



Climate Warming Effects Can Result in Permanent Change



Columbia Glacier c. 1980



Columbia Glacier 2005



Arapaho Glacier 1998



Arapaho Glacier 2003

By Sofia Mendoza
Tusker Tribune Staff

I'm sure everyone has heard about climate change at one point in their lives but not many people do research about what this means for our future.

With rise in temperatures, glaciers are melting quickly and by 2025, sea levels are predicted to rise about one foot. This could eventually lead to populated areas becoming submerged in water if this constant rise continues.

The use of AI also affects climate change. The data centers of artificial intelligence often result in electronic waste. Another reason we should limit artificial intelligence use is because of the mass amount of water the AI processing centers use. According to UNEP (2024, September 21). AI has an environmental problem. Here's what the world can do about that. UNEP. <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/ai-has-environmental-problem-heres-what-world-can-do-about>, "Globally, AI-related infrastructure may soon consume six times more water than Denmark, a country of 6 million, according to one estimate."

The melting of glaciers could lead to the extinction of vital species like polar bears. This will disrupt the Arctic ecosystem and food chain and potentially lead to overpopulation of fish like cod or even mammals, like seals. We must make a change in our way of living if we want to stay as we are now. We made a change when we saved the turtles; now we must save the polar bears and preserve our glaciers.

By Allison Posadas
Tusker Tribune Staff

Pink,
a whisper soft,
a gentle shade,
Pink paints the dawn skies, a rosy view,
From blushing cheeks,
To a fragile and rosy color,

Pink,
It's the statement of bold,
Pink is a color of strength,
Pink will always be my favorite,
Even during my ups and downs,
Pink inspires me the most,

Pink,
A shade that warms your heart,
Pink is like a lollipop.
The bright and vivid color, brightens your day,
Pink is my favorite color,
And I'm not lying
And I love it so much,
And it's a very true color,
Pink is as pretty as the sky,

Pink,
Pink is a bold color,
Just like you,
It starts off as bubblegum,
Then it turns into a rosy color,
Pink isn't just a color,
Pink is something that can cure you,
Pink is a feeling,
Pink is a blush of light,
Since this poem is ending,
Always remember that,
Pink is a gentle reminder that it's ok to fail.

Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Ongoing Fight for Racial Equality

By Noah Samuel
Tusker Tribune Staff

This past Monday was Martin Luther King Jr. Day. MLK Day is a federal US holiday, observed on the third Monday in January each year. But who was Dr. King? Why was he so important to society, and why does he have a holiday in his honor? Keep reading to learn more about Dr. King, and his great contributions to the civil rights movement and society.

Who Was Dr. King?

Martin Luther King, Jr. was a civil rights leader and Baptist minister who worked to end racial segregation and discrimination in the United States. He became a key leader of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1950s and 60s, believing strongly that nonviolent protest was the best way for change.

Inspired by his Christian faith and leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, King encouraged peaceful demonstrations to challenge unfair laws and treatment. His leadership helped bring national attention to civil rights issues and inspired many others to stand up for equality.

Accomplishments

Montgomery Bus Boycott

Dr. King is best known for the Montgomery Bus Boycott and March on Washington. The Montgomery Bus Boycott happened when Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a bus for a white person in 1955. She was subsequently arrested, as this was in violation of Jim Crow laws. The boycott, led partly by Dr. King, was a protest of Parks' arrest by not riding the Montgomery buses. The boycott lasted for 385 days, and the situation became so severe that Dr. King's house was bombed! Dr. King was eventually arrested for driving 30 mph in a 25-mph zone, and was put in jail, which drew national attention to King, and increased his public stature.

March on Washington

The most famous of all of Dr. King's speeches, and what brought King into national fame, happened in 1963, during the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. This was an organized protest, originally meant to "dramatize the desperate condition of blacks in the southern US."

The organizers wanted to call out the US government for not safeguarding the rights and safety of Black citizens. However, from presidential pressure, the March took on a less strident tone. During the protest, Dr. King gave his famous 17-minute-long speech, which was later known as "I Have a Dream." This proved to be a catalyst in the civil rights movement.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. worked tirelessly for equality and justice, inspiring change through nonviolent protest. MLK Day honors his life and the lasting impact of his work on society.



What's In the Card? Exploring Tarot Cards

By Laurel Knapp
Tusker Tribune Staff

Filled with mystery and magic, Tarot cards are used all around the world for guidance, divination, self-reflection, and even fortune-telling. You may think you understand the secrets of Tarot, but do you really know what's in the cards?

A Tarot card deck consists of 78 cards, separated into the major and minor arcana. They are a tool of self-discovery and are often used in divination and fortune-telling. Each card has specific meanings that can be analyzed to help you with a decision, make inquiries about the future, and understand a situation more clearly. The cards use images to mirror our subconscious in how we interpret them.

