

# The Tusker Tribune

The Student Newspaper of Somers Middle School



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Winter 2019

## NCAA Crown Goes to Clemson



By Arjun Ojha  
Tusker Tribune Staff

On January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019, the #2 ranked Clemson Tigers led by Dabo Swinney faced the #1 ranked Alabama Crimson Tide led by Nick Saban. They played each other in Levi's Stadium in San Fransisco, California.

The ticket prices went down because not many people were interested since it was the 4<sup>th</sup> year in a row that these 2 teams have played each other. The 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting was a semifinal, not a national championship.

Both Clemson and Alabama had young QB's (Quarterbacks).

*Continued on Page 7*

## Cast Your Vote for the 2019 NBA All-Star Game!



By Benji Cutler  
Tusker Tribune Staff

The NBA All-Star Game is a game where fans get to pick the starters from each conference and all NBA head coaches select the reserves. This year, the voting is presented by Google either on a device or on any Google Assistant in your home.

Through a device, you can click here: [https://vote.nba.com/?cid=asv18\\_nbadrd#/](https://vote.nba.com/?cid=asv18_nbadrd#/)

to easily get to a completely simple way of voting, or you can vote using the NBA app. It allows you to vote for two guards and three frontcourt players from each conference, the Eastern Conference and the West.



## The Hottest Producers of 2018



By Noah Volkman  
Tusker Tribune Staff

As 2018 came to an end, I decided to look at the best producers of the year by gathering the most popular songs and their producers.



At #10, we have **Louis Bell**, who produced songs like Halsey's "Without Me" and Post Malone's "Better Now" and "Psycho."

At #9 is Atlanta's **Mike WiLL Made-It**, who crafted a slew of tracks last year, including Jay Rock, Kendrick Lamar and Future's "King's Dead."



At #8 we have New Jersey's **Ronny J** for his work on Kanye



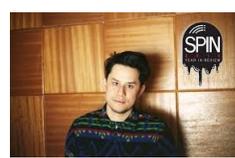
West and Lil Pump's "I Love It" as well as Machine Gun Kelly's withering Eminem diss track, "Rap Devil."

Coming in at #7, is Memphis' **Tay Keith** who had 3 Billboard Hot 100 Top 5 hits, on of them being co-production on Travis Scott's "SICKO MODE." Not only that, Keith graduated from Middle Tennessee



College and scored his very first #1 hit that same week. In July, he spoke about what's made him so successful. "I'd say my sound is kinda like that Memphis original down South bounce sound mixed with the new sound, too."

For #6 we have **Illa-DaProducer**, who crafted Eminem's MGK response track, "Killshot." And according to Illa, the song wasn't originally for Eminem. "But when Slim came calling, he answered. So when I originally started the beat for "Killshot" it was actually for Giggs. He always asked me for these horror movie beats. That's what I was thinking when I made the "Killshot" beat was just something mean, gritty, grimey."



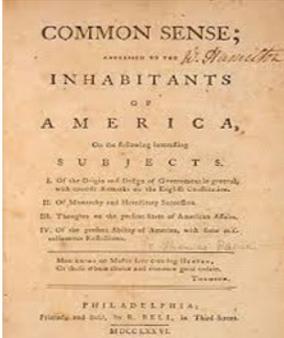
At #5 we have Canada's **Frank Dukes**, the man behind The Weeknd's "Call Out My Name," which may've been about Abel's ex, Selena Gomez. Dukes executive produced The Weeknd's somber March 2018 EP, *My Dear Melancholy*.

*Continued on Page 5*



**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.

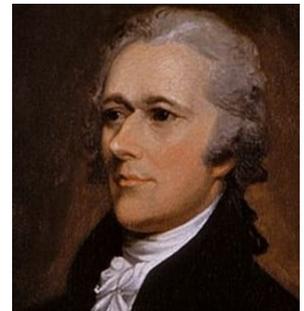


**January 10<sup>th</sup>, 1776**

Thomas Paine, one of the major social figures leading up to the Revolutionary War, published his charismatic and controversial book, *Common Sense* on this date. *Common Sense* played a major role in convincing the American colonists to rebel from Great Britain. It openly challenged the English monarch and proposed a new, democratic republic.

