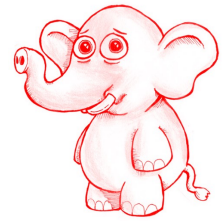


The Tusker Tribune

The Student Newspaper of Somers Middle School



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Fall 2016

“Uranium” (the prologue)

A NaNoWriMo Story

Editor’s Note: Somers Middle School Eighth Graders have been writing novels during the school year for the NaNoWriMo program. The name is short for National Novel Writing Month. Nitin Seshadri, a Tusker Tribune Staffer, will be presenting his NaNoWriMo entry chapter by chapter in the Tusker Tribune. The prologue to his novel, “Uranium”, appears today.



By Nitin Seshadri
Tusker Tribune
Staff Writer

Derek had woken up extremely late this morning.

"DEREK!" his mom yelled.

"Yes, what?" Derek replied, groggy.

"Get up! You're extremely late for school. Come on!"

Derek awoke with a start. He rushed to the bathroom and began to brush his teeth lazily. He jumped into the shower and doused himself in warm water. After rushing out of the shower, he hurriedly combed his shaggy brown hair, threw on one of his red T-shirts and some jeans on, and rushed downstairs.

"Derek, why didn't you wake up? I thought you set an alarm!" his mom said.

"I don't know, I probably hit Snooze..."

"Whatever. Hurry up and eat your oatmeal, the bus is coming!"

Derek shoveled the oatmeal into his mouth and threw his backpack on his back as he rushed to the bus. It was an unusually hot morning for a New York summer. When he opened the door, it seemed as though he walked into a furnace. Just as he arrived at the bus stop, he realized that he had forgotten his school computer. He would have to get a loaner to use today.

"Dude, look up! There's a huge fiery object

in the sky! It looks dangerous!" his best friend, Andrew, exclaimed. The other kids at the bus stop, noticing the tension, glanced up and all began screaming in fear.

Derek looked up. A giant, fiery object loomed in the sky, speeding towards Earth. Bits of glowing hot material were spewing off of its sides. One piece of material narrowly missed his house's roof. Further down the road, the roof of a neighbor was burning.



Obviously, why wouldn't that be dangerous? Derek thought. "I'm going to use the UFO detector app I made to see what in the world this thing is," he said to Andrew.

Derek quickly fished his phone out of his backpack and launched the app he had made to detect objects in space. This app had had won him a recognition from NASA

who had said that he should conduct more research and improve the app, but he hadn't done anything with the money they had given him yet.

As he put the phone up to the sky, it beeped, which worried Derek.

"ASTEROID DETECTED – 1 KM WIDE – MAY CONTAIN RADIOACTIVE MATERIALS – FATAL TO HUMAN RACE – ON COLLISION COURSE WITH EARTH" appeared on the screen. Using the app, Derek found that the asteroid was going to touch down in his neighborhood. On his street. The asteroid was just 50 miles above ground and it hurtled down to Earth with threatening speed.

"Andrew, I need you to listen to me..." said Derek, his voice struggling to cut through the cacophony.

Derek could feel the heat as the asteroid sailed closer and closer to Earth, a deafening noise ringing through his ears.

Boom.

The 'Roots' of the Christmas Tree Tradition



By Robert Gaudio
Tusker Tribune Staff Writer

The tradition of putting up a decorated Christmas tree is traced back hundreds of years ago, to the 1600s in Germany. The Germans decorated their Christmas trees with edible things like gingerbread and apples. They also used glass ornaments, paper cut outs and candy.



As German people immigrated to the "New World" in the 1800s, they brought their Christmas Tree spirits with them as well. The idea of a Christmas tree became very popular in Britain after Prince Albert, a German, and his English wife Queen Victoria, put up the first Christmas



tree at Windsor Castle. A drawing of this was published in 1848 in the London Times. This drawing was published in other magazines and caught the attention of many Americans. This really kick started the Christian tradition of today.

Decoration in those Victorian times included candles to represent the shiny stars at night. Edison's Electric Light Company made the first electric string lights in 1882.

Now a days it is a worldwide tradition to put up Christmas Trees. New York's Rockefeller Center has been putting up a lighted Christmas Tree since its opening in 1933. It is a tradition watched and seen worldwide by millions.



