

The Tusker Tribune

The Student Newspaper of Somers Middle School

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Winter 2018



Have a
terrific
break!
—The Tusker
Tribune
Editorial
Staff



Next issue:
1/4/2019

Neal Shusterman Visits SMS



By Sofia DiMella
Tusker Tribune Staff

On Monday, December 17, 2018, Author Neal Shusterman came to visit us. In

the morning we all went to the auditorium for a presentation. We got to ask different questions about his career as an author and about the books he wrote/is writing.

But only a select few of students got to have a one on one lunch with Neal Shusterman!



where we ask him questions and he answers.

He told us how he became interested in writing and fun facts about his books. Some of his books include *Unwind*, *Full Tilt*, *Challenger Deep* and *Scythe*.

We got to learn lots of new things about writing and what it takes to write a story. He also shared some tips like how he comes up with his ideas and how he comes up with his characters. Some of his ideas are inspired by everyday things. Like taking a test or watching a television show.

Presentation

During 3rd period the 7th graders went to meet Neal Shusterman. It was something like a Q and A,

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Westchester County's Best Mexican Restaurant



By Deanna DeCamp
Tusker Tribune Staff

Have your parents ever asked you where you want to go to dinner one night and you respond that you have no idea and your sibling ends up picking the restaurant you hate? I know I have. But I found a restaurant that the whole family loves and has quick service. This place is Salsa Fresca in the Triangle Shopping Center in Yorktown Heights.

One great part about this restaurant is that it has quick service. Quick service is a restaurant where you can get food at a fast pace but is not a fast food or fancy restaurant. This kind of restaurant is in the middle of those rankings. Other quick service restaurants include Panera, and Burger Shack. Your food takes a maximum of five minutes to be made. The exception are the quesadillas because those take longer to get warm. So, at this restaurant you can get a



quick bite to eat if you have some where to be right after.

Another great part about Salsa Fresca is that they have a wide variety of things you can add into your food. For example, I usually get a burrito with chicken, Mexican rice, cheese, lettuce, and guacamole. Or I will get tacos with ground beef, cheese, and lettuce. They also have taco bowls, bowls, and quesadillas. They are all very tasty and delicious to eat.

The final great part about this restaurant is that each meal comes with a side of chips and salsa and you can buy different kinds of things to drink. Each meal comes with a side of chips and salsa which goes very well with your Mexican meal. You can also buy a fountain drink (small or large) which can be filled with coke, lemonade, cream soda, sprite, etc. You can also buy a water or canned soda.

Furthermore, Salsa Fresca is a quick serving restaurant that tastes delicious.



By Kaeleigh Picco
Tusker Tribune Staff

Have you ever wondered what happened today-ten years ago? Twenty years ago? Thirty? In *This Week in History* I will tell you about the events that happened that particular week that could have impacted our everyday lives, or are just really interesting to learn about.



December 20th, 1958

Elvis Presley, possibly the worlds greatest Rock and Roll icon, was drafted into the United States Military to fight in the Vietnam War. He served for two years, and reached the rank of Sergeant in that time.



December 22nd, 1956

This day was a sad one for animals, as it marks the anniversary of the birth of Colo, the first ever gorilla born in captivity. Weighing just four pounds, Colo is a western low-land gorilla whose parents were captured from French Cameroon, Africa in 1951. In 2017, she became the oldest gorilla in captivity, dying at age of 61.

December 23rd, 1888

Most of you may have heard of Vincent Van Gogh, an incredibly famous Dutch painter known for his pieces such as Starry Night, Sunflowers, and numerous self-portraits. However, in the 18th century not many people appreciated his work, and Van Gogh was known as “A poster boy for tortured starving artists”, and only sold one painting. He suffered from depression, and that caused him to cut off his ear! This is the date that marks that crazy event, but also compels us to remember Van Gogh and all of the struggles he went through to express his art.



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Meet SMS' SRO OMR! (Officer Matt Rokicki



By Allison O'Connor
Tusker Tribune Staff

Westchester County Police Officer Matt Rokicki is a person helping keeping us safe, and because he's always around, you should know a little thing about him first.