**January 11<sup>th</sup>, 1755**

I'm sure most of you have heard of the musical Hamilton, and this date marks the birthday of the man himself. Alexander Hamilton was everything from a Founding Father in the early days of America, to a first Secretary of the Treasury, to being a Senior Officer in the military. This man truly did it all.



**January 13<sup>th</sup>, 1990**

A proud day for the long fought civil rights movement across the U.S., Douglas Wilder of Virginia became the first African-American governor in America as he took his oath of office in Richmond (the capital of Virginia).

**January 15<sup>th</sup>, 1559**

Elizabeth Tudor, daughter of infamous Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, was crowned Queen of England on this date; she would go on to become the longest reigning ruler until Queen Elizabeth II and never married nor had any children.



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## Hulk Roller Coaster Lives Up to Expectations



By Ian Cohen  
Tusker Tribune Staff

Over break my family and I went to Universal Studios in Florida. When we went to Island of Adventure, we were looking for crazy rollercoasters to ride. The second we stepped foot inside, there it was the "Incredible Hulk" ride. We waited on the line and when we got inside it was like a science laboratory inside.

When we were up, we went inside a tube with all LED lights inside. We moved very slowly, then, in the blink of an eye, we shot out of the tube at crazy speed.



The rollercoaster went around on flips, corkscrews, and over the lake upside down.

In 45 seconds, the ride was over. I thought to myself, *that was the best ride ever.*

### Hulk Roller Coaster Facts

- Top speed: 67 mph
- Number of inversions (loops, etc.): 7
- Refurbished in 2015 and reopened in 2016
- Total length: 3,700 feet
- Maximum Height: 110 feet
- First drop: 105 feet
- Total time of ride: 1 minute, 30 seconds
- Number of passengers per train: 32
- Number of subterranean dives: 2
- Manufacturer: Bolliger and Mabillard, a Swiss company.



## 'Wicked' Does Not Disappoint



By Alexander Susca  
Tusker Tribune Staff

"Wicked" is a musical about the origins of the wicked witch from *The Wizard of Oz*. It follows a girl who is an outcast because of her green skin. She later becomes the wicked witch.

I would rate this show a 9/10 for many reasons. First off, the story. The story was amazingly written with no plot gaps. The perfect balance of story and music. Which brings us to our next part, the music/singing. The music is outstanding with intense songs, calm songs, songs that you would think were sung by someone on the radio.

All the actors knew the music by heart and had great



voices. Just to take it off the table, there isn't much I can say about the acting itself besides that there were no mess-ups and they played their parts fantastically.

On to the final part, the sets. The outline of the stage was a bunch of gears turning. I thought that was really cool. My favorite set was the Emerald City. That set was perfect, and the lights made it really look like emerald. All the other sets were a little bland, and that's the one point off.

Overall, it was an amazing musical. I would recommend it to anyone who liked the *Wizard of Oz* or if you just need an entertaining play to see. Oh, and look out for the dragon.

## Life After Death: Who Controls Lil Peep & XXXTENTACION's Posthumous Music?



By Noah Volkman  
Tusker Tribune Staff

In the last two months of 2018, there were two posthumous (post-death) releases – the late Lil Peep's *Come Over When You're Sober, Pt. 2* and XXXTENTACION's *SKINS*. While both released filled fans' yearning for new music, they weren't without their missteps and bigger questions.

