The Tusker Tribune

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SOMERS MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWSPAPER

Issue 7 Fall 2026

Dia De Los Muertos Blends Modern with Ancient Traditions

By Riley McKenna
Tusker Tribune Staff



Día de los Muertos is a Mexican holiday about celebrating relatives who have passed. People put the favorite things they used to do/use next to a picture of them to remember them.

Día de los Muertos is celebrated on November 1st and 2nd every year. It was created over 3,000 years ago. Día de los Muertos is celebrated in at least 14 countries, including México, the United States, Brazil, the Philippines, Italy, Peru, Guatemala, Ecuador, Bolivia, Haiti, Honduras, Czechia, Nicaragua, and Argentina.

It originated in México even though it is celebrated in a lot of other countries. Fun Facts About Día de los Muertos:



- It blends ancient Aztec traditions with Catholic influences and is recognized by UNESCO as an Intangible Cultural Heritage.
- Families on Día de los Muertos come together to celebrate with their passed relatives.
- Their passed relatives are memorialized by remembering them and putting pictures and things they like.

Pajama Day the Best Theme Day of Spirit Week

By Ellie Tzadok
Tusker TribuneStaff

Last week we had school spirit week!

Last Monday, our school had one of the most fun days ever—Pajama Day! Instead of getting up early to pick out regular clothes, everyone rolled out of bed and came to school in their favorite pajamas. The classrooms were filled with soft blankets, fuzzy socks, and colorful PJs covered in everything from cartoons to cool patterns. Some students even brought their stuffed animals or wore matching sets with their friends. The teachers joined in too, wearing cozy robes and slippers. Even though we still had our normal lessons, everything felt more relaxed and cheerful. It was funny to look around the room and see everyone so comfortable, doing our work in their sleepwear! Pajama Day made Monday feel special and reminded us how fun school can be when we do something a little different. It was the perfect way to kick off Spirit Week with fun, and funny pajamas!

Everyone on Monday had wonderful school spirit, and even if you didn't participate, it's okay, you have the entire rest of the week to dress up and show school spirit. But those who dressed up had weird, funky, and wacky costumes! Most had pajama pants with funny little patterns on them. Others had slippers that replicated how fun and free willed the day felt; one girl even had some seagull slippers! While kids tend to stay in the box with their pajamas, you could spot groups dressed in cozy onesies all around! Thank you to all that participated in this event! I think I can speak for all of us when I say that Pajama day has been so fun!

Check Out Spirit Week Photos on Pages 2, 3 , 4, 5!!!
















SMS SPIRIT WEEK
• 10/26 Monday-Airport Attire
Dress in comfy clothes for a long flight!
• 10/27 Tuesday-Wrong Destination
Dress for a different situation example ski trip
• 10/28 Wednesday-Decades Day
Dress for a different decade (50's 60's 70's 80's 90's....)
• 10/29 Thursday- Ballers vs Scholars
athletic attire or academic inspired outfit (glasses, blazer, ties...)
• 10/30-Halloween
Dress in your Halloween costume!







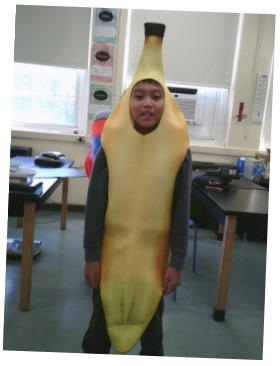





























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Honor Our Veterans Next Week

By Andrew Tatto
Tusker Tribune Staff

Veterans Day and Remembrance Day share many similarities, such as being celebrated on November 11.

Veterans Day, which is celebrated in the US, honors all living and non-living soldiers, whether they served in a war or peacetime, it features many parades, military cemetery salutes, and public ceremonies. It's not to be confused with Memorial Day in May, which only honors people who die while serving.

Remembrance Day, which is observed in Canada, honors all military members that have served, with a deep focus on the people who sacrificed their lives and died through service, Communities have one to two minutes of silence at 11:00 AM to remember the soldiers. People wear artificial red poppies, which is the traditional flower of remembrance inspired by WW1 battlefield landscapes.