Major Arcana

The major arcana consists of 22 cards. Starting with The Fool, we follow the fool's journey through stages of growth, transformation, and self-discovery as well as the challenges of those stages, and finally ending with The World. While The Fool is the first card, it is number 0. The major arcana represents significant life events, major themes and lessons, fundamental archetypes of human existence, and universal truths.

Minor Arcana

There are 56 cards in the minor arcana. It consists of 4 suits – wands, cups, swords, and pentacles. Wands represent fire energy, which has to do with action; cups represent water energy, which has to do with emotions; swords represent air energy, which has to do with thoughts; and pentacles represents earth energy, which has to do with tangible areas of life. Each suit has an ace, a two, a three, a four, a five, a six, a seven, an eight, a nine, a ten, a page, a knight, a queen, and a king. The minor arcana represents essential elements of life including emotions, intellect, spirit, and practicality, as well as daily life.

History

The origins of Tarot cards have been traced back to India, Egypt, and the invention of cards and paper in China and Korea in the 12th century. They traveled to Europe in the 15th century. Tarot cards used the Italian suits of swords, cups, wands or batons, and coins or pentacles, rather than the French suits of spades, diamonds, hearts, and clubs. According to V&A, they possibly represented classes of society: aristocracy for swords, clergy for cups, peasants for wands or batons, and merchants for coins or pentacles.

Originally, Tarot cards were used for a fun game – it wasn't until the 18th century when they started to be used for divination and fortune telling. The first deck made specifically for divination was made in 1770 by Etteilla.

Now that you have a deeper understanding of Tarot cards and the history and meanings behind them, can you interpret the future the cards hold?

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Give Skiing A Chance!

By Weston Volpe
Tusker Tribune Staff

Did you want to go on the middle school ski trip, but you don't know how to ski? Then you should take ski lessons at Thunder Ridge.

A couple of years ago I tried skiing but I didn't like it very much. It was too cold and I just wanted to go snow tubing instead. But a few weeks ago, I decided I wanted to give it another try, so I started ski lessons at Thunder Ridge. On the first lesson my group of eight started on the bunny hill and we learned how to put on our skis and take them off, and also how to stop.

On the second lesson we kept practicing stopping and then we learned how to turn. At the third lesson we learned how to get on the ski lift that held two people and our group rode it to the very top of the mountain and we took a green trail (The easiest type of trail) down the entire mountain!

At the next lesson we got on another lift, but that lift held three people and went faster than all the other lifts and of course, we rode down a green trail, but a different one than last time. I haven't finished the ski lessons yet, but I can't wait to ski with my whole family soon! I am really glad I gave skiing another try.



Mr. Gilbert's Prize Box Means Possible Reward for Orchestra!

By Lucas Mejia
Tusker Tribune Staff

Hello! Welcome back to the Weekly Life of a 6th Grade Musician. Ok, let's get right into it!

Today, unfortunately, it's not a Fiddle Friday. It is a 1A day, but we did get 2 orchestra classes in a row so that's a plus! So, I just want to repeat something for any of those who did not check last week's article or the articles before that: Mr. Gilbert has restocked the prize box. I repeat, Mr. Gilbert has restocked the prize box. This means, every orchestra class, you get a ticket, and if your ticket gets picked, you may get a prize. Get tickets and get lucky.

It does seem that we're not going to have school on Monday. A massive snowstorm is coming soon. Snow is also what cancelled the bluegrass performance last weekend that we were given tickets to.

Don't forget to practice; we have a lot of new songs this week, like A Viking. I just wanted to say ahead of time, there is a jazz band trip to the Sleepy Hollow High School in early February. So if you're in jazz band sign up so you can go. I will also be doing a full coverage of that trip. See Mr. Gilbert for more details.

All right that is all we have for today, I'll see you next time on the weekly life of 6th grade musician.





Ski Trip Was a Terrific Time!

By The Great Outdoorsman
Tusker Tribune Staff



Hello and welcome back to The Great Outdoorsman. I'm Lucas and let's get into our full coverage of the ski and snowboarding trip.

OK, let's say some things--I was picked up at the end of the day so I cannot report on the bus trip back. Plus, I can only report on the 6th grade bus trip, since I was on that bus. OK . . . (exhale) let's get into it. It was a very chaotic trip to the middle school. It had snowed last night and I had car problems and it was early! I'm sure everybody there had car problems too. That of course delayed the trip for a good 10 minutes.

Also I just want to mention how good the bus was. To sum it up, it was basically an airplane on wheels. It had TV's, heat and temperature control, and even (and this is a super big plus) a bathroom. In the 6th grade bus, the driver played The Minions movie on the way there. The bus trip took a good hour and 15 minutes.

When we got there everybody unpacked their stuff. We were told we had to go back to lodge at 11:30 am for the first head count and we had fun. I personally went back early just so I could be skiing when everybody was having lunch, so the lines were shorter. But, fun fact, I also lost my glove! So I went to the shop and got a new glove.

