

The Tusker Tribune

The Student Newspaper of Somers Middle School



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Spring 2019

'Who' is the Best Tusker?



Can you guess the faculty members behind the trunks during this past week-end's production of "Seussical"?



Debate Over State Tests Continues



**By Isaac Like
Tusker Tribune Staff**

State tests have been around for years. For ELA, which we took last week, the test includes around 35 questions with 4 stories in it and 5 writing questions. The math test, which we'll take in May, has around 50 questions.

These tests causes unnecessary stress, for teachers and schools. A lot of people wonder if it's worth it?

Every year there is always talk if the test should happen and who opts out or not. I've never opted out because I believe it helps you prepare for your SATs in high school.

However, the tests are boring and waste about 8 hours of learning each year. The test causes stress that no one should need if they're not getting graded on it. So what's the point?

One good thing is that the test is no longer used to evaluate whether a teacher is teaching students the correct information. But it still seems to be a big

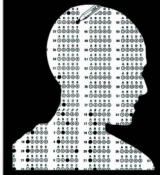
disruption on the school year.

In my opinion the test should not be even an option and the time could be spent better teaching kids the curriculum.

Learning



Testing



Tusker Tribune Commentary:

Lockdown During Passing Time Made Sense



**By Chloe Monachelli
Tusker Tribune Staff**

I believe that this lockdown in between classes that we have had recently was very necessary.

Usually with our lockdown drills, they have been during a class, meaning that every student was already in a safe classroom and prepared.



Not this time though. Students were scattered all over the school hallways. Nobody other than the teachers and staff were aware of what was going on.

The teachers did a great job making sure all students were safe and secure in a safe classroom (out of sight of course).

Yes, it was a little nerve wracking for students at first, but it taught us all a very important that can save our lives. If a tragic situation like this happened in real life, we would have a much better chance of staying safe.

I highly suggest having a lockdown drill in between classes to other schools. It teaches a great lesson and can save lives.

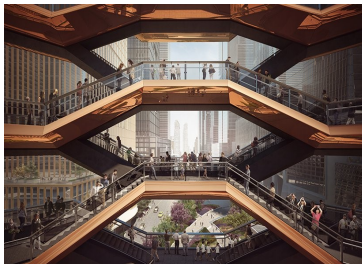
'The Vessel' Makes a Huge Impression



**By Natalia Tellez
Tusker Tribune Staff**

The Vessel, a \$200 million stairway to nowhere, is the new piece of architecture built in Hudson Yards Public Square in New York City. The spiral staircase is a new landmark meant for visitors to climb and enjoy the view. The concept for The Vessel was revealed in 2016, construction started in April 2017, and it opened on March 15, 2019. The pieces of The Vessel were assembled in Monfalcone in Italy. From there the pieces were transported by ships to the Hudson River docks.

The design was thought up by Thomas Heatherwick and the Heatherwick Studio and is meant to be a place "where people can enjoy new perspectives of the city and one another from different heights, angles and vantage points." It is made up of over 154 connected flights of stairs with 2,500 steps and 80 landings making almost the distance of one mile.



Visitors can try to make it to the top and go up all those

stairs and if not, there is an elevator ready for them.

My family and I went, and it was an

amazing experience and structure, but we didn't know we

had to buy tickets in advance, so unfortunately, we didn't get to climb it. If you do plan on going, (and you should!), make sure to buy tickets before visiting since The Vessel can only hold 1,000 people per day and it is usually pretty full.

The good part is that tickets to The Vessel are free and the only reason you must purchase one is so you have a reserved spot allowing you to climb.

Overall, The Vessel is an amazing piece of architecture that allows you to get a great view, enjoy time with family, and get some exercise in. I personally recommend going to the city and visiting Hudson Yards to see the new and incredible structure called The Vessel.



Video Game Review:



**By Andrew Fasone
Tusker Tribune Staff**

Wizard101 was released on September 2nd, 2008 and was followed by the release of Pirate101 in 2012. The game has had many updates over the years that changed many things about the game, but first you need to pick the school that you want to be.