At first glance, Remembrance Day and Veterans Day may seem the same, but if you take a closer look at them, they have many differences! So next time you hear these two names, don't confuse them!



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Any student interested in joining the Tusker Tribune Newspaper Club should contact Club Advisor Dean Pappas at DPappas@somersschools.org.
To visit the Tusker Tribune Website, click here: Tusker Tribune School Newspaper

The Tusker Tribune
SOMERS MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWSPAPER

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NEWSPAPER CLUB
TUSKER TRIBUNE



We'll tell you all about this photo in next week's Tusker Tribune!

Tuskers Ready to Perform at All-County Music Concerts

By Aidan Sacchetti
Tusker Tribune Staff

Multiple SMS students have been picked to perform in "All-County" band, chorus, and orchestra. All-County gives students a chance to perform with other musicians and singers from many schools across Westchester County. Students were selected based on last year's NYSSMA solo scores and a recommendation from their teacher.

For band, participants are Aidan Sacchetti and Molly Salman.

For chorus, participants include elementary chorus members Julianna Braun (soprano) and Nicholas Manolakis (alto) and intermediate chorus members Miguel Feliz (baritone), Coraline O'Brien (soprano), and Angelica Potente (alto).

For orchestra, students selected were Kaylee Jeon, Kaitlin Kelly, Aiden Parkin, and Mason Stothers, with Hannah Dempsey and Eileen Cho as alternates.

Participating students will receive music sheets to practice on their own, then take part in two rehearsals and a final concert. Concerts will take place at White Plains High School on March 6, with a snow date of March 13.



Lures to Make the Most of November Fishing

By Lucas Mejia
Tusker Tribune Staff

It's November and fishing is only getting harder, so what do you do? Good days are hard to come by. But if you are not iced out of the water then there is still fish to be caught! At this time of year bass wants slower presentations. No more, "bass want to pack the pounds before fall". Where we are, in northern NY, fall is ending. This time of the year is for slow and small lures. Great examples are a jerkbait or a ned rig.

These are great picks. Also no topwater! I only fish topwater when its 60*f or higher. That may still happen but will be rare. It is also the time to stop bank fishing lakes. Unless you have a boat, don't fish most big lakes! This is because most big lakes have shad, minnows or baitfish. And this is a problem because bait fish move to the middle of the lake and unless you have a boat you can not access them! (blue gill are not baitfish) Bass follow those baitfish.

But say you have no baitfish and you are pond fishing, what lures do you use? Short answer: use minnow, shad or bluegill imitating lures. Long answer? The number 1 lure you can use is a jig head soft plastic. This time-tested method is a great way to catch bass!

Number 2, if you are fishing a big lake from a boat, try the umbrella rig. This lure is a killer in open water.

Three, the lipless crank bait. Fish this along weed edges and drop offs. And hold on! Thanks for reading, and I will see you next time.



Ned Rig



Jerkbait

‘Bear-ly’ Keeping it Together

By Emily Gardella
Tusker Tribune Staff

The room smells of chlorine and industrial carpet cleaner. All twenty-four of us packed into a bland grey hotel room like sardines. We were supposed to be enjoying a school trip to Barbados. Well, until it happened. Mr. Smith leaves the room for a brief second and whispers for us to be quiet. Of course, nobody listens. Some kids shout jokes and others hurl hotel pencils across the room. I stay silent because there's really no point in talking right now.

Mr. Smith slams into the room with a horrified look pinned onto his face. “Hide," he whispers fearfully; the words scrape out, rough like sandpaper. "A rouge Grizzley bear is on the loose around the resort . . . and attacking people. Stay calm and hide under the table, I will close the door.”



I shot a look around the space. Panic erupted instantly. There was only one table for twenty-four kids. The hotel door was incredibly flimsy, and the lock looked broken. Through the rising screams, I locked eyes with Maya, a quiet girl from my tech class. We didn't say a word, but in that split second, we knew exactly what the other was thinking: We're trapped.

