

The One and Only Pencil

Our ode to the mighty pencil on this, the National Pencil Day!

The Pencilite Heritage by Ben Plunkett

Pencil Day honors this day in 1858 when the first modern pencil came into creation. I will admit that I have lived in denial of my pencilite heritage for many years, probably since high school. But then just two weeks ago I was on a mad search for the ever elusive blue pen. On that day remembrance took me and I shed a tear as I beheld our legion of ancient yet unsharpened pencils lying idly in the junk drawer beneath the microwave. It was at that moment that I determined to return to my roots. So that very same day I bought a pencil sharpener and sharpened those babies to a razor tip. It was not long before waves of love and goodness washed over me as the fine lead point flew gracefully across the page. It had been so long...so long. And then I suddenly stopped. The pencil was turning...turning, turning, turningturningturning. And then it was a rocket zooming up into the ceiling fan. Oh how it flew that day, brothers and sisters, how it flew.

The Short Pencil by D.A.Speer

I've never been good at the game of golf. One measly time I was able to chip a ball into the hole from off of the green, but it wasn't due to any skill whatsoever. By the time I was in high school, I was able to hit par...for the first two holes. It was always downhill from there, on the express train to double bogey town. I was left fuming and defeated time and time again on the fairways, angrily chopping away in futility because my score had long since exploded past anything reasonable.

But you know who was there for me through it all? The trusty short pencil.

Yes, it etched my failures onto the scorecard as the game inevitably progressed toward its disastrous end, but it never once complained. It was always there on the golf cart, clipped to the steering wheel, ready to celebrate with me in my victories and agonize with me in my defeats.

Truth be told, I always preferred staying in the cart and driving around instead of actually playing anyway. There are too few times in life that you can drive a miniature cart around outside, and it was always nice to have a small wooden pencil pal right there by my side.

The Tale of the Bloody Pencil by Phill Lytle

It was a dark day. A day of strife. A day of violence.

There was enmity between siblings. The elder abdicated his ordained duty and refused to assist his younger sibling with his arithmetic. The younger begged. He fell to his knees in desperate supplication. All his groans and utterings fell on deaf ears. The elder rejected every cry for help. He rebuffed every tearful plea.

It was then that something deep and dark broke in the soul of the younger sibling. Something ancient and evil awoke in the heart of that young child. A black stain that had always been there, but now knew that its time had come.

It searched for the closest instrument of war at hand. The options were limited. But there, on the table, was something that would suffice in this hour of great need. A lonely, innocent pencil. There it rested from its academic efforts. There it lied, pure and undefiled, perfectly oblivious to the horrors that awaited.

