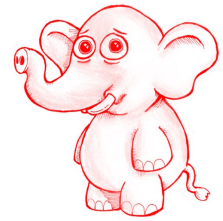


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Winter 2017

Valentine's Day Fun Facts!



By Jaewon Yeo
Tusker Tribune Staff
Writer

Valentine's Day is celebrated every year on February 14. Many people celebrate it in the US and it is a holiday of love and gifts, such as chocolate.

Here are a few fun facts about Valentines Day you probably never knew:

- There are at least 36 million boxes of heart-shaped chocolate sold annually and about 58 million pounds of chocolate.
- Approximately 50 million roses are given on Valentine's Day.
- Valentine's Day is the second-most card giving holiday. First is Christmas
- The first box of Valentine chocolates was made in the late 1800's by Richard Cadbury
- More than \$1 billion is spent on chocolate in the US.



- Teachers receive the most Valentine cards
- About 220,000 wedding proposals are said on Valentine's Day.
- About 1,000 love letters sent to Juliet are sent to Verona, Italy each year (which is the place where *Romeo and Juliet* by Shakespeare took place).
 - 8 billion Sweethearts candies are produced.
 - 62% of the adults in the US celebrate Valentine's Day.
 - The holiday is named after a saint named Valentine who lived in ancient Rome.
 - King Henry VII declared that Valentine's Day would be a holiday on February 14 in 1537.
- Gift exchanging started in 18th century in England.
- Esther Howland began the trend of giving cards in US in 1850's by producing a large number of cards.

An Experiment in Puns



By Evan Rich
Tusker Tribune Staff Writer

"Making my way down town, and down town is awes-" said Joe Mommah "Wha- What is happening!"

Joe got taken to the punderful town of comic Sans Francisco. "Welcome" said a being that does look human. "Welcome to comic Sans Francisco. This punderful, punderful town. Do you want to be a resident? Do you have the necessary kowalafacations?"

Ok great alpaca your bags."
"No I don't want to move I just got teleported here," I said back to him.

He responded

"Oh...Hawkward"

"Stop speaking in horrible puns!" I yelled.

He responded again. "But

that's what we have to do in this pun-derful town."

"Oh God."

"I'd tell you a chemistry joke but I know I wouldn't get a reaction. Huh Huh?"

"Please st-"

"NO! I'm on a roll, rick roll!"

I wondered why the baseball was getting bigger. Then it hit me. Have you ever tried to eat a clock? It's very time consuming. Why don't programmers like nature? It has too many bugs. Did you hear about the guy who got hit in the head with a can of soda? He was lucky it was a soft drink. Yesterday I accidentally swallowed some food coloring. The doctor says I'm OK, but I feel like I've dyed a little inside. A friend of mine tried to annoy me with bird puns, but I soon realized that toucan play at that game."



TOY YODA

Continued on page 3





“Uranium” (Chapter 7)

A NaNoWriMo Story



By Nitin Seshadri
Tusker Tribune Staff Writer

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. Chapter 7 of his novel, “Uranium”, appears today.

Derek woke up on his back in the underground room. The Aboveground door was still open and he could see the night sky through the stairwell that the door opened up to. He hadn't seen the outside world for months. Derek had mangled the door lock badly when he had yanked the door open in anger.

Derek got up and gently shut the door so as to not alarm any of the nurses. Well, they weren't nurses anymore. They were aliens. They had taken Andrew and Andrea away. Derek was enraged by this very thought. So he formulated a plan. He would, in the cover of darkness, open the Aboveground door, and run up to the Earth's surface. He would be free! And with that happy thought, he went to bed. After all, he was sleepy.

Derek woke up a couple hours later (according to his phone, which still worked) and quietly snuck in the shadows, afraid of being watched, to the Aboveground door. He quietly twisted the handle. Then, suddenly, the worst happened.

A siren began to sound, red lights turned

on, and a booming robotic voice came from nowhere. Had he tripped a security system?

RED ALERT DOOR HAS BEEN OPENED
RED ALERT DOOR HAS BEEN OPENED

Derek heard a distant explosion. Then loud, heavy thuds moving towards the door that the alien nurses entered through—the door marked Employees Only. He swiftly opened the door and ran up the stairwell. However, he was almost too late. As soon as he reached the top of the stairwell, another one of the creatures slammed the door open.

"Hey! Get your butt down here! You are our prisoner, human!" it bellowed menacingly. Derek, unfazed, mounted the staircase and looked at his surroundings. The sun was slowly rising over the horizon and he could see that he was in the middle of an utterly giant wasteland.

The entire surroundings were just sand, broken metal pieces, and a few long-dead cacti.

Derek picked up a few handfuls of sand and threw them into the advancing alien's eyes.

"AHHHHH!" it cried in pain. "My eyes, my eyes, my eyes! Wherever you are, human, you will pay for what you have done. Your chances are LIMITED!"