Lil Peep, known to many as a visionary due to his fusion of mid-aughts emo with today's trap sound, was fresh off the release of his debut album, *Come Over When You're Sober, Pt. 1*, when in November 2017, tragedy struck. The 20-year-old X was loved by fans for his raw and emotive lyrics. He also had a dark side though. In June 2018, the months of his death, X was awaiting trial for charges for domestic abuse and false imprisonment regarding his ex-girlfriend. He was killed in an altercation outside of a motorcycle shop that same month. The charges against X were dropped after his death. Both him and Peep left behind plenty of unfinished songs – with no real direction for what to do with them. This is a unique conundrum for today's generation of artists as the *New Yorker's* Carrie Battan writes, "... there exists a mountain of unreleased music by deceased young stars to be sifted and pumped out into the world. It's a minefield of commercial potential. In an interview with Lil Peep's parents, his mother, Liza Womack, said, "We gotta do what Gus would have wanted, and Gus had very strong feelings about his work."

After Peep's brother urged her to get involved, she started to take more control over *Come Over When You're Sober Pt. 2*. "He said to me, 'Mama, you gotta start to get involved with what's going to happen with Gus' music,'" Liza said. She believes *Pt. 2* is the perfect sequel to Peep's debut. "You can see how it went from *Come Over When You're Sober 1* to *Come Over When You're Sober 2*," she said.

But the process wasn't always so smooth. In September 2018, a Peep & X collab called "Falling Down" dropped. Originally "Falling Down," was titled "Sunlight On Your Skin" and featured iLoveMakonnen. The addition of X caused quite a stir amongst Peep's friends and fans. "He explicitly rejected XXX for his abuse of women, spent time and money getting XXX's songs removed from his Spotify playlist, and wouldn't have co-signed that song." A fan said. And in one of his final interviews, Peep said, "I hate features that were togeth-

er by labels and stuff like that. I just want to have my friends featured on the album and my friends making the beats so that it becomes its own entity." At the time, Makonnen insisted that the record was meant to bring people together. "I think it'll be good for everybody. Both legacies, all that." He said. Still there is no way to know what Peep would've wanted – and therein lies the moral quandary with these posthumous releases – do you add features when the artist isn't alive to approve it?

As for X, his album *SKINS* was released with only one feature – Kanye West. Longtime X collaborator John Cunningham explained why West was included on the album, saying "because he was always talked about Kanye's work and was actively wanting to do a song with him up until the day he passed. Also, Scarlxrd was never on that song but we love him too. Cunningham also said that he and X began work on this project not long after X's ? album, saying, "the songs and the ideas and the vision of it all was done or very close to being done." Knowing that John and X were close should put many fan worries to rest – but feasibly there could still be controversy on the horizon.



X reportedly signed a \$10 million deal shortly before his death, which may mean more posthumous albums are on the way that were not approved by X while he was alive. Issues over releases like these aren't anything new. In fact, in June Drake took some flack for using dated Michael Jackson vocals on his 5<sup>th</sup> studio album, *Scorpion*. Michael Jackson's nephew raised some concerns. Austin Brown, MJ's nephew said, "I feel like, if he didn't finish it, then you shouldn't use it."

But Drake's been here before – in 2014 he had to abandon a posthumous album of Aaliyah's music after her frequent collaborator Timbaland objected. "Aaliyah music only work with it's soulmate...which is me." Timbaland said. As for MJ, there's a lawsuit alleging that Sony's 2010 album *Michael* – the first release after his death in 2009 – included three fake records. And if we look at rap history – notably the numerous releases from 2Pac and the Notorious B.I.G. after they died – we might see more from X and Peep. 2Pac and Biggie even posthumously appeared on a song together in 2003. As fans we'll just have to hope that those in control of these artists legacies stay true to what they wanted. And when it comes to Lil Peep, we may not have to worry at all. "There's a lot of music, and I'm going to be a very busy mom, because I gotta go around and make it happen the right way," Womack said.