SPORTS UPDATE by Eli Yates



College Football Selections Announced

This weekend on Saturday the college football selections were announced.

It was Alabama who received the #1 seed at 13-0. Clemson got the #2 seed at 12-1. Ohio state got the #3 seed at 11-1. Washington got the #4 seed at 12-1.

On December 31 Alabama plays Washington in the semifinal Chick-Fil-A Peach Bowl at 3:00 p.m. Then at 5:00 p.m., Clemson plays Ohio in the semifinals of the PlayStation Fiesta Bowl.



Tiger is Back

Tiger Woods played his first golf tournament on 12/1, after coming off of two back surgeries. He played in the Hero World Challenge tournament and came in 15th place.

Brady Wraps Up Win #2001



This weekend on Sunday the New England Patriots played the Los Angeles Rams and Tom Brady broke Peyton Manning's record that he tied last weekend with 2000 career wins this Sunday.

Brady broke it and has been the 1st quarterback ever to get 2001 wins.

The Tusker Tribune Staff

- Sara Vala
- Nitin Seshadri
- Robert Gaudio
- Eli Yates
- Jesse Heller



The Tusker Tribune is published online and is featured weekly on the Somers Middle School Website. It is entirely student-written by 6th, 7th and 8th grade students from

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Any SMS student is eligible to write stories. If interested, please e-mail Advisor Dean Pappas at DPappas@somersschools.org

Dallas Cowboys Dominate NFL in 2016



By Jesse Heller
Tusker Tribune Staff Writer

The Dallas Cowboys are the first of 12 teams to clinch a spot in the NFL playoffs. The Washington Redskins' loss to the Arizona Cardinals this past Sunday make it mathematically impossible for the Cowboys not to make it.

Dallas is led by two rookies, Dak Prescott (quarterback), and Ezekiel Elliott (running back). Dak Prescott who was picked in the 4th round 135th overall of this year's NFL Draft, is performing like he is an NFL veteran. He was the 8th quarterback taken this year among 15 of them. He has a (19::2) (touchdown-interception) ratio to go along with 2974 passing yards and 5 rushing touchdowns. His 2 interceptions are the second lowest among quarterbacks. Tom Brady only has one interception on the season but he had been suspended for the first four games of the season. Prescott also owns a 108.6 QB rating which ranks third in the NFL.

Ezekiel Elliott, who was the Cowboys' first pick in the draft, 4th overall, leads the whole NFL in rushing yards, with 1285 yards and is second in rushing touchdowns with 12 on the year. Both Prescott and Elliott are in the running for rookie of the year as well as MVP!

Not to take away anything from Prescott and Elliott, there are some other reasons to the Cowboys' success. It all starts with the offensive line. The Cowboys' offensive line ranks among the best in the NFL. The offensive line gives Prescott a lot of time to sit in the pocket to find the open receiver and they give Elliott the holes to run through and get more yardage. Elliott is a great running back but with those blocks he's getting, he is the best in the NFL. If I were an NFL general manager, I would be drafting offensive line. Four of the Cow-

boys starting offensive lineman are below the age of 26 and they have 10 year veteran Doug Free at offensive tackle. Offensive line as the Cowboys have shown leads to success.

Long time Cowboys quarterback Tony Romo, coming off breaking his left collarbone twice in the previous season, is healthy and ready to go. In just the third pre-season game, he had a compression fracture on his first lumbar vertebrae which is the first bone of the lower back. The Cowboys tried trading for a quarterback but once they couldn't, they had to settle with rookie Dak Prescott. "Who is going to start?" The Cowboys now only had 1 loss



on the season in the first game and Tony Romo is healthy. Over Romo's entire career, the Cowboys had been 10-23 without him and now they were 7-1. The Cowboys just decided to delay his return because they wanted Romo to be 100% and they didn't want to have to deal with who to start just yet. Tuesday, November 15, after the Cowboys had won a crazy game against the Steelers and were now 8-1 on the season, Tony Romo addressed the media for the first time the situation and said, "Dak Prescott, and what he's done, he's earned the right to be our quarterback."