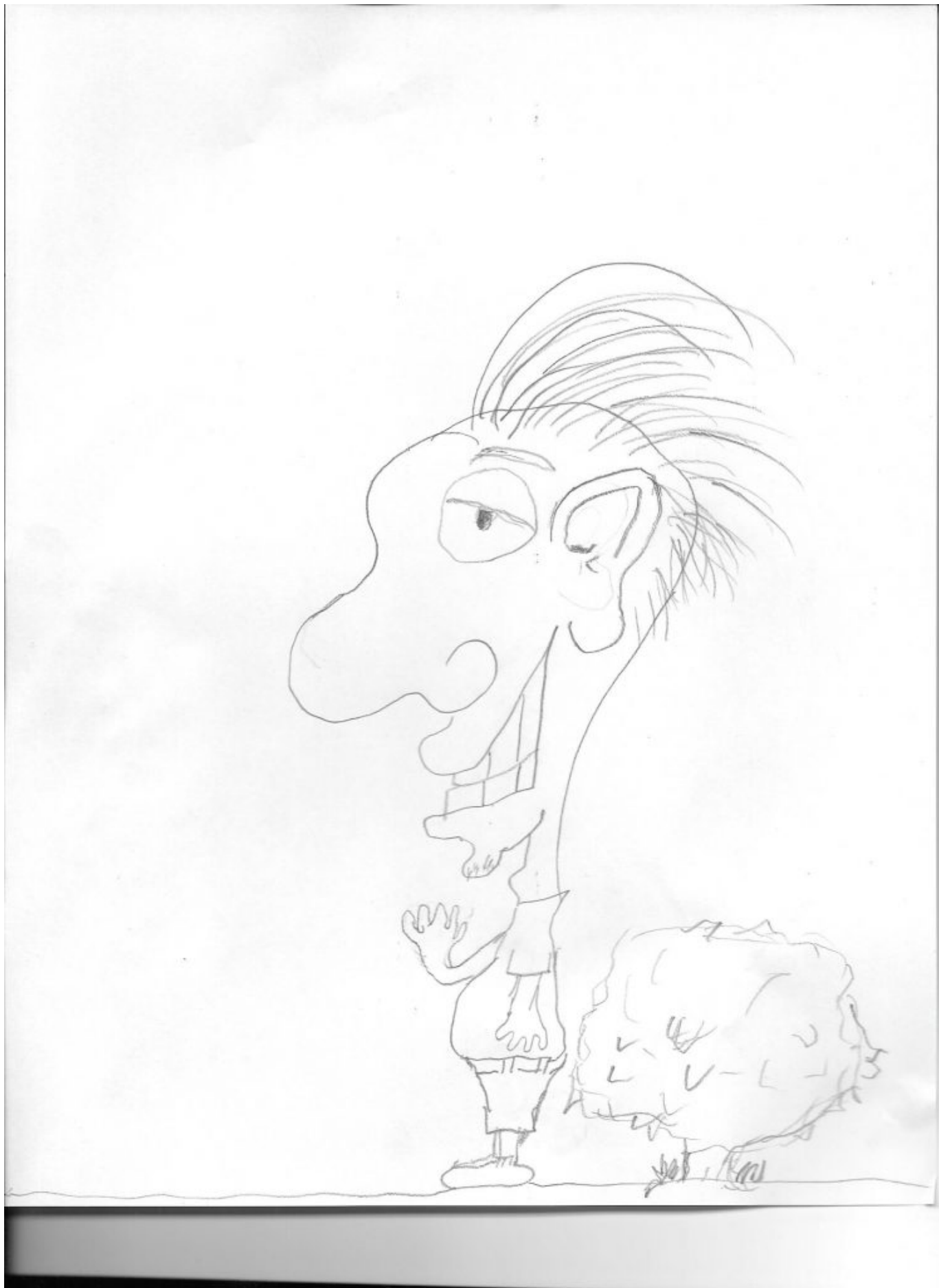
The younger stretched out his hand, took the pencil, and lunged at the elder. He stabbed him then. He stabbed him with force, anger, and indignation. The elder stood there, shards of a pencil lodged in his hand, confusion etched on his face. How had it come to this?

The poor pencil was broken and bloody. It fell to the floor, dropped by the younger in disgust and shame. There it rested, never to be used again as a tool of learning and knowledge. It was discarded after the events of the day. Weep for the bloody pencil, which suffered death and destruction through no fault of its own. Weep for all such tools that are wielded in anger and rage. Weep.

The end.

L'Art du Le Pencil by Ben Plunkett

Without a pencil, I could not have created this masterpiece of masterpieces.



The Always Reliable Pencil by Phill Lytle

Technology is great. It really is. We are more than blessed to live in a time with technological advances that feel like science fiction come to life. Every aspect of our lives has the potential to be enhanced by ever-expanding and advancing technology.

But what happens when technology lets us down? Take the classroom for example. Schools are moving to more and more technological usage. There is a reliance on tablets, computers, and things of that nature. Yet it is not uncommon for things to go wrong. For systems to crash, computers to stall, tablets to bug out.

That is when the trusty and reliable pencil steps up the plate and does what it was created to do. The pencil is always ready to help. It is always available. It is always at hand, primed for use. You take it in your hand and you put its point to paper and viola! Glorious writing appears on the page. And when the point is dulled or the lead breaks, you take it to the sharpener and you give it a few twirls in those blades of renewal and all things are good again.

That is the power of the pencil. It is simple. Boring. But it lives in ever-ready anticipation to help. For that, let us be thankful. The pencil never lets us down.