Amidst all the screams of horror throughout the hotel room, I run over to Maya and we whisper in unison. “3... 2... 1... RUN!” We hold hands and sprint out of the flimsy door, hurdling under Mr. Smith's arms like ninjas.

“Emily!!! Maya!!!” Mr. Smith screams in agony.

But we run. And run. As we pass into the hallway, I immediately spot petrified tourists scrambling around the hallways in horror. Adrenaline is spiking through my chest like lightning. As we sprint through a corridor, we take a turn to the right. At every twist and turn, my throat clenches as I expect the sight of a malicious bear lunging at me.

Maya and I take one more turn, and we spot a black door labeled “Exit”. Pushing the door open with the last of my strength, we run outside into an open field that leads to the beaches. Once we reach the middle of the spacious field, and far away from the hotel, I start choking on air. My heart is pulsing in my chest; my ears are ringing desperately.

“That was crazy!” Maya pronounces between breaths.

“I.... agree,” I say, gasping for air. Then something clicks. About 20 feet away from us lies a platform of wood with a heavy-duty rope tied to the bottom. “Maya, come here,” I exclaim, running towards the mysterious platform. While I am examining the platform, Maya curiously taps on a small red button engraved into the wood. The big wooden platform pushes up into the air, just about high enough to not get eaten by a malicious bear.

Maya and I exchange looks in awe. We are in the air. The wooden platform is tied to the ground with a thick yellow rope.

“This is awesome,” Maya whispers. From here, I can spot beautiful white beaches, shimmering with turquoise water. Below us, kids I recognize from our school, and adults I've never seen before, all running out of the hotel and shouting. I can make out what some people below us are shouting up to us- all the same phrase. There are two bears now.

Maya looks at me, then pulls out her phone as her fingers shake. “In case our parents don't see us again,” she says as she snaps a photo of us. When I see the photo, we both have looks of pure horror painted on our faces, against the most beautiful sunset I've ever seen.

November Delights



By Gianna Mancini
Tusker Tribune Staff

In the stunning month of November, many people don't realize the beauty of the season. When you step off the old dull mechanic bus, you hear the engine roar, and the loudest crunch of leaves below your new crisp sneakers. You glance up, and observe the new pigments on the trees, slowly dying each portion, one step at a time. The small, yet bright red leaf's, and the shriveled brown ones are eye catching.

Although they might not be in perfect shape, it's the perfect feeling to find after a never-ending school day along with exhaustion. You take a deep whiff of air to catch your breath from this amusing show you can't turn away from, and smell the smokey fires burning your throat, but in a pleasant way.

You can imagine sprawling out on your light grey couch, reclined back with a warm, steamy hot chocolate, drizzled fudge on top, and a few small white marshmallows lying above the surface, absorbing the chocolate. Soon enough, you feel the breezy air rubbing against your face, leaving your cheeks looking rosy without a tint of blush.

The feeling like you accidentally ran into a brick wall. It's the time you know that the summer heat is gone. The big splashes you created in an ice-cold pool, the minty ice cream dripping besides your chapped lips, and your brand-new pink shorts from Target.

Fall is the time to start bundling up with a cozy jacket and kick the air conditioning out. When most students feel like there is nothing to do since school has started, this wonderful look nature provides makes you drop your phone and take in the magical colors. Are you even on Earth? Who knew the world could be so beautiful? The neighbors' grass looks freshly cut. The patterns of the lawn mower driving up and down the property leaving satisfying strokes, in the perfect pathway waiting for the leaf's to tremble down. The small twigs that used to lie on Ms Smith's lawn this morning are now thrown into the deep woods, where the wilderness animals live, getting ready to start their hibernation journey sweeping away from the Fall.