The alien was blinded. As it mounted the stairs, it tripped, fell and rolled all the way down the stairs. It did not get up again. Whether it was out cold or dead, good riddance. Another alien down.

other alien down.

Derek noticed that the stairwell where he had come from was just a hole in the ground. If there were a cover for this hole, no one would know this place even existed.

Derek quickly found a stray wooden board lying in the sand, covered up the stairwell so the alien nurses could not figure out how he got out, and covered the board with sand. Then he just started running.



A Heart of Ice



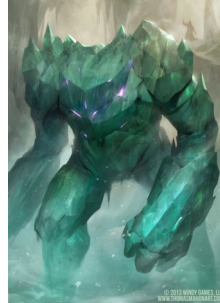
By Nick Cirillo
Tusker Tribune Staff Writer

I wake up. You know, I've never done that before - I didn't even know I was *alive*. I look down at my body, somehow, since I don't have eyes, and see... A rock. *Wait a second*. I *am* a rock! Yeah boy! Uh-huh, woo-hoo, I'm a rock, and I'd do a little dance but I don't have limbs!

Then something freaks me out: Ice. A chilling, freezing, wind, and I'm obliged to roll over onto a nice, warm, pile of other rocks. Roughly humanoid, but cool all the same. The ice binds me, and I feel a blossoming warmth, the opposite of the wind itself, in my new, giant goliath-like body. Did I just fuse to the pile? I walk around, no facial features and all, excited for my new life, but I see my goal.

The *others*.

The other ice-covered stone creatures swing at me, bash, spit chunks of ice, throw sheets of snow, as I (albeit clumsily) dodge and weave, countering them with my own wintery at-



tacks, fitting the frozen tundra around me.

I hear a howl, a fierce, fiery wolf cry, from a dream far away, that motivates me to keep going. With each other giant I destroy, succumbing to my endless cold, I build on my body, until I am bigger than a forest, colder than outer space, and stronger than a mountain. Then I hear the voice.

"Destroy... The land... Douse the fire... Absorb the energy... And I will set you free..."

So I do. I wreak havoc on the land around me. I encounter many obstacles, like trees, more trees... Pretty much just trees. But I also found a thunder lion who seemed to dislike me, shooting bolts at me like I was a big metal pole. I travel to another village, and I see a man. Arcing flame spins from every-which-way, making me feel a bit melty, but the wolves I heard earlier lay slain on the ground, their eyes of fire extinguished.

Continued on page 4



A Sad Ode to Homework



By Casey Bolotin
Tusker Tribune Staff Writer

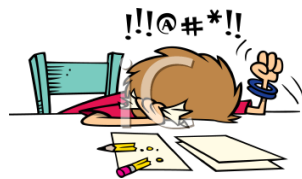
You hear the words and scream,
You have seen the teachers gleam.

You do not want it to be true,
However, you know when it's due.

All because it's graded,
You wanted to be aided.

Sure, it can be tough,
Just please do not make it rough.

You watch your parents smirk,
As you do your **HOMEWORK**.



SPORTS UPDATE



By Eli Yates
Tusker Tribune Staff Writer

Last night UConn Girls Basketball team played South Carolina and beat them 66-55. This team has won 100 consecutive games. Their last loss was in November of 2014!

UConn broke its own record which was 90 wins last night. This team also is the first Division 1 team ever to win 100 games in a row.



Puns

Continued from page 1

"NO NO NO NO
NO NO! GET ME OUT
OF THIS NIGHT-
MARE!"

Then I woke up.
Then I went to get a
shirt, I really wanted a
camouflage shirt, but I
couldn't find one.
Smirk.

Hamilton is Well Worth Watching

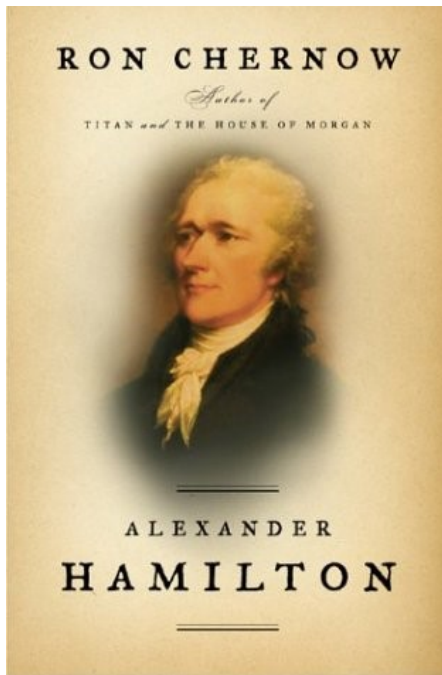


By Hunter Duffy
Tusker Tribune Staff Writer

If someone came to you and said "I'm going to create a musical about Alexander Hamilton" you might think they're crazy.

That's most likely what close friends and family of Lin Manuel Miranda thought when he told them his idea.