## MJSS KNOW-IT-ALL

Dear Miss Know-It-All:

Wwhat should I do? This Friday I must make the decision on what sport I should play. I have 3 choices. The first sport my dad really wants me to play. He played it when he was younger. The second my friends really want me to play; they're all on the team already. And the third, I really want to play. I'm worried that if I choose the sport, I like then my dad will be disappointed in me and my friends won't think I'm cool. What's the right choice?

Sincerely,

MR. SUPERFAN

**Dear MR. SUPERFAN:**

*The minute read I read your question I knew this issue would be a tough one. As a student myself, I've struggled with plenty of drama and school/home related problems. I think that the most positive and reliable choice would be choosing what you want. If you choose to do anything else, we both know you would be very unhappy. Even though you're scared that your dad might be disappointed in you, I'm sure you're just worrying too much. He will understand the decision you make, and if he doesn't explain to him why you made that choice. And as for your friends, they are obviously not that cool if they make fun of you for doing a different sport. And if they do make comments to you about your choice then you show them how cool your sport is and that you're an amazing player. Be confident! Remember you do what you want and enjoy it.*

MJSS KNOW-IT-ALL



*Best Regards,  
Miss Know-It-All*



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

## Producers From Page 1



At #4 we have the German twins **CuBeatz**, who also co-produced Travis Scott's "SICKO MODE," along with Nicki Minaj and 6ix9ine's "FEFE" with Murda Beatz.

#3 is **John Cunningham**, the late XXXTENTACION collaborator and executive producer for *SKINS*. In October 2018, Cunningham spoke in an interview ahead of the release of X's first posthumous album about the process and he said, "We basically started making this next album right after ? came out. The songs and the ideas and the vision of it all was done or very close to being done."

Coming in at #2 is **Kanye West**, who led



the production of five albums, released over the span of 5 weeks in May and June. But his biggest hit was with Lil Pump ("I Love It").



Finally, at #1 is Canada's other golden boy, **Boi-1da**, who produced and co-produced a slew of songs last year, including Drake's tear-jerker, "God's Plan." Boi-1da and Drake go way back, and he also worked with Drizzy on another early 2018 track, "Diplomatic Immunity." "You just know what you're getting with him. You just know that it's gonna be a hit song, you know it's gonna be a moment, you know any time Drake drops something, everybody stops to hear it so you just know it'll be something great."



So who's your favorite producer of 2018?

# Historic Philadelphia Keeps the Past Alive



**By Anastasia Fiorella  
Tusker Tribune Staff**

A couple of weeks ago my Dad and I went to Philadelphia PA. We went to go see a pop artist concert that evening, but before the show, we went to see the historic district.

In The National Constitution Center, they had statues of all the Congressional representatives from each state that made the laws. Another cool thing that I saw was the actual room where they signed the Declaration of Independence, at Independence Hall in the heart of Philadelphia. The room itself was small as people back then were not as tall as we are today.



It was cool to see the same room that I saw in some videos I watched. It was amazing they kept everything the same as it was back when they signed the Declaration!



I also went to go see the American Revolution museum. There were things from the war like the little guns and rifles they used in their battles! When you would walk around there were little videos being projected onto the wall and they would talk about the battles of the American Revolution and what the soldiers went through.



As you went along the museum there was also a president section and in there they had all the presidents' pictures and their own little section with their picture and what they did for our country. There was also a little voting station where you would go in the "voting" booth and simulate that you're voting, and on the screen they had a little trivia on the screen and you got to pick which president did what.

Overall the experience was amazing and there was so much to see and I couldn't get to all. It's definitely a two day trip!

## The Tusker Tribune Commentary: School Uniforms Have Advantages



**By Jeanne Manteau  
Tusker Tribune Staff**

We often hear complaints about having school uniforms or even just a simple dress code.

However, it seems obvious that having a school uniform would be a good improvement for many schools throughout the country. School uniforms are helpful in so many ways, yet not many people seem to like them!



School uniforms prevent people from being left out. Nobody gets criticized because of their clothes or mocked because they are not following some trend or other style that just happens to be popular.