When you finally arrive home, you walk through your old creaky door and put down your newest backpack. You grab out the book "What Happened to Rachel Riley?", and sit on your light-colored couch, right near the windowsill, where you can see the trees sway, and the smallest twigs blow. You focus on the book that you have almost completed. Your eyes trace the words like a cat eyeing a toy, and the sound of the wind screams; making the house feel cold, but in a seasonal way.



Fast-Moving, But Intense: Hurrican Helene

By Maksym E. Chorny
Tusker Tribune Staff

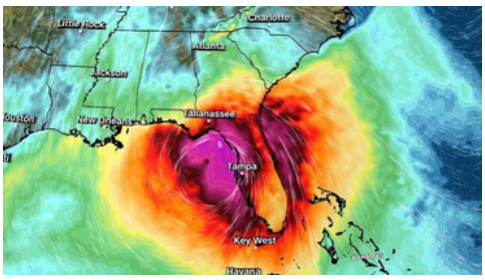
Hurricanes Weekly Issue #6

Hurricane Helene (2024)



As Hurricane Francine neared landfall, Tropical Depression Seven formed in the Atlantic Ocean on September 11, 2024. The system then strengthened and became Tropical Storm Gordon before attaining peak intensity, with winds speeds of 45 miles per hour and a low pressure of 1004 millibars. Gordon dissipated on September 17, having never made landfall. Gordon caused zero deaths and zero dollars in damage.

A system designated Potential Tropical Cyclone Eight formed on September 15, 2024. Unlike Gordon, this system did make landfall in the Carolinas (North Carolina and South Carolina), on September 16, and dissipated the next day, the same day as Gordon. In total, the system caused over $50 million in damage, one indirect death, and a tornado, despite never becoming a tropical cyclone.



On September 20, 2024, a tropical disturbance formed near Central America. After little development, the system was designated Potential Tropical Cyclone Nine by the National Hurricane Center (NHC), on September 23, 2024. The system then underwent tropical cyclogenesis, which is a fancy way of saying that the system went through the process of becoming a tropical cyclone, and was then designated Tropical Storm Helene on September 24.

The system then strengthened and became a hurricane on September 25. And although Helene came close to Mexico, the system never made landfall. Since it did not make landfall in Mexico, Helene instead went over the warm waters of the Gulf of Mexico. This caused Helene to undergo rapid intensification on September 26. The system then reached peak intensity on September 27 while nearing landfall in Florida, with peak wind speeds of 140 miles per hour and a low pressure of 939 millibars, which made Helene a category 4 major hurricane. Sadly, Helene made landfall with this intensity near Perry, Florida on the same day, making it the strongest hurricane to make landfall in Florida's Big Bend region since reliable records began in 1900. That was the year when the 1900 Galveston Hurricane struck Galveston, Texas. (There is an I Survived book featuring this hurricane). However, Helene was a very fast-moving hurricane, so after landfall in Florida, Helene entered Georgia as a category 2 hurricane on the same day and weakened to tropical storm status in the same state on the same day. Helene also had damaging effects in both North Carolina and South Carolina.

Also on September 27, Helen became post-tropical over Kentucky. The system finally dissipated over Tennessee on September 28. In total, Helene caused 252 deaths, $78.7 billion in damage, and a tornado outbreak. This made Helene the deadliest and costliest hurricane of the 2024 Atlantic Hurricane Season, and the fifth-costliest tropical cyclone of all time.

Due to all the deaths and damage Helene caused, its name was retired before the start of the 2025 Atlantic Hurricane Season on April 2, 2025, and replaced with the name Holly for the 2030 Atlantic Hurricane Season.

Next Page: Learn about the systems between the beasts of Hurricane Helene and Hurricane Milton.