What seemed like a weird idea at first has turned into a musical admired by many. Hamilton: The Musical features the life story of Alexander Hamilton, our first Secretary of the Treasury, from the moment he came to America to his death.



It tells about his political views, feuds, and social life as well. Other important characters in the story are Aaron Burr, who would kill Hamilton in a pistol duel, Eliza Schuyler, Angelica Schuyler, Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, Lafayette, Hercules Mulligan and John Laurens.

Act One of the show is about Hamilton meeting Burr, joining the Continental Army, meeting the Schuyler sisters, marrying Eliza, and helping to win the Revolutionary War.

Some songs from act one are "Alexander



Hamilton", the first song sung by the entire cast, "My Shot", in which Hamilton meets Lafayette, Laurens, and Mulligan, "The Schuyler Sisters", the first time the audience is introduced to the sisters, "Helpless" and "Satisfied", describing how Hamilton meets Eliza and marries her, "Guns and Ships", where Washington begs Hamilton to rejoin the army, and "The Battle of Yorktown", the song about how the colonies won the fight for independence..

Act two of the show is about Hamilton getting into politics but then his career and marriage being ruined by his affair with Mariah Reynolds. But even with these struggles, he regains Eliza's trust. Some songs featured in act two are "Non-stop" which talks about Hamilton's rise in power, "Cabinet Battles 1 and 2" which show Hamilton's rivalry with Jefferson on political issues, "The Reynolds Pamphlet", where he admits to his mistakes, "Stay Alive" (reprise) in which he loses his son Phillip, "Quiet Uptown", where Eliza forgives him for his mistakes, and "The World Was Wide Enough" which tells the story of Hamilton's death.

Hamilton features great music, a great story, and history lesson all in one. I predict it will be on Broadway for many years to come.

Heart of Ice

Continued from page 3

Then he blinks out of existence.

"Wait... He will return..." the voice screams. So I do, and about a day later, he flies out of the house, seemingly afraid of the demons behind him, kill the wolves, stares me in the eye—

and disappears. I walk away.

Far away, in another land, a mural lies decimated upon the sand. A wandering traveler picks it up, and finds a glyph representing a battle between a fiery demon, with eyes of fire; an icy golem, with a heart of ice; and a thunderous lion, with a soul of lightning; all converging upon the same destiny...

The Elemental Void.

Lots on Tap for World Language Day



By Charlie Stone
Tusker Tribune Staff Writer

World Language Day is a day at SMS where we celebrate other countries and their languages.

The day consists of students going through each classroom in the foreign language hall to eat and celebrate the cultures of Canada, Italy, France, and Spain.

Each classroom is set up to act as a certain country. Mrs. Messina's room will represent Canada,

Mrs. Soares's room will represent Spain, Mrs. Crispo's room will represent Sicily, Mrs. Pepe's room will represent Spain, and Mrs. Gottlieb's room will represent Italy.

During students' foreign language periods, they will walk from class to class tasting food and learning about the country. All of the school is invited to drop in and participate in the festivities.

Practical Tips for Those Terrible Tests!



By Maria Klimentova
Tusker Tribune Staff Writer

Have you ever felt super stressed about a test or felt like you are being overwhelmed with tests and homework? Well, so have I! I have created a list of a few tips and tricks I can give to relieve you of some stress caused by school work and studying.

- Make flashcards. The easiest and most efficient way I have found to study for tests is by making flashcards by hand or by using Quizlet. Since flashcards engage in "active recall" (which is when your brain is forced to remember things from scratch instead of from multiple choices) you are thinking more actively which also helps you remember everything you study!
- Don't wait until the last minute. I'm sure you have heard this from all your teachers but really—don't wait until the last minute. Start studying about a week or at least 2-3 days before your test. Never cram, or stay up late for a big quiz. A good night's rest helps you focus, and being tired and irritable does not.
- Get rid of all distractions when studying. That means putting your phone away, turning your computer off, and removing other things that might distract you (such as books, siblings, pets, friends, etc.) Turn the TV off. Remember,

studying is time for you to focus on that one particular thing, so eliminating objects that will bother you helps a lot.



- Stay organized. I always have struggled with putting all my papers and books away before the bell rings, but never shove your papers and worksheets in random spots. Then you won't know where your study guide for that big test is or where you put your notes. Keep everything in its own section so it is easier to locate and use!

• Talk about assignments and exams with friends. One of the best ways to study is with a partner. That way you can compare answers for homework and have someone help quiz you with your flashcards!

- Make your own study guide. Re-write bolded or underlined words in your textbook. Re-write key concepts and ideas. If you already have a study guide, re-write the questions! Writing things down actually helps you remember more than if you just read it.

Remember—such a thing as over studying and over working exists. If you are studying really hard every day, remember to just take some time for yourself! Read a book, listen to some music, or go outside. These methods are all good for relaxing. Getting a good night's sleep will also help all your studied thoughts and knowledge sink in.

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