We came back at 2:30 pm for the head count. Everybody had to be back by 2:45pm and the bus would leave at 3:15pm, but a lot of people were late. I have to say that so if you're one of those people, don't worry, I was a bit late too!! It was my first time at Mohawk, and I liked it. I liked the number of black diamonds slopes and the nice slops. I had lunch from home, so I cant tell you if the food was good. There are some pictures here! Good for a school trip!!

So that is it for our full coverage of the ski and snowboarding trip! I'll see you next time on the Great Outdoorsman.

LEGO Changed My Life!

By William Mifsud
Tusker Tribune Staff

Hi. My name is Daniel, and I am 12 years old. I recently got into chess, and I discovered I had hidden powers. Well, now that I've mentioned it, let's talk about HOW I got my powers.

When I was 5, I accidentally touched a LEGO brick that was a glowing green color. There was also a sticky note under its display case, saying, "IMPORTANT: DO NOT TOUCH." And what'd I do? I touched it. And I kinda lied when I said I "accidentally" touched it.

When I did, I felt a big adrenaline rush for a few seconds, then it stopped. I was all like, "What was that?" And stuff. Now, I have the power to float, levitate things, and even build cool things in just a few seconds. I know, I know, you're probably all like, "Wow! Daniel's so cool!" But no. I also have a secret power I discovered yesterday. I can make stuff. Give me a word. Any one of them. "Eifel Tower." "Human head that is fake." I've heard 'em all. But after discovering this, I knew I was extraordinary. Not in a vain way, though. In a superpower way. I hope you enjoyed this! Tune in next week for part 2!



'Pie' the Way--Today is National Pie Day!

By Ashley Hobby
Tusker Tribune Staff

National Pie Day takes place on January 23rd every year. This day is declared by a teacher in the 1970s. His name was Charlie Papazian. There are many different pie flavors as well. This sweet treat also contains a detailed history and culture.

Charlie's birthday was January 23rd, 1949 and he was raised in Warren Township, New Jersey. His father was a chemical engineer and helped with a manufacturing plant. After Charlie graduated from the University of Virginia, he moved to Boulder, Colorado, where then he became a schoolteacher for ten years. Charlie's favorite food was pie. Instead of cake on his birthday, he wanted pie instead. Charlie declared his birthday as "National Pie Day". Now, Charlie lives to be 76 years old.

The most popular pie in the United States, the fall favorite, is apple pie. Apple pie was approximately 29 percent of all pie orders last year. Apple pie was first originated in England and became a symbol of American tradition. The first recorded recipe dates back to the 14th century. There are many different apple pie recipes to choose from. Some have different apple varieties, and some have unique textures and flavorings.

Overall, there are many more pie flavors than just apple pie to choose from. Which **one** will you choose for national pie day?



Is There Too Much Blocking of Websites at School?



By Sofia Mendoza
Tusker Tribune Staff

With the new year there are more blocked sites on our computers, but is it really necessary? Having blocked sites is helpful to help keep students on task during class time. But what about free periods?

Having blocked sites will only make students more determined to find unblocked ones. But blocked sites aren't only about the games. In many classes, especially language classes, we need to use store sites or websites to find houses or prices. Having these types of sites could lead to some students not getting the right teaching they need or having to make teachers find a way to work around these regulations.

But even with the downsides of blocked sites there are some pros like keeping students on task, working on classwork during free periods, and not going onto inappropriate websites. I asked about 10 students if they liked having blocked sites on the computers and 90% of them said no.

While having some websites blocked is a good thing, the staff and tech department could be a bit more lenient with what is banned and what's not.

Computer Club Releases Your Creativity

**By Weston Volpe
Tusker Tribune Staff**

Have you ever wanted to design cool gadgets with a 3D printer or code and make games? If you have been wanting to do all that awesome stuff, then come to Computer Club! You should come because you can design things on Tinkercad to 3D print fidgets like the spiral cone and the star fidget.

You can go with your friends and have fun together designing cool things. You can code on the Scratch program or on Python or other coding languages. If you're interested in Computer Club, it happens every Tuesday from 3:05 PM to 4:00 PM. It's in room 101 (Mr. DeVito's room). All you have to do is come down to room 101 on a Tuesday by yourself or with some of your friends at 3:05 PM (or later) and code or 3d Print!

You can also take the late bus home! If you have any questions, just message rdevito@somersschools.org or mlugo@somersschools.org



Countless Benefits from Learning to Play an Instrument

**By Sofia Mendoza
Tusker Tribune Staff**

If you're looking for a new hobby or something to do in your free time, you should try playing an instrument. Making and playing your own music brings joy, but you can also de-stress because it's your instrument.

Usually learning the basics of an instrument takes a few months, but in the end, it's all worth it. You may be hesitant on learning an instrument because of the cost or because of lesson fees, but there are many affordable instruments such as bongos, recorders, bells, ukuleles, or even keyboards.

From firsthand experience, I've learned and taught myself a few instruments, but I am also still learning. Right now, I can play violin and am teaching myself drums, guitar, kalimba, a little bit of piano, and ukulele. Playing music helps me relax and have fun.