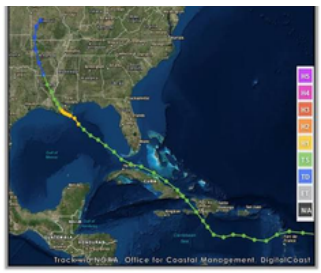
The Storms That Came Before Hurricane Milton

By Maksym E. Chorny
Tusker Tribune Staff

Hurricanes Weekly Issue #7

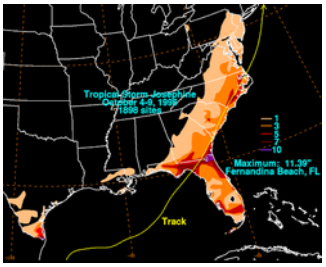
After Helene but Before Milton

Before or during the time Hurricane Milton was active, there were four storms active in the Atlantic Ocean. The first of these systems formed on September 24, 2024, as an extratropical cyclone. The system then underwent tropical cyclogenesis, becoming a tropical storm and receiving the name "Isaac". The system gradually strengthened and attained hurricane status on September 27. The system attained peak intensity the next day as a category 2 hurricane with 105 mile per hour winds and a low pressure of 963 millibars. Isaac then weakened down to tropical storm strength on September 29. Isaac continued to weaken before becoming an extratropical cyclone again on September 30. Isaac then dissipated as a weak extratropical cyclone on October 3, 2024. Isaac never made landfall, so it caused zero deaths and zero dollars in damage.



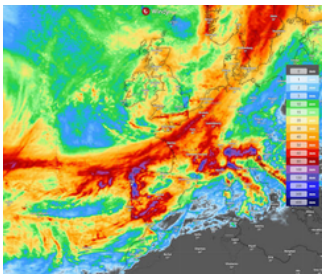
Hurricane Isaac

On September 27, another tropical depression formed in the Atlantic, and became Tropical Storm Josephine on the same day. The system attained peak intensity later that day on September 27, with peak wind speeds of 50 miles per hour and a low pressure of 1001 millibars. Josephine then weakened over the next three days and dissipated on September 30. Like Isaac, Josephine never made landfall, causing zero deaths and zero dollars in damage.



Hurricane Josephine

As Josephine weakened, a third tropical depression formed in the Atlantic on September 29. The depression strengthened and became Tropical Storm Kirk the next day. Kirk then became a hurricane on the first day of October. Kirk briefly became a category 2 hurricane on October 2 before attaining category 3 hurricane intensity soon after. On October 3, Kirk became a category 4 hurricane and attained peak intensity the next day with peak wind speeds of 150 miles per hour and a low pressure of 928 millibars. After peak intensity, Kirk still had a long journey to complete. On October 5, Kirk was downgraded to category 3 hurricane status, which still made Kirk a major hurricane. On the night of October 5-6, 2024, Kirk was downgraded again, this time to category 2 hurricane status, and was then downgraded to category 1 status on October 6. Kirk remained a category 1 for the rest of its journey as a tropical cyclone before becoming a category 1-equivalent extratropical cyclone. As an extratropical cyclone, Kirk passed the northern coast of Spain and traversed over France, Belgium and Luxembourg before dissipating in Germany. In total, Kirk caused no damage and zero deaths as a tropical cyclone, but Kirk did cause damage and one death in Europe as an extratropical cyclone.



Hurricane Kirk

The final system that formed before Milton was a tropical depression that formed on October 2. The system became Tropical Storm Leslie on October 3. After some steady intensification, Leslie became a hurricane on the night of October 4-5, 2024. Leslie attained peak intensity on October 6, with wind speeds of 90 miles per hour and a low pressure of 980 millibars. After peak intensity, Leslie began to weaken on October 7 and was downgraded to tropical storm status on the night of October 7-8. After 18 hours as a tropical storm, Leslie attained hurricane status for the second time on October 8. Leslie then became a category 2 hurricane on October 9 before attaining peak intensity the next day as a category 2 hurricane with peak wind speeds of 105 miles per hour and a low pressure of 970 millibars. Leslie then weakened back down to category 1 hurricane status the same day and to tropical storm status that night. Leslie dissipated on October 12, 2026. Since Leslie never made landfall, no deaths and zero dollars in damage resulted from the hurricane.



Hurricane Leslie

Next issue: Learn about Hurricane Milton, its rapid growth, its landfall in Florida, and more!