Romo has been like a mentor to Prescott. He is supporting him and helping him out. One of the things Romo is known for is his scrambling and you can see that Prescott has picked up on some of it. The Cowboys are young, talented, and most importantly, they want to win. There are 4 more games left in the season. The Cowboys are on primetime the next three of the four games. They play in New York against the Giants this Sunday and then travel home to Dallas to play the Buccaneers the following Sunday night at 8:30, followed by a Monday night game against the Lions on 12/26. They then fly to Philadelphia to wrap up their season against the Eagles on 1/1/17.

The 'Roast' Becomes a Reality

By Sara Vala
Tusker Tribune Staff Writer

Editor's Note: This story is fictional, but the message connects with the anti bullying, tolerance and acceptance activities that have been going on during Advisory periods at SMS.

"Hey Marina!" shouted Chris. "How come your head looks like an octopus?" he asked in a mocking tone.

"OOOOOHHHHHHHHH!!!!!!!" shouted half the kids.

It was the bus ride home and not even a minute past before Chris started "roasting" Marina again. 8th grade has been torture for her and Chris just kept adding fuel to the fire.

Marina was a tall, but smart girl. She always worked hard and wasn't afraid to stand up for herself. But ever since Chris got transferred to her bus, he started to make fun of her. He made fun of her clothes, her appearance, and even her weight. Marina was getting sick and tired of it, but the bully wouldn't stop.

"Hey! Do you wear wedgie-proof underwear to school everyday child?" yelled Chris. And on and on the 9th graders ranted. They weren't any help at all. They admired Chris and considered him a "cool kid".

Marina sat faraway from Chris as possible, but that didn't stop him from roasting her.

"Hey! You should be named Arby X for your porkbelly!" taunted Chris.

Marina's mother always warned her that one day, people would make fun of her weight. And this year, the nightmare came true. Marina sat in her seat, trying to brush off the taunts, but deep down, it felt like her self esteem was put in a paper shredder. She tried to concentrate on algebra problems, but she couldn't ignore the hateful words, as they came every few seconds. Marina's eyes watered and her breaths were short and quick. Chris saw what was happening, but instead of stopping, he kept going.

"Hey look!" he whispered to his friends, smirking. "It's Marina, the crybaby, and she's gonna' cry," he said with fake puppy eyes.

The whole bus started to chant, "Crybaby!" Marina was trying her hardest to hold

back tears but his taunts ripped her whole life apart. Finally, it was Marina's stop. She quickly grabbed her books and stormed off the bus straight home. Marina could not take it any more. She opened the door and locked herself in there for hours.

"Marina, sweetie, it's time for dinner," called Marina's mother. It was 7 o'clock and her mother was getting worried. She'd never been in her room so long. Marina's mom placed her ear against the door and listened. No sound.

"Marina?" she questioned as her heart rate rose every second. Still no sound. She tried to turn the doorknob, but it wouldn't budge.

"Rick!!!!" she screamed. Marina's father ran upstairs a few seconds later. "What happened?" he asked with a very scared look on his face.

"Marina isn't answering the door and she's been in there for hours," she said, shaking with fear.

"Stay here," said her father, and ran downstairs. When he came back, he had an axe. "Marina!" he shouted. "If you can hear me, move away from the door!" And seconds later he swung. Once. Twice. Three Times. Finally, on the fifth swing, the door opened.

The worried parents rushed into Marina's room. Her room was trashed with books, clothes, and make-up accessories all over her bed, floor, and dresser.

"Marina?" asked her mom with her face turning paler by the minute. The room seemed to be freezing cold.

"Miranda?" asked Rick. Miranda turned around. In the corner of the room where Rick was, well, it was empty. Her backpack was supposed to be there. She looked in the closet and saw that most of her important items were gone.

A gust of wind blew into the room. The two adults ran towards her window. They opened the curtains, and saw a horrible thing. A trail of muddy footprints lead away from the house and into the woods. On the ledge sat a note, written in sparkly pink ink. Miranda sobbed into Rick's shoulder and the two stood there and watched for any sign. But they had to face the facts. Their 14 year old daughter Marina, had run away.