When playing your own chords or strings, it can feel liberating because you make the rules. Since music is such a vast spectrum, it's easy to find what you like and don't. Playing an instrument can also help with memory and focus since you must memorize notes and chords and beats of rest. When you play music, it is just you and the notes. It can easily help you find inner peace or discover a new hobby or talent you enjoy.



Snowflakes Are, In Fact, Real

**By Allison Posadas
Tusker Tribune Staff**

I'm not sure if some of the people reading this article right now know this for sure, but I can attest that this is real. On Sunday January 18th, 2026, my sister wanted me to play outside in the snow with her. I couldn't say no, so I went out in the snow. After a while of hanging out with her, I sat down. A little later, I looked down to my gloves and I noticed a little star, I did not think much about it, until I looked up in the sky and I noticed that I saw a snowflakes.

At first, I couldn't believe my eyes, because a lot of people think snowflakes are fake, due to online conspiracy theories, so I thought so, too. Soon I noticed that the little stars on my gloves were actual snowflakes. And I can truly confirm that they are not fake. Three interesting fun facts about snowflakes:

- 1) The biggest recorded snowflake was 15 inches wide, found in Montana in 1887.
- 2) Snowflakes typically fall slowly, around 1 to 4 mph, though wind and shape can affect speed.
- 3) Lastly, Snowflakes are translucent, but scatter light, making them appear white; they can also look colored (blue, pink, brown) due to impurities or algae.

Make Your Space ‘My Space’ By Customizing Your Room

By Sofia Mendoza
Tusker Tribune Staff

Many people love to express themselves so why not do it in their own room? Putting up posters of things you like such as movies or music artists will add a bit of personality to your room. Even if you share a room with a sibling or two, you can still put up small things like stickers or even action figures.

Painting your walls or even doors is a form of expression. Choose a color you like and splash it onto any surface you'd like! When you customize your room, you get to show a new style you like or feel more comfortable in your own space. Adding small things like books or a runner can even influence your mood and make you know you have control over the area.

Adding decorations may seem like a big commitment, but you can move anything from posters to closets any time you'd like. Even if you're unsure about changing things up, you could always make subtle changes like different pillows!



By Robert Jarrett
Tusker Tribune Staff

Chestnut-eared Aracari

“It is a medium-sized toucan of tropical rainforest. It is distinguished from other Aracaris by a blue patch of skin around a light eye and a single red band on its yellow belly. It prefers forest edges and young forest; often found around gardens and human dwellings. Frequently encountered in pairs or small groups, especially in fruiting trees.”

The chestnut-eared Aracari, a member of the Toucan family and is found in the following South American countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, and Peru. It ranges from 17-19 inches long and weighs 7-11oz. Although the females and males share the same colorations on the bill, the female's bill is shorter.

The Chestnut-eared Aracari is a bird of the Amazon Basin. The Chestnut-eared Aracari are found in a variety of habitats, many of which are by water. Examples include wet forest by lakes and rivers.

The Chestnut-eared Aracari's diet is mostly fruit. It forages at all levels of the forest, plucking fruit from branches (even while hanging upside down) and investigating vines, shrubs, and crevices.

“The IUCN has assessed the Chestnut-eared Aracari as being of Least Concern. It has an extremely large range but an unknown population size that is believed to be decreasing. No immediate threats have been identified.” (Wikipedia Contributors, 2025)



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*Chestnut-eared Aracari - eBird. (2025).
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How Does Dopamine Affect You?

By Kaylee Jeon
Tusker Tribune Staff

Have you ever had a snack or went shopping after getting angry or reacting in a negative way? This reaction is from a chemical in the brain called dopamine. You might recall this chemical to be called the “brain reward system,” but dopamine is more properly described as the thing that causes excitement when the brain thinks a reward is going to be given.

This excitement is used in sales tactics when buying things from a store or online. For example, sales and deals at stores would probably make someone feel happier when buying something rather than buying an item for the full price. Because of dopamine, you will become more convinced of buying the item because it is “cheaper” than usual. When the dopamine wears off, the buyer will want the dopamine effect again, so they will want to keep buying repeatedly causing an endless cycle.

This also applies to snacking and electronic use because it makes you feel good, which may lead to a repetitive cycle. Overall, dopamine affects decisions and actions through repetitiveness. A release of positive dopamine during an action causes you to want to repeat the action.



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Reflections on a Day of Giving at Bedford Community Church



By Sofia Mendoza
Tusker Tribune Staff

This past Monday, I volunteered at Bedford Community Church to help serve the homeless. I have done an article about a similar experience in the past but this time, since I am older, it has more impact. There were 27 men who were being served. Most of them were immigrants working in the US to send back money to their families back in their homelands. We served many rice and chicken meals with vegetables that were warm to keep them heated from the outdoor cold.

One thing that made me realize how much these men go through is when they were taking attendance and one of the men's names were called and another man said that he had died. They did not seem very bothered, which made me realize that something that could be a sensitive topic for us is their everyday life. Another man was helping clean up after we put away all the food. They are just like us but in different situations.