He has been working for Westchester County Police for three years. Before he worked for Westchester County Police, he worked for White Plains Police for three years.

Officer Rokicki wanted to become a police officer to help others. Officer Rokicki became a School Resource Officer (SRO) after taking some special classes and going through an interview process.

He knew about the program since high school because when he was in high school, a



School Resource Officer was assigned to his school.

Officer Rokicki wanted to become an SRO so he could interact with kids, and to be a positive influence. On a typical day, he monitors the SMS building and takes time to speak to as many students as he can. Outside of his SRO duties at SMS, Officer Rokicki does other police activities by taking overtime shifts, and during the summer months when school is not in session.

You can find Officer Rokicki in his office, which is room 210 across from the Art Rooms, or by meeting him as he walks around the halls.

According to Officer Rokicki "the SRO program is important to keep the school safe and to build a relationship between students and police. It is important to build a relationship because some kids are afraid of police officers, so they won't usually talk to them" outside of school.



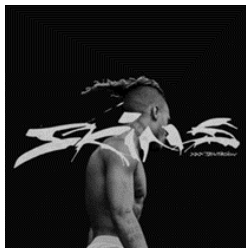
Music Report



By Noah Volkman
Tusker Tribune Staff

SKINS – XXXTENTACION

XXXTENTACION's record label is called Bad Vibes Forever, and in the wake of the South Florida star's murder, the name reads more like a curse than a fan base-uniting battle cry. Prior to



his death, the troubled rapper and singer was the voice of a generation struggling with anxiety resulting from coming of age social media's clout era. *SKINS*, the third album in his discography, arrives six months after his untimely passing and delivers on his previously stated commitment to brevity (the LP contains 10 tracks, the longest

of which is just over the three-minute mark), while still spanning a multitude of influences and musical inclinations.

Much like its predecessor (?), released just nine months prior, *SKINS* boasts technically proficient rapping, heartfelt R&B-influenced singing, and screamo belting. The real surprise here is the album's lone credited feature, Kanye West, who does his best to uplift XXXTENTACION's legacy by way of an impassioned verse on "One Minute." "When I'm on my way, X hold the gate," he raps. At the news of X's passing, Kanye tweeted his con-

dolences: "I never told you how much you inspired me when you were here thank you for existing." If X never knew, his fans surely will, as the most impactful rapper of X's lifetime made it a point to pledge his allegiance to bad vibes forever. Genre: Pop/Hip-Hop

FRIENDS KEEP SECRETS – benny blanco

"I've been doing this for 12 years," Benny Blanco said in an interview. "After that long, it's good to switch it up." You might not know Blanco's name, but you know his work. A prodigious songwriter from suburban Virginia who apprenticed under Dr. Luke, he's written so many hits for so many stars



(Rihanna, Sia, The Weeknd, Katy Perry, Justin Bieber, Kanye, Marron 5...you get the idea) that it's impossible to imagine contemporary pop music without him. Now, at 30, he's stepping out from behind the curtain on his debut album—or at least the first version of—*FRIENDS KEEP SECRETS*.

Taking cues from Kanye West's perpetually in-progress *The Life of Pablo* and 2018 G.O.O.D. Music releases, the project is an ever-evolving collection of song that Blanco says he'll update "whenever I want."

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Race to the College Football National Championship



By Arjun Ojha
Tusker Tribune Staff

College football fans are waiting for December 29th, 2018. The reason they're waiting is because that's when the Cotton Bowl Classic and the Orange Bowl will take place.

The Cotton Bowl features number 2 ranked Clemson Tigers led by Dabo Swinney and number 3 ranked Notre Dame Fighting Irish led by Brian Kelly.

The Orange Bowl features number 1 ranked Alabama Crimson Tide led by Nick Saban and Oklahoma Sooners football led by Lincoln Riley. Today, I will breakdown the two games.