You can choose between Life, Death, Fire, Ice, Thunder, Myth, and The Balance schools. Once you pick your school, there's no changing unless you make a new character and start all over again.



But after you pick your school that you're happy with, you next choose what you want your character to look like. You get to choose the face, eyes, mouth, etc.

Then you choose the color of the robe you want and you can split it into two sections—a top half and a bottom half. Then you go through a tutorial, but you can skip it if you want to.

Then you get thrown into the real world. If you're dedicated enough to the game, you can get your wizard up to level 100+ and this doesn't apply to one school. You can get your wizard of any school to this level.

Continued on Page 4

Homework Hassle?



By Isaac Like
Tusker Tribune Staff

"Ugh I really don't want to do this."

You have probably thought about this more times than cars honk in New York City.

Who likes homework? Not me and I'm sure whoever reads this doesn't either. Homework had been around as long as school had been and still nobody likes it so why get it?

Homework is used as a study or "recap" of your lesson that you do out of the class and, if you will, "home." The problem is with homework is that most students sit through a whole school day (approximately 6 hours) and go



home to do more work, which is agonizing. Teachers, of course, know this so why don't they just tell you to study?

I believe homework should not be allowed because giving homework is like having another period of your class and no one wants that, especially because kids barely want to go to school in the first place! Also, many kids are busy with sports or extracurricular activities, so all of us students ask, Drop the homework!

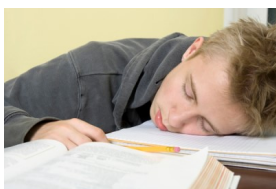
Let School Start Later!



By Isaac Like
Tusker Tribune Staff

Who has ever wanted to wake up early? I know I haven't.

Many students face waking up from a daily time every day and never get enough sleep, so how we fix this? For one, schools need to change start times. For SMS, I have to wake up at 7:00 each day and that's on the later end of the students.



When I'm driven to school, I get up at 7:30 but is that enough? Teens are supposed to get around 9 and a half hours of sleep but how do you get that much? Is your brain is programmed while growing to fall asleep around 11:00? You simply can't and that is why some students cannot be active and participate.

Studies have been shown at American College of Chest Physicians (ACCP) that shows a significant decrease in teen driving accidents when school start is delayed. This is decreased because the teens were able to focus more.

Let's push for more sleep!

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:

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250 Route 202
Somers, NY, USA.

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

DPappas@somersschools.org



Stories Coming Up April 26:

- Social Action Day!
- World Languages Day!
- Who Shot Mr. Burns? A 'Simpsons' mystery!
- Bronx Zoo trip!

Somers Impresses at Regional Hoops Tournament!

By Katie Faivre
Tusker Tribune Contributor

Somers Special Olympics Basketball team placed second in their division in the Westchester Putnam Regional Basketball Tournament on Sunday, March 31 at Marist College. SMS students on the team include 8th grader Joseph Cilento, and 7th graders Phillip Ziegler and Tommy O'Connor.



The Fountain of Death



By Eric Amante
Tusker Tribune Staff

Now let me just say for all students, we are very annoyed that almost all the water fountains in this school are at low filter status. This problem has been going on for a very long time and has annoyed me and many other students who just want to drink water without worrying what's in it. Some examples of these filters are the following:



Sorry for the low image quality. Almost every single water fountain in the school looks like this except for the ones with no filter status reader, but it's all the same pipes so I don't think it matters.



I don't think that anyone is going to fix it anytime soon. Which is why I am bringing attention to it now. I think I speak for all students when I say that it bothers us that we need to worry about what is in our water at school.

It is unfair to the students that need to walk all the way across the school to the cafeteria to just get clean water. And it is unfair to the teachers that wait for the student to come all the way back. So I am calling this out so someone can fix it because it is very annoying to all the students and teachers in the school.

Editor's Note: a follow-up with Buildings and Grounds revealed that while the water filter lights may not be green, the water is safe to drink.