We should never judge someone from how they live. This shows us to be more grateful for even the little privileges we have and to not take advantage of our lives right now because we could always be in other people's positions who have it harder than us.



Fun Ways to Pass the Time While At the Airport

By Giuliana DeMartino
Tusker Tribune Staff

Sometimes, going to the airport might be boring, such as arriving hours before your flight or your flight getting delayed. Here are a few fun things to do while you are at the airport waiting for your flight to board.

Airports are like shopping malls. There are many stores and restaurants. You can always stop and get a snack or a new pair of headphones. I would never be bored in a mall, so airports being basically a mall takes waiting for your flight to another level. The only downside is that it's usually more expensive to buy stuff in an airport.

Download an air traffic control app to listen to what is happening behind the scenes at the airport. Sometimes you can even hear the reason why your flight is delayed. Apps and websites like LiveATC give you the chance to be able to listen to air traffic control.

If you have a camera or even your phone camera, you can plane spot. Plane spotting is taking pictures of planes during takeoff, landing, or when there is a sunset in the background. Just look out the windows at a gate, then take a photo of a plane. If you want to make this more fun, download Flightrader24 to see the details of that exact the plane you took a picture of. On Flightrader24, you can see the flightpath and aircraft details. I always try to see what type of plane I saw before looking at the app. such as if that plane was a Boeing 737 or a Airbus A320.

If possible, go to an airport lounge. You can get as much food and drinks for free. There are good seats and Wi-Fi you can connect to. It's also a great place to charge your phone. The only downside is that most lounges want you to have airline status before entering.

Some major airports have arcades, parks, spas, gardens, and small museums. If the airport you are at has any of these fun, places go check it out. Singapore Changi Airport has a huge waterfall, and people travel just to see what this airport has to offer.

It's not fun being bored at the airport because it's crowded, overpriced, and tiring but there are still a bunch of things you can do to not be bored and maybe even have a better time at the airport than on vacation.

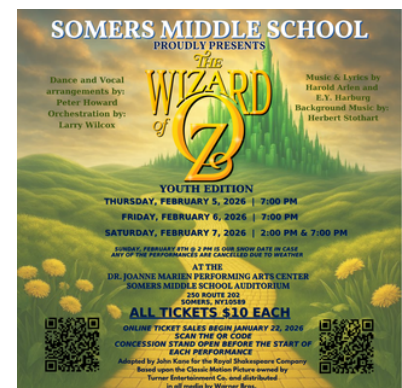
Drama Club is the Perfect Place to Show Your Talent!

By Sofia Mendoza
Tusker Tribune Staff

The Drama Club in Somers Middle School is a great club where you can make new friends, gain confidence, and discover something you really like. For any sixth or seventh grader now, who are scared to join, it is a great experience to have and it's fun when you do it with friends.

But even if none of your friends are in the cast, it is a great opportunity to make new ones. In drama, there is lots of collaboration and cooperation between cast members as you learn dances together, sing, and enjoy the cast experience. You don't need to play a big role in having fun in dramas. Being part of an ensemble plays a big role as well.

In my sixth and seventh grade drama experience I was an ensemble and it was a lot of fun. By being on stage in front of a crowd, you gain confidence in yourself to know that you got this and there's nothing to worry about. Even if you don't like the experience, it's not for the whole year and you don't have to do it next year either. But if you do, you know that you have a fun club that you can talk about with your friends. If you want to see a bit about how the drama productions at SMS work come to one of our shows on **February 5th at 7pm, 6th at 7pm, and 7th at 2 and 7pm.**



A Sweet History of Candy Canes

By Noah Samuel
Tusker Tribune Staff

Every winter, you probably see red-and-white striped candy canes hanging on trees, in stockings, or in your hot chocolate. But have you ever wondered where they came from?

Origins

The story begins in 17th-century Cologne, Germany, where plain white sugar sticks were given to children during Christmas church services. According to legend, the choirmaster did this to help them behave. To justify giving candy to children during Mass, he asked the candy maker who had created these sugar sticks to bend the top into a crook, reminding the children of the shepherds who came to visit the infant Jesus. It's also believed that the white color was used to teach the kids about sinless life of Jesus.

Modern Candy Canes

Over time, candy canes spread to many parts of Germany, but they remained plain white. It wasn't until the early 1900s that manufacturers began adding the red stripes, said to symbolize the blood of Christ, and the peppermint flavor, a refreshing winter flavor. Eventually, machines were invented to twist the white and red together, and candy canes no longer had to be bent by hand.

Conclusion

Today, candy canes are more than just a sweet treat – they're a beloved holiday tradition worldwide. They're used for decorating cookies, topping desserts, and even flavoring coffee! So next time you enjoy a candy cane, remember that you're tasting a piece of history that's been bringing joy and spreading holiday cheer for almost 400 years.



Snow Imagery--Perfect for This Weekend's Upcoming Storm?