Cotton Bowl Analysis



First off, I will be breaking down the Cotton Bowl. The Cotton Bowl features Clemson vs Notre Dame. The date of the game is December 29th, at 4:00 pm at AT&T Stadium in Dallas,

Texas. This is Clemson's third appearance in the last three years. They have had three different quarterbacks all three times they have made the playoffs. The three quarterbacks were Deshaun Watson, Kelly Bryant and now Trevor Law-



rence. In 2016, they won the National Championship against Alabama with one second remaining. In 2017, they lost to Alabama. This year, who knows what result will be?

This is Notre Dame's 1st playoff appearance in 131 years of existence. They have changed quarterbacks this season and Brian Kelly was happy with their change in quarterbacks. I believe that Clemson will come out on top in this game.

Orange Bowl Analysis



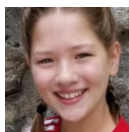
Now, I will be breaking down the Orange Bowl. The Orange Bowl features Alabama vs Oklahoma. The date is also December 29th at 8:00 pm at Hard Rock Stadium in Miami, Florida. Alabama has also made the playoffs three times in the past

three years. In 2016, they lost to Clemson with 1 second left. In 2017, they beat Georgia in the National Championship. This year, who knows what the result will be?

Oklahoma is led by QB Kyler Murray who is a possible Heisman Trophy candidate. I believe that Alabama will come out on top.



In Japan, New Year's Eve is 'Ōmisoka'



By Allison O'Connor
Tusker Tribune Staff

Ōmisoka or ōtsugomori, is a Japanese traditional celebration on the last day of the year.

It was held on the final day of the 12th lunar month. With Japan's switch to using the Gregorian calendar at the beginning of the Meiji era, December 31 is now used for the celebration.



A traditional food served during Ōmisoka is "Toshikoshi Soba" (年越しそば, a year passing buckwheat noodles) that promises a long life when eaten on New Year's Eve (Ōmisoka).

After or while eating most families sit together and relax. Also, they exchange special Christmas related items, gifts, money, and cards.



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Things AREN'T Looking Up For Pigs!



By Joseph Melillo
Tusker Tribune Staff

Hey Everyone! It's me again and I'm back with another *Did You Know* article.

This week's *Did You Know* is . . . that it is physically impossible for a pig to look up into the sky! Is it true? I know, but do you?

Actually, the anatomy of a pig's neck muscles just simply does not allow them to look up. Just like when you try and lift something too heavy, your muscles just won't cooperate.

A pig's neck muscles work the same way. Their muscles just can't make the head move upwards, therefore disallowing the pig to see the

sky.

Now, this doesn't mean that a pig has nev-

er seen a beautiful starry night ever in its lifetime. There are still two ways it could. One, the pig could look at the water and see at least the reflection of the sky. Two, someone who is pretty strong could lift the pig and put it vertically so it would be forced to look at the sky.

The inability to look up is evolutionary. Neither a pig nor a dog have natural predators that could attack from above, unless the pig is a piglet and the dog is a puppy or is a very small breed.

Well, that's all for this week folks, see ya next time on *Did You Know?*



Wicked Fills in the Blanks from Wizard of Oz



By Natalia Tellez
Tusker Tribune Staff

Recently, I went to Broadway and saw one of my favorite shows.

Wicked tells the untold story of the Witches of Oz. It lasts approximately 2 hours and 45 minutes with a 15-minute intermission. It has received more than 100 major international awards, including three Tony Awards on Broadway and two Olivier Audience Awards in London.

Wicked is already the fifth longest-running musical currently playing in the West End and now seen by more than 9 million people in London alone. It was selected by viewers as the best musical of 2007. *Wicked* has broken box-office records around the world. It was also named by Time magazine as the "Best Musical of the Year". It tells

the entertaining untold story of an unlikely friendship that formed between two girls who met in sorcery school. *Wicked* tells the story of Galinda and Elphaba's extraordinary adventures in Oz that ful-

fill their destinies as Glinda The Good and the Wicked Witch of the West.