Wizard From Page 2

But since we're on the topic of different schools, I'm going to talk about them. So, starting off with Thunder, Thunder is the most powerful class, at least from my experience. They have the most powerful damaging spells out of all the spells but that doesn't mean they're the most useful or the best spells.

Life is the only class that can heal everybody, not including death, because that's different. They are basically the healers of the classes. But that's not all they have. The Life school still has a lot of attacks but some of their attacks get replaced with, of course, the heals. You can even get a healer pet which would sometimes heal you or your entire team depending on the amount of people you have with you. But even when you're alone, they could do a deal that would heal everyone if you had more people. The best thing about these pets is that they don't die. They stay with you until you or your opponent wins.



But next school, the Ice school, allows you to get the most amount of health. I am pretty sure that the max is 10,000 but I could be wrong. In this class you can get the resistance shield. What it does is if someone attacks you with something, that shield blocks most of what it does, so it does less damage to you.

The next school is the Fire school. With this school there is the after-affect thing. Basically, you hit someone and with some attacks and does what it supposed to. But after that it leaves a little square that circles around your opponent. What that does is every time it's their turn, it deals some damage to them before they go. It can be really useful sometimes and at other times, not so useful. It really depends on when you play it.

The last three schools are Death, Myth and Balance. All these schools have special features them. With Death, you attack somebody, and you get 50% of health back from that attack. With Myth, you can summon minions to help you out when you're fighting somebody. And with Balance, it has a little bit of every school's special features except for the Death school.

Free Agents in 2020



**By Jesse Manginelli
Tusker Tribune Staff**

2020 is a pretty year for baseball fans and pros alike. There are some top tier players that will soon become free agents in 2020.

Let's start off with upcoming free agents from the American League East. For the Blue Jays, there are a couple of upcoming free agents but this one is the best so far this season. The upcoming free agent player is Justin Smoak. Smoak is the Blue Jays' first baseman and he has so far hit one home run this season, but 170 total home runs in his entire career.

The next team is the Orioles. The Orioles



have a few upcoming free agents but the biggest one is Mark Trumbo. Trumbo has hit 218 home runs in his career and has an all time batting average

of .250. The next team is the Red Sox. These players might be the two biggest upcoming free agents. They are Chris Sale and Xander Bogaerts. Now that's all the big upcoming free agents for the American League East but now I will go over the best upcoming free agents by position. The catchers are Francisco Cervelli and Yasmani Grandal. For first base there are Jose Abreu and Matt Carpenter.

For second base, two players are Scooter Jennings and Johnathan Schoop. At third there are Anthony Rendon and Josh Donaldson.

The upcoming free agent shortstop is Didi Gregorius. The outfielders are Marcell Ozuna and Yasiel Puig. The designated hitters are Khris Davis and J.D. Martinez.

The pitchers are Madison Bumgarner, Rick Porcello, and Dellin Betances. I guess we will just have to wait and see. Who do you think will leave their team in 2020?



NBA Playoffs Picture



**By Arjun Ojha
Tusker Tribune Staff**

The NBA regular season is now over. The teams in the playoffs are now revealed. The top 8 teams from the Eastern and Western Conference make it to the playoffs.

The NBA playoffs start on Saturday, April 13th. The playoff bracket is as follows: The 1 seed plays the 8 seed, the 2 seed plays the 7 seed, the 3 seed plays the 6 seed, and the 4 seed plays the 5 seed.



In the Eastern Conference, the Milwaukee Bucks play the Detroit Pistons, the Toronto Raptors play the Orlando Magic, the Philadelphia 76ers play the Brooklyn Nets, and the Boston Celtics play the Indiana Pacers.

On the Western Conference, the Golden State Warriors

play the Los Angeles Clippers, the Denver Nuggets play the San Antonio Spurs, the Portland Trailblazers play the Oklahoma City Thunder, and the Houston Rockets play the Utah Jazz.

In the Eastern Conference, the last seed for the NBA playoffs were decided by the last game of the NBA regular season.