By Natalia Steiner
Tusker Tribune Staff

White. Soft. Silent. Looking into a snow globe, eyes are going completely blind from the bright, pure, white. Freshly fallen. Still coming down, soft but surely, cold and sparkling. Frostbite just from the look of it.

Every year people wait for it to fall, to wake up to a white solid blanket, on the floor of the world. The colorless but bright snow.

Weather channels saying snow, now hopeful for it to come. The inside feeling of waiting to lay down under warm blankets, surrounded by a cold but comforting igloo.

By the fireplace. A small platter of cookies and a cup of warm velvety hot chocolate. Whipped cream gently spooned high like snow covered mountains in the winter.

Marshmallows timidly dropped; such as trees enveloped in miniscule specks of snow forming each snowflake. Evergreens still strongly a rich dark hue of forest green, no longer coded in heavy white but lightly dusted from the frigid winter wind.



The Hart MVP Trophy Race is On!

By Noah Samuel
Tusker Tribune Staff

We're a little over halfway through the NHL regular season, so it's an appropriate time to discuss the top candidates for the Hart Memorial Trophy. The Hart Trophy is awarded annually to the player who is voted most valuable to his team in the NHL. It was first awarded at the end of the 1923-24 season. The trophy is named in honor of Dr. David Hart, who donated the trophy. So here they are: my top three picks to win the Hart Trophy this season (statistics as of 1/18/26).

1. Nathan MacKinnon

Someone who always deserves to be in this conversation, Nathan MacKinnon has once again delivered. A league-leading 36 goals will tell you that. Leading the Colorado Avalanche, he also has a league-second 82 points, a dominant 24 points higher than the person in second. The Avalanche have an NHL record of five regulation losses this season so far, as well as a League-leading 33 wins, partly in thanks to MacKinnon's exceptional speed and stickhandling ability.

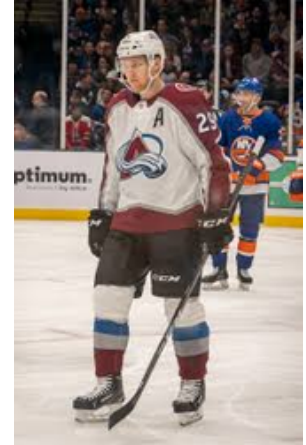
2. Nikita Kucherov

A player that has never really been in the spotlight, Nikita Kucherov has single-handedly brought the Tampa Bay Lightning from outside of the playoffs, to the top spot in the Atlantic Division. At the beginning of the season, most people had concluded that the Lightning, at 7th place in the division, were done for this year. But thanks to Kucherov's 70 points and league-third 46 assists, Tampa Bay has surged to a 13-game point streak! To put that in perspective, Kucherov has 21 more points than the second-placed player on his team. The Lightning have a goal differential of +46 and are the first-place team in the East, as well as second in the league behind Colorado.

3. Macklin Celebrini

For someone who has spent only two seasons in the League, Macklin Celebrini has definitely stated his case. Leading the San Jose Sharks with 24 goals and a League-third 72 points, and with 40 points more than the player in second, the 19-year-old has had a breakout season this year. A plus-minus of +14 and League-second 48 assists all add to Celebrini's portfolio. People might find this pick controversial because of Celebrini's young age, but I firmly believe that the Sharks would not have the second Wild Card in the West without Celebrini's help.

These are my top three candidates for who I think should win the Hart Trophy this year. But who knows – there could be another player who makes his case later on. Who do you think will win?



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The Quickest Trip to Aruba Ever (It's Like They Never Got There)

Note: This is a story written by Allison as part of an ELA 8 Suspense Story Unit being taught by Mr. Suranna and Ms. Reynolds.

By Allison Posadas
Tusker Tribune Staff

The last unit we did in ELA was suspense story writing, and I loved writing my suspense story, so today it inspired me to write a new one, for you guys to read.

"Bye mom, I'll see you in a week! Have fun with dad."

"Thank you. Are sure you can stay home alone? You're 15," my mom said with a worried look.

"I'm sure mom, I'm a teen now. I know the rules, I know my responsibilities, and I am old enough to be staying home alone. Nothing wrong will happen, I promise."

"If you say so. Don't get in so much trouble while we're gone."

"Yeah yeah. I get it," I say, while rolling my eyes.

Soon my parents close the door gently and they are on their way to Aruba for their anniversary.

"This is going to be the best winter break ever!" I say while running to my room. An hour has passed and all of a sudden, the doorbell rings. "Who is it?!" I say while walking down the stairs with a confused expression. *Who could that be?* I think with a worried look. I open the door, and all I see is a box. "Oh, is this my package? It was supposed to come next week, but oh well."

I picked up the package to look for the address to see if the company messed up, but there was no address, no name, and no name of the company, just a plain cardboard box. "I think they messed up; there is not even a return address," I say with a worried look. "I think I will just open the box, because maybe the shipping company messed up."

