

Ranting Ever On: Bad Drivers

I am an angry driver most of the time. It is something I have to work on constantly. I wouldn't even consider myself an angry person most of the time – though I do have a very angry resting face. (That's an article for another time!) I am not even an impatient person in my day-to-day life. But on the road behind the wheel, I am all those things. Plainly put, most people have no business driving a vehicle. They have no idea how to control their own vehicle, let alone be aware that there are other vehicles on the road around them. This is all very annoying. It is also dangerous. I could live with the annoying part, but when you factor in the dangerous aspect of bad driving, that sets me off. I never took Driver's Education in school. My small school didn't offer it. (To give you some idea how small my school was, I was in a graduating class of one.) My parents taught me when I was 17 years old and it made a world of difference. They taught me to pay just as much attention to those around me as to my own driving. They taught me to follow the laws of the road – novel idea it seems. They taught me to be a “defensive” driver. I have done my best to take their lessons to heart. I don't speed. I use my signal lights. I do all the little things we are supposed to do when we are drive our vehicles. And it bothers me that from all appearances, most other drivers do not do these things.

Complaining about bad driving is too general to make a good rant. If I want this rant to stick, it needs to be more focused. With that in mind, let's look at the art of driving conscientiously. Little things like letting cars merge, not following too closely, slowing down and moving over a lane when there is a stalled car on the side of the road, acknowledging when another driver lets you merge. These are the little things that make driving better and safer for everyone on the road. Too often though, these are the first things that are thrown out of the window by most drivers.

Comedian Brian Regan has a really good bit about acknowledging other drivers that is not only funny, but also makes many valid points. You can watch that clip [here](#) if you so desire. Warning: Some might find the advertisement before the clip offensive.

I have had many similar experiences. One in particular stands out. On my way to work, I was in the right turn lane and I could tell that the car to the left of me was going to need to get over. They did not have their signal light on, but I could tell. How? It's just one of those things you learn to recognize when you pay attention when you are driving. Naturally, I slowed down and gave the driver a chance to switch lanes. They didn't. I thought for a brief moment that perhaps I was mistaken that this driver needed to change lanes. My faith wavered. I doubted my skills. Not for long though, because finally, at the last possible moment, the driver flashed their turn signal once and then quickly swerved in front of me. That last-second signal light was both infuriating and laughable. It was pointless but I'm sure it made the driver feel like they had done everything correctly.

So, I had allowed the driver to merge – and believe me, it was not easy. The very pleasant and patient person behind me was not less than thrilled that I slowed down. They showed their displeasure by honking at me and then giving me a friendly hand gesture. (Maybe they weren't angry and were trying to tell me that I was Number One?) Even after all of this, I had a faint hope that the driver I had allowed to merge would acknowledge my help and perhaps wave to show their appreciation. Nope. They did not wave. They didn't even look in the rearview mirror to see the kind man who had made their turn possible. They continued to do the thing that had put them in the precarious position from the very beginning: They talked on their phone. How did I respond to this ugly and distasteful display of incivility? I waved at them like an idiot and continued to wave (with a giant, completely over-

the-top grin on my face) for the next three or four minutes. I have no idea if they saw me. I don't really care. Actually, I do care. My secret hope is that they saw me and realized what they had done and when they got to work, felt so bad about how they treated another human being that they curled up in the corner of their cubicle and cried themselves to sleep. No big deal – just total and abject shame and guilt.

Moral of this story: Be nice to other people when you are on the road. Or, in the words of the famous fictional rock band, Wyld Stallyns, "Be excellent to each other." Bill and Ted believed it. Jesus did too. Driving would be less stressful and the roads would be safer if we just listened to Bill, Ted, and Jesus.

Schick Introduces Powerful New Razor – "The Nuke"

In the weapons race that is the world of razors and cutting-edge shaving technology, an industry veteran has thrown down the gauntlet. Where other shaving supply companies are satisfied with 5, 6, or even 7 bladed razors, Schick has unveiled their newest creation – "The Nuke*" – a 37 blade razor that will literally destroy every hair follicle it touches.

"When we looked at the market and what our consumers are really wanting, we quickly realized that just upping the ante a little was going to get us nowhere. We had to "drop a bomb", pun fully intended."

Director of Product Design, Natalie O'Harra, further explains the process, "We asked ourselves a few fundamental questions.

First, 'What is better than seven blades?' Second, 'Can we invent a razor that will make shaving a more comprehensive, robust, and effective activity?' We firmly believe that "The Nuke" is the answer to those questions.

"The Nuke" is armed with 37 stainless steel blades, each sharpened to an edge that is capable of slicing through a shoe. But the secret weapon in "The Nuke's" arsenal is the nuclear-powered burst of focused heat between each blade that sears the hair follicle to its root, rendering it dead and useless.

"Most men hate shaving" Ms. O'Harra adds, "They hate having to repeat this process over and over. "The Nuke" recognizes that aggravation and it makes it a thing of the past. Once you use "The Nuke" you will never need to shave again. Ever."

Lofty goals for sure, but Schick is convinced that this is the best path forward for their company. The price tag is high since this is literally the last razor you will ever need to buy with a suggested retail price is \$499.00. Is the efficacy and finality of this shave worth it to consumers? We'll have to wait and see.

Warning: **The Nuke is a one-time use razor. Once you open the package, you have 10 minutes to complete your shave before the heated bursts render the razor a melted lump of char. DO NOT attempt to use it for longer than 10 minutes. DO NOT attempt to use it more than once as it will cause major damage to your skin, your ligaments, your bones, and your soul. Blindness will occur if **The Nuke** gets too close to your eyes. Avoid contact with any hair