Spoiler Alert Ahead! In my opinion, it is very good. Perfect for any ages including kids. The story between Galinda

and Elphaba is really sweet and it ties together and sets up everything for the *Wizard of Oz* plot. For example, the reason the Wicked Witch in the movie wants Dorothy's red shoes so much is because they are the last thing she has as a remembrance from someone special in her life who was killed. Also, the Broadway show explains the way the characters, including the Cowardly Lion, Scarecrow and Tin, the Woodsman came into the Wicked Witch's life. You'd actually be surprised how they really came into the story and the Wicked Witch of the West's life!

The Broadway show is also a musical so there are lots of songs throughout it. The most popular one is *Defying Gravity* which is one of my favorites along with *The Wizard and I*, *No Good Deed*, *Popular*, and *For Good*.

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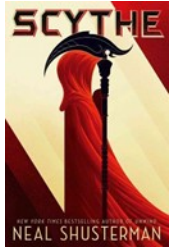


Shusterman

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The Lunch

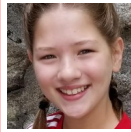
To be part of the lunch you needed to write a letter explaining why you should be chosen to go to this lunch (which took place 5th and 6th period in the library).



Neal Shusterman shared with us a part of *The Toll*, book 3 of the *Arc of a Scythe* series, expecting to come out in 2019.

We also got to ask questions about upcoming book or books. Don't you worry, the lunch also included lunch! We were served pizza and cookies to eat while he answers questions. When it came to the end Neal Shusterman autographed papers we wrote on for us to take home.

Tusker Tribune Trivia



By Allison O'Connor
Tusker Tribune Staff

1. Name the four main characters from the cartoon series "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles". **Donatello, Leonardo, Raphael and Michaelangelo**
2. What is the capital of Hawaii? **Honolulu**
3. What is the name of the actor who plays the character of Harry Potter in the movie series? **Daniel Radcliffe**
4. Who discovered rubber? **Charles Macintosh**
5. What is the name of the Greek God of music? **Apollo**
6. Who painted the Mona Lisa? **Leonardo da Vinci**
7. Who was the first gymnast to be awarded a perfect score of 10 at the Olympics? **Nadia Comaneci**
8. What was Mickey Mouse's original name? **Mortimer Mouse**
9. In which year did the Titanic sink? **In the year 1912**
10. When was the first atomic bomb dropped? **It was dropped on August 6, 1945.**
11. What is the common name for calcium carbonate? **Chalk**
12. What galaxy is Earth located in? **The Milky Way**



Wicked

Continued from Page 4

Overall, the whole show is very entertaining, and the story is incredibly sweet, super creative, and fun to watch. You would think you know the whole story about Glinda the Good and Elphaba the Wicked Witch of the West, but there is actually many things that you don't know and plot twists you never learned about.

Did you know that Elphaba has a good heart and right intentions and Glinda is the one who is responsible of killing her sister? In this great show the roles of the protagonist and villain are reversed so it makes it even more entertaining. *Wicked* tells you the untold story of the Witches of Oz and gives you an amazing experience.



A Christmas Song Playlist



By Arjun Ojha
Tusker Tribune Staff

With Christmas just around the corner, I'm sure that those who celebrate it want to listen to Christmas songs while opening presents.

I will tell you some popular Christmas songs that will sure light up the house. So, here are some popular Christmas songs:



- 1) Jingle Bells by Michael Bublé
- 2) Jingle Bell Rock by Glee Cast
- 3) All I want for Christmas is you by Mariah Carey
- 4) Little Drummer Boy by Percy Faith's Orchestra and Chorus
- 5) Winter Wonderland by Michael Bublé
- 6) A Holly Jolly Christmas by Burl Ives
- 7) The Christmas Song by Nat King Cole
- 8) Silent Night by Celtic Woman
- 9) Joy to The World by Love To Sing
- 10) Silver Bells by Percy Faith's Orchestra and Chorus

Merry Christmas to All!

Music Report

From Page 3

Here's how he created what be the blueprint for the modern poop album. "Ultimately, I imagine this being, like, four mini-albums, but how I end up approaching that, I don't know. I might release one song one day, and then six songs six months later. I was definitely inspired by Kanye working on those albums in real time, but I was also inspired by the way we live.