As I opened the box, there was nothing inside. Then, as soon as I opened the box, my phone started ringing. "Oh, it's an unknown number, I'm not going to answer."

Ok, answering call Siri said on the phone.

"No! I did not say for you to answer the phone!"

The person on the other end of the call starts saying creepy stuff. "I know where you live," he says in a creepy voice. "I know where your parents are; they are in Aruba."

And then I hung up the phone. "OMG, who was that, is someone stalking me? I better call my parents," I say with a terrified look. I called my parents for the 100th time and still have no answer.

"What am I going to do? Mom please, please, answer the phone!"

Then my mom picks up. "What's wrong? You know I can't talk right now."

"There was a random person calling me. He said he knew where you were. He said you were in Aruba with dad, and he said, he knows where we live! Please call the police! I'm scared!" I say with a terrified look on my face.

"I said you could stay home if you promised you wouldn't joke around. Stop trying to prank me, Lucy!" my mom says while I'm mid-sentence.

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Aruba

From Page 13

“But. Mom . . .”

Then she hangs up. Soon I noticed that there was a person knocking on my window. “AHHHHHHH!” I scream while trying to find a place to hide, then soon I go to the closet.

Lucy’s hand trembled so violently; the phone felt like a slippery soap bar threatening to fall to the ground. Her heart hammered against her ribs. A frantic drumbeat that seemed to echo the stranger’s chilling words all of a sudden, suffocating the silence of the house. Each beat was a stark reminder of isolation; the sound increases by the unsettling creak of the old house settling, or was is something else? A floorboard groaning upstairs?

She strained her ears, her breath catching in her throat, imagining the darkness outside pressing in, alive with unseen threats. Soon, the doorknob of her bedroom turned slowly. *Lucy, you're ok, you're probably dreaming*, I say in my head terrified.

Trembling, I fumbled with my phone, my fingers slick with sweat. I scrolled through my contacts; my eyes were darting toward my closet door. Soon I found “Dad's work.” *This could work? Maybe my dad's boss could call my dad.*

I called “Dad's work”. Then soon my dad's boss answered. “Lucy is this you? What’s wrong? Does your dad need help?”

“No, he is in Aruba. Can you call him saying I need help? I'm in an emergency! "I say quietly with a deep, and shaky breath. “Please, I think someone is trying to break into our house, and I'm home alone.”

“Ok, stay calm. I called you dad. He is on his way.”

Soon the doorknob turned slowly once again. Just as the door creaked open, my dad's gruff voice boomed through the door. “I'm like two seconds away from home. We're on our way, stay calm.”

The sound of the car horn blaring outside, followed by the slamming of car doors made the stranger in the doorway freeze. My dad, alerted by my call, and the mention of an intruder, had arrived home much sooner.

“OK I'm home. I'm going in now stay calm.”

“OK, hurry! I'm so scared!

Soon the front door opened, and the police came to arrest the stranger. I got so scared that I passed out.

“AHHHHHH, IS HE GONE??

I hope you enjoyed my story, thank you so much!



Beached

Note: This is a story written by Robert as part of an ELA 8 Suspense Story Unit being taught by Mr. Suranna and Ms. Reynolds.

**By Robert Jarrett
Tusker Tribune Staff**

It was a cold morning on the English Channel, near the Western Front, the cold air revealing everyone's breath. Joseph had just begun to wake up in the barracks of the ship, when he felt it crash as if there was a sudden, unnatural roll throwing him off his feet. He lifted his head, dazed, and in that moment, he felt like his head was lifting a thousand pounds as he looked up, and then with a heavy thud, it all went dark.

When he awoke, he found himself dazed, glass digging into his skin, and torn metal forming a shield around him against the exposed wiring, although it was crushing his ankle. The fact he had survived was lucky. A voice cut through the ringing in his ear. "Hey!" the voice was older, stoic.

"H-hello?" His voice croaked out, quiet and weak. No response. "Hello!" he yelled louder.

Then the metal began to creak and then was lifted, revealing the scene before him. Bodies lay on the shore of the river, mutilated and unrecognizable from scrap metal flying into them in the crash. "You ok? That ankle looks pretty bad," came the voice, above him now.

He looked up at the figure, the sun illuminating his silhouette. The man looked short, stocky, and pretty old for a soldier, although he was donned with a United States soldier's uniform. With a sense of sudden alarm, the man quickly pulled out a first-aid kit, and wrapped Joseph's ankle with a bandage and handed him a piece of driftwood long enough to be a makeshift crutch. "Get up, we got to get moving," he said, his voice a whisper now.

"Why?" Joseph asked, still rolling from the crash. But he soon understood. He looked around, trying to spot what had alarmed the man, when he heard a low thrumming and the rattling of metal. When he looked in the direction of the sound, he saw a German U-boat, heading straight to the wreckage. He hoisted himself up, using the wood and started speed walking to the tree line as fast as he could with the stick keeping him upright. The thrumming was getting louder now, or was that the beating of his heart as adrenaline was rushing through his veins? And then a shot rang out, drowning out all sound around him.