Also, kids in the morning can spend time stressing about their clothes, wondering if they'll fit in or if their clothes are too flashy, too bland, etc. Well, having a school uniform solves all of those problems! You only can wear one item, so nobody can get teased because of their clothing. And no need to hesitate in the morning, because you either wear your uniform, or you wear your uniform!

So, before dismissing the thought of having a uniform, think about all it gives you, and hopefully it'll change YOUR opinion!

## All Star From Page 1



TNT will reveal the NBA All-Star starters results, including the two captains (which I will explain in an article I will be writing sometime in February) on Thursday, January 24 during NBA Tip-Off. TNT will also be announcing the reserves, which are selected by the head coaches, on Thursday, January 31. Throughout the voting period, fans are allowed to submit one full ballot every single day.



For the third straight year, NBA players and media along with fans select the NBA All-Star starters. Fans will account as 50% of the vote, while NBA players and media panel will count as 25% each. Players and media have the same rules for voting, and are allowed to vote for themselves or their teammates.

You have until Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Monday, January 21 to vote, just letting you all know, if you are interested in voting, once again, you can go through [https://vote.nba.com/?cid=asv18\\_nbadrd#/](https://vote.nba.com/?cid=asv18_nbadrd#/) through Google or vote through the NBA app. I will be making another article on how the All-Star Game itself works and will be sharing the results of all the starters and reserves, so stay tuned!

## The Highest Paid Athletes of 2018

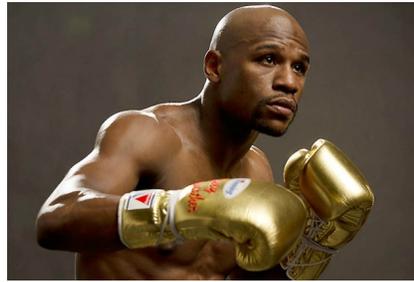


By **Jesse Manginelli**  
Tusker Tribune Staff

Many professional athletes make a lot of money, but these athletes were the highest paid athletes of 2018.

**Floyd Mayweather**, a retired boxer holds 1<sup>st</sup> place as the highest paid athlete. He earned \$285 million. Most of this money came from his highly publicized fight against Connor McGregor. Mayweather has been the highest paid athlete 4 times in 7 years.

The second highest paid athlete this year is **Lionel Messi**, a professional soccer player for Barcelona and the Argentine national team. Messi made \$111 million which is just over **Christiano Ronaldo's** earnings.



Speaking of **Ronaldo**, he is next on the list. Ronaldo is also a professional soccer player. Ronaldo made \$108 million this year which is just under **Messi**, who made \$111 million.

**Connor McGregor** is fourth on this list at \$99 million. **McGregor** made \$3 million from his fight against Mayweather. Many people speculate that McGregor didn't make as much money as Mayweather because he lost the fight.



Number 5 on the list is Neymar at \$90 million. Neymar is a professional soccer player. He plays for the Brazil National Team and Paris Saint-Germain F.C.

Sixth on the list is star basketball player LeBron James. James has played for multiple NBA organizations including the Lakers, Cavaliers, and the Heat. Last year he made a whopping \$85.5 million.

## What Makes a 'Good Student'?



By **Allison O'Connor**  
Tusker Tribune Staff

A good student is somebody who has a keen interest and a desire to learn and a willingness to work hard.

What makes a good student is perseverance and discipline. A good student is not someone who thinks they are perfect and gets perfect grades. A good student is someone who tries hard, who never gives up, and doesn't leave someone out.



A good student is someone who is helpful, kind, and friendly, but the one thing that makes someone a good student is the way they behave. When you behave you don't want to be screaming, shouting out bad things. You don't want to give up before you even try. You don't want to be rude and pick on people. You don't want to scream in the

halls and make ruckus.

Remember you want to be a good student, not the bad one.