This isn't 40 years ago. There aren't physical copies of this, I'm not going to tour. So why not be more spontaneous? Everyone is so scared, so precious about everything. I wanted these to feel as of-this-moment as possible," he explains. "When the first batch of songs was due, like two weeks ago, I switched out four of them at the last minute. I made a lot of late changes—big stuff, too, like running down the street to get Ty Dolla \$ign on a beat I'd just made and then smashing it into the track with 6LACK. But that's kind of the point. We procrastinate until we absolutely cannot procrastinate anymore, and then we eat. You've got to loosen up to create."

Genre: Pop

DUMMY BOY – 6ix9ine

It's impossible to talk about Tekashi's success without mentioning the dark undercurrents of his real life. His career presents an ethical minefield, while also standing as an emblematic hip-hop story of 2018. The X-rated equivalent of Rainbow Brite, he was one of several controversial

artists to help cement the mainstream viability of "SoundCloud rap."

For Tekashi, image was everything; rapping was an afterthought. Though the "also raps" moniker is by no means a novel concept, Tekashi mastered it. He was the king of a visual world in which talent is no longer a requirement for entry. "I didn't really want to be a rapper or whatever," he said in an interview. "I just thought of making music because everybody was like: 'You look mad cool.'"



The movement would have been relatively harmless had it not been for Tekashi's unquenchable thirst for viral clout. He has the presentation: rainbow-colored and grill to match; face tattoos emblazoned across his body more than 200 times. The rapid rise and fall of Tekashi 6ix9ine is best exemplified by *DUMMY BOY*, his newest full-length musical offering that was delayed, leaked and rushed to release. The album was supposed to be 6ix9ine's commercial and artistic breakthrough where he finally served up a big-budget arena rap spread.

With guests including Bobby Shmurda (who's currently serving a 7-year sentence in prison), Nicki Minaj, Kanye West, Lil Baby, Gunna, Tory Lanez, and top-notch producers like Murda Beatz, Scott Storch and Boi-1da, 6ix9ine gathered some of rap's best, new and old, into one album. 6ix9ine is now facing 32 years to life in prison after being charged with racketeering and firearms charges among others for his proximity to gang-related activities.

Genre: Rap/Pop

A Nostalgic Look Back at 2018's Top Hip Hop



By Noah Volkman & Sam Sanz
Tusker Tribune Staff

Top 5 new artists:

1. Juice WRLD
2. Sheck Wes
3. Lil baby & Gunna
4. 6ix9ine
5. Migos' solo careers (Quavo, Offset, Takeoff)



Top 20 songs:

1. Sicko Mode – Travis Scott ft. Drake, Swae Lee & Big Hawk
2. Mo Bamba – Sheck Wes
3. Yes Indeed – Lil Baby & Drake
4. In My Feelings - Drake
5. Better Now – Post Malone
6. Fefe – 6ix9ine ft. Nicki Minaj
7. God's Plan – Drake
8. I Like It – Cardi B, Bad Bunny & J Balvin
9. I Love It – Kanye West & Lil Pump

10. Look Alive – BlocBoy JB ft. Drake
11. Lucid Dreams – Juice WRLD
12. Moonlight - XXXTENTACION
13. Plug Walk – Rich the Kid
14. Taste – Tyga ft. Offset
15. Walk It Talk It – Migos ft. Drake
16. SAD! – XXXTENTACION
17. Zeze – Kodak Black ft. Travis Scott, Offset
18. Fine China – Juice WRLD and Future
19. ATM – J. Cole
20. Off Deez – JID and J. Cole

Plus ...

1. ASTROWORLD – Travis Scott
2. Culture II - Migos
3. DUMMY BOY – 6ix9ine
4. ? – XXXTENTACION
5. Scorpion – Drake
6. Beerbongs & Bentleys – Post Malone
7. Invasion of Privacy – Cardi B
8. The World is Yours – Rich the Kid
9. Goodbye & Good Riddance – Juice WRLD
10. Ye – Kanye West