. They celebrated new life after winter. One important one was the Babylonian celebration of Ishtar, the goddess of spring. They had special ceremonies about plants growing again.

Other places, like Egypt, Greece and Rome,



had similar festivals. They all had celebrations of new beginnings. The Anglo-Saxons even had a goddess named Eostre, whose name sounds a lot like "Easter"! These celebrations often used eggs as a symbol of new life. When Christianity started to grow, it combined some of these older celebrations with its own important stories. Christians linked the story of Jesus coming back to

life with these spring festivals. This made it easier for people to understand and accept the new religion.

Alcohol Awareness Month Focuses on the Dangers of Drinking



By Allison Posadas
Tusker Tribune Staff

Alcohol Awareness Month (it's usually in April) is like a reminder to be smart about drinking. Alcohol

Awareness Month is all about teaching people, especially kids our age and teens, to make good choices. It means understanding that there are serious risks to drinking or drinking too much.

For example, in health class, I learned that as kids, our brains are still developing. The teenage brain is still under construction, undergoing significant in structure and function. This is especially true for the prefrontal cortex, the area responsible for higher level thinking.

Your brain isn't developed until your early twenties. If you drink while your brain is still developing, you can develop both short- and long-term effects, including:

- memory loss
- mental health problems
- brain damage

Alcohol can make you feel sick or even hurt yourself or others. It can also make it hard to think clearly and learn at school. And if you're too drunk, your body isn't ready for it at all.

How Much Can YOU Save?



By Elizabeth Alonzo Javier
Tusker Tribune Staff

Do you know what America Saves this week is about?

Well to start I have to be honest with you guys. I didn't even know about this celebration! But I have done some research on sites and now I know about this week, so now I want to inform you what America Saves Week is all about. Let's jump right in!

First off, New York will be observing America Saves Week, a national campaign encouraging individuals and families to focus on saving, reducing

debt, and building wealth. Why is this day even a national day? you may be asking. Well. . . plot twist!



By Elizabeth Alonzo Javier
Tusker Tribune Staff

Before cracking open that beer or popping a cork, learn a few things about drinking that may surprise you with things you didn't know! Let's start!



A collage of posters and facts outside of Ms. Casey's office on the main floor at SMS.

Alcoholism can be a very deadly disease. Each April, the National Council for Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD) promotes Alcohol Awareness Month, a national month that raises the nation's public health awareness.

According to the 2019 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), 25 percent of people ages 18 or older engaged in binge drinking in the past month; six percent engaged in heavy alcohol use in the past month.

Alcohol is the third leading cause of preventable death in the United States — close to 95,000 Americans die from alcohol-

related causes each year. Did you know that!? Alcohol is the most used addictive substance in the United States. Many more people now die from alcohol and drug overdoses each year than are killed in automobile accidents, a stunning revelation. Can you believe that! 'Cause I can't!

This is what SMS Student Assistance Counselor Ms. Casey had to say about Alcohol Awareness Month:

"Hello Elizabeth! Alcohol Awareness Month is so important to increase public awareness and inform young people about the risks, dangers, and learn about the resources and tools to help support people who have alcohol dependency issues.

Five facts about alcohol:

1. Alcohol addiction is a disease.
2. There are no health benefits to drinking alcohol.
3. Alcohol can damage more parts of your body, not just the liver.
4. Drinking alcohol does not warm you up, it actually does the opposite.
5. Support groups like AA (Alcoholic Anonymous) are support groups for people who are trying to get help with their addiction. People can also go to gain support on how to support a loved one going through addiction."

Thanks so much Ms. Casey!!

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Some Interesting Faces About Bunnies (Rabbits)



By Elizabeth Alonzo Javier
Tusker Tribune Staff

Bunnies, also known as rabbits, are small, fluffy mammals belonging to the Leporidae family. They're beloved for their cute appearance and playful nature, making them popular pets worldwide. However, there's much more to these creatures than just their cuddly exterior.

Bunnies possess several key physical features. They have long ears, which help them detect predators, and powerful hind legs for hopping and escaping danger. Their strong teeth are



continuously growing, requiring them to constantly chew to prevent overgrowth.

These adorable creatures live in diverse habitats, including fields, forests, and even deserts, adapting their lifestyles to their surroundings.

Bunnies are herbivores, meaning their diet consists primarily of plants, such as grasses, leaves, and vegetables. Their eating habits play a vital role in maintaining their ecosystems. However, these gentle creatures also face many predators, including foxes, hawks, and even domestic cats. This constant threat keeps their populations in balance and their senses sharp.

Cats Are Complex Creatures



By Allison Posadas
Tusker Tribune Staff

Cats, with their sleek bodies, mesmerizing eyes, and independent spirits, have captivated humans for thousands of years.

These fascinating felines, belonging to the Felidae family, boast a rich history alongside humanity and a unique set of characteristics that make them endlessly intriguing.

Domestic cats, *Felis catus*, are descended from the African wildcat. Their domestication began thousands of years ago, likely in the Middle East, where they were initially valued for their rodent-control abilities. Over time, cats spread across the globe, adapting to various environments and becoming cherished companions in countless cultures.

One of the most striking features of cats is their agility and hunting prowess. Their sharp claws, retractable for protection and extended for climbing and hunting, combined with incredible



reflexes and stealth, make them highly effective predators. Their keen eyesight and acute hearing allow them to detect even the slightest movements, making them formidable hunters of mice, birds, and other small creatures.

Beyond their physical attributes, cats possess complex social behaviors. While often portrayed as aloof, cats exhibit a range of vocalizations and body language to communicate. Purring, hissing, meowing, and tail movements all convey different messages, reflecting their mood and intentions. Their social interactions, while often subtle, are vital for establishing dominance hierarchies and maintaining group cohesion, especially in multi-cat households.

Cats are also known for their independent nature. Unlike dogs, who often display a strong pack mentality, cats are more self-reliant and often prefer their own company. This independence, however, doesn't preclude affection. Many cats form strong bonds with their human companions, displaying affection through purring, rubbing, and gentle head-butting.

Save From Page 3

America Saves Week is a national initiative, not a national holiday, that encourages Americans to prioritize saving and build financial stability through a week-long focus on financial wellness. Everyone has an opportunity to participate. Let me have the honor to show you the plan:

- April 7th (Monday): Saving Automatically.
- April 8th (Tuesday): Saving for the Unexpected.
- April 9th (Wednesday): Saving for Major Milestones.
- April 10th (Thursday): Paying Down Debt is Saving.
- April 11th (Friday): Saving at Any Age.

Let's make an effort!

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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.

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Tusker Tribune Website:

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