## Clemson

*From Page 1*

Their names are Trevor Lawrence (19) and Tua Tagovailoa (20). In the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, both teams scored 27 points combined. Clemson scored 14 and Alabama scored 13.

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter, both teams scored 20 points combined. Clemson scored 17 points and Alabama scored 3 points. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter, Clemson scored 13



points. Alabama scored none. In the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter no one scored. In the end, Clemson won the national championship by a score of 44 to 16.

After college ends, Clemson will be losing all their starting Defensive Linemen.

Those names include Dexter Lawrence (21), Christian Wilkins (23), Clelin Ferrell (21), Austin Bryant (22). They will also be losing their Wide Receiver Hunter Renfrow (23).

## 7th Graders Don't Need Cell Phones



**By Mikayla Haran  
Tusker Tribune Staff**

These days, everyone's on their phones and I'm not going to lie but I'm always on mine, too.

But I find my phone as a distraction for getting good grades. Studies show that people with phones get worse grades than people without them. I could live without my phone for a day. Why don't you try see if studies are right? See if not having a phone improves your grades!

Another thing is we all wonder why we have so many car crashes in the world. Could you guess why? If you guessed "cell phone", then you're right. These car crashes happen 1.6 million times a year.

"There are several reasons why kids should not have cell phones. Kids with cell phones are likely to spend too much time on them, keeping them from doing more productive things, like exercising and reading. There is increasing evidence of addiction to electronic devices, which like any other kind of addiction is destructive. Many kids with



cell phones lose sleep because of talking at night or because of being anxious that they do not miss a call, and as a result suffer from headaches and sleepiness during the day, which interferes with learning at school."

This was recently stated by David O. Carpenter, Director, Institute for Health and the Environment & Professor of Environmental Health Sciences, University at Albany.

Additionally, Georgia S. Thompson, Vice President of the Programs and Affiliate Network,

National Black Child Development Institute, notes, "Kids should not have cell phones. I may be alone on this, but I don't see a real need for them, and I certainly don't see the benefits for young children. I actually know of a five-year-old child who owns a cell phone. Children's excessive use of cell phones can lead to issues with both health and safety."

The experts seem to be of one mind, and they support my claim that 7<sup>th</sup> graders would probably be better off without cell phones.

## Why is Everyone Rapping Offbeat?



**By Noah Volkman  
Tusker Tribune Staff**

Today, in hip-hop there are a few popular flows and you know exactly where they came from.

There's the Migos' rap, rap, rap and pause flow, Young Thug, Gunna and Lil Baby's singing flow. Valee's bored, run-on sentence flow... Sheck Wes, Rico Nasty and 6ix9ine's "I AM YELLING AT YOU" rager flow. Gucci Mane, Kodak Black and BbyMutha's slow drawl flow and Drake and Tierra Whack's sing-song flow... and we can't forget Eminem, Joyner Lucas and MGK's speed rap.

And then, there's another one that keeps popping up. Blueface, the Los Angeles living, breathing Internet meme, has gotten a lot of attention for his offbeat flow along with Shoreline Ma-



fia. And then there's YBN Nahmir, who's from Alabama.

Honestly, as of 2018 moved along, more and more rappers be-

gan to sound like Vallejo, California's SOB X RBE. Coming together in 2015, SOB X RBE has released three projects, and were hit up personally by Kendrick Lamar to join 2018's *Black Panther* soundtrack. But their flow is emblematic of Northern California's overall style of rap that was born in the late 80s and early 1990s. And, of course, another Vallejo vet E-40, whose linguistic twists and turns are sometimes on but mostly off-beat, on purpose. Elsewhere in the Bay is Oakland's gruff-voiced, Yaddaamean King, Keak Da Sneak.

This 90s flow has even influenced underground scenes across the country, like Detroit's Tee Grizzley and Chicago's G Herbo. So there you have it, the tradition of fast-paced offbeat creative flows can be traced back to at least these West Coast forefathers—and apparently, anybody can get it.