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Hip-Hop's Love for WWE



**By Noah Volkman
Tusker Tribune Staff**

Hip Hop and WWE have a long history. With its larger-than-life personalities, flashy style and sheer competition, the hip hop community has found plenty of inspiration inside the ring. According to data, there have been over two thousand references to the franchise, from Mr. T and Randy Savage to Triple H and the Rock. I decided to look at some of the most memorable moments.

First up, Ric Flair, with references on songs like "Don't Like 1" by Kanye West, Pusha T, Chief Keef, Jadakiss and Big Sean. Flair's vibrant personality and signature "woo" put the two-time Hall of Famer into the history books as one of the greatest wrestlers of all time. The Nature Boy was known for his extravagant and classy personality inside and outside of the ring. Ric once flexed, "I dress myself in cashmere. Yeah. I dress myself in \$100 pleated slacks. I dress myself in alligator shoes. I wear a \$15,000 Rolex."

His robes were a staple early in his career, and inspired Ghostface Killah. Offset and Metro Boomin also paid homage to Flair's fashion on their 2017 track, "Ric Flair Drip" and recruited him for the video. "Wheeling-dealing, limousine-riding, jet-flying, drippin' son of a guns!"

Next up, the Undertaker, with references on songs like "Portland" by Drake, Quavo and Travis Scott.

The Deadman's demeanor and signature eye roll cemented his status as a WWE fan favorite. Bad Bunny references The Phenom's entrance on his 2017 track, "Tu No Metes Cabra."

Bunny's love for WWE continues with his reference to Stone Cold Steve Austin and enlisting help from Ric Flair for his "Chambea" music video. In an interview, Bunny talked about growing up watching the sport and the significance of meeting the greats saying, "it's like fulfilling your childhood dreams, not as an artist or career dreams, but your kids dream." And both Bad Bunny and J Balvin paid homage to WWE greats on Cardi B's 2018 hit, "I Like It" with Bunny referencing the late wrestler, Eddie Guerrero. And Balvin likening a woman falling over him to Jimmy "Superfly" Snuka's signature move.

Artists like Denzel Curry, 21 Savage, Lil

Uzi Vert and Post Malone have referenced the sport in their bars too. In 2018, Curry performed a wrestling-inspired show with the Flatbush Zombies in his hometown of Miami. Erik Art Elliott said, "It's very few times you can have something else related to music that's so synonymous like

wrestling. A lot of people watch wrestling, or they listen to hip-hop, but I feel like we're fans of the culture of wrestling. We grew up watching that ****. This is like literally a dream come true. Post Malone's "Go Flex" is a tribute to Stone Cold Steve Austin. As a WWE fan, he's made friends with the stars, and even brought the Undertaker on

tour—there might even be a collab in the works. "Maybe we'll do a song together. Maybe he'll take some trash at the beginning. That'd be super sick, super tight," Malone said.

Open Mike Eagle, Murs and Wale add to the list of hip hop superfans. Wale's WaleMania is celebrating its fifth year, bringing big personalities together from both industries. And the admiration is mutual. Apart from the countless references in hip-hop verses, the WWE community has

equally embraced hip-hop. One of the earliest instances of the two worlds colliding came in 1989 when Run-DMC graced the ring with a special Wrestlemania Rap.

Since then, countless artists like Salt n Pepa, Puffy, Wiz Khalifa and Snoop have all stepped into the arena. The latter even became the first musician inducted into the WWE Hall of Fame. In 2000, The Rock was featured on Wyclef's "It Doesn't Matter" delivering his signature line. That

same year, rappers and wrestlers joined forces on WWF Aggression, reworking the themes for the sport's best athletes. The album featured Snoop Dogg, Method Man and more and even debuted at #8 on the Billboard 200 chart.

And one of the most renowned wrestlers got their start on the WWE mainstage as a bad boy, sporting large chains and jerseys. John Cena, who dubbed himself the 'Doctor of Thuganomics,' entered the ring with raps for his opponents. In 2005 he released his debut studio album, "You Can't See Me," which peaked at #15 on the Billboard 200. What are some of your favorite WWE and rap moments?