The machine guns aboard the German sub started to tatter the sand and dirt around him, creating clouds of dust that made it hard to breathe. He finally made into the tree line and quickly slipped into the cover of shrubbery and large trees. The bullets buried themselves into the wood, then ceased. He glanced above the cover, looking for the man who saved him. There, he saw the man, behind a chunk of the hull that was being riddled with holes and marks as the machine guns drowned out the sound of the channel.

German soldiers started to pour out of the hatches of the U-boat until a group of five or six of them started jumping onto the sand as the ship stopped a few feet from shore. Just then, a bullet pierced through the man's cover and hit him in the leg. He let out a holler and went into a fetal position, clutching onto his leg in pain. A German quickly seized him and barked a command that Joseph didn't understand, and the other soldiers started to search the perimeter.

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Beached

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He had to get out of here, to try and find help. But what if they killed the man who saved him? Should he try to kill the Germans? He would surely die if he tried; he was outnumbered six to one. What if they found him in the area, and took him too? He had to make a choice, and quick, before the Germans find him.

He decided to make a run for it, reassuring himself by saying maybe there were other survivors, or a French encampment nearby. He could hear his heart thumping in his head as he hobbled awkwardly, a sharp pain going through his leg with each step. Was he going to make it? What if a German patrol found him before he found help?

He felt he had been limping for hours when he saw a tent on the horizon, its cloth walls thrashing in the light breeze. He had to be careful, couldn't run up asking for help just in case it was a German tent. He sneaked into a small patch of forest near the tent and crouched around until he was about thirty feet away from the tent when, lo and behold, the flag displayed nearby was a French flag! He spotted three or four French soldiers sitting around a campfire nearby. He walked out into the camp loud enough to be heard by the soldiers. Two of the four soldiers turned around quickly at the noise but let their guard down when they saw his American uniform.

"An American, here?" said one of the soldiers in broken English. "Are you a courier? Has there been a ceasefire?"

"No, I'm not a courier," said Joseph, "I was in a crash, my platoon's boat is beached, and there are a couple of survivors who have been captured by Germans. I need help to save them, or they'll be executed."

He knew that they would not go back for one man, so he had to lie, saying there were multiple survivors. They quickly handed him a map and told him to point at the location of his platoon on the map. They started discussing in French, presumably about a plan. By the time they had stopped discussing, it was the dead of night, the sky a dark purple.

They handed him a revolver with only four rounds and set out for the beached ship. By the time they reached the ship, the sun had started to peak on the horizon, and the clouds were hot pink. They were stalking through the tree line. The Germans had already set up camp with two small tents, a wood bench, and a small group of prisoners, other survivors most likely, being watched by two soldiers.

The rest of the soldiers must have been still asleep in their tents. They split up, with Joseph and two Frenchmen took the side where the prisoners were, and the other two flanked behind the tents. Two of the French soldiers aimed their rifles at the men guarding the prisoners. Two thunderous cracks filled the air as the Germans stumbled back and the sand behind them was sprayed a scarlet red.

Following the sounds of rifles came the startled Germans who awoke in the battle. They rushed out the tents with rifles in hand and quickly shot down one of the Frenchmen who killed the guards. Joseph and the other Frenchmen flanked the soldiers in the tree line.

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Beached

From Page 16

The second French soldier shot at the soldiers from a new position, killing one and wounding another. There were three more Germans left. The remaining Frenchman quickly appeared from behind the Germans and started shooting, each shot sound through the shore as the Germans and French exchanged bullets. The Frenchmen were quickly overwhelmed and killed, but the last Frenchmen were able to take out two Germans, leaving only one.

It was just Joseph and the soldier. He was pressed against the back of a tree, feeling all the crevices and lines in the bark. He could hear the soldier slowly walking up, leaves crushing under his feet. He clutched onto the grip of his revolver.

The soldier rounded the side of the tree and squeezed the trigger. There was only one click, nothing more. The German looked at Joseph, his eyes wide with shock and fear. His feet quickly pivoted to run, but Joseph shot faster. The bullet struck the German in the center of his back, hitting the spinal cord and probably one of his lungs. The soldier toppled over instantly, crashing into a rotten log that split around his head. Joseph leaned closer, waiting for any sound that meant he was still alive. Nothing.

Joseph ran down onto the beach, faster than he had ever run, with no regard for his leg, his heart thumping in his ears as he felt his head pulse. He saw where the prisoners were, but they had all fallen to the sand, none of them moving. He ran to check, to see if he had failed, to see if the man who was brave enough to save him, had died. That's when he saw it. His savior, had a bullet through his neck. Blood was pouring out as the man stayed motionless, eyes rolled back in his head. His gray stubbly beard-stained red. This was Joseph's fault. He was too cowardly to try and fight alone, and for that the man paid dearly. Joseph's face was red and moist from tears, his hands grasping the dead man's uniform. Joseph was in unimaginable despair; he feared he would never be able to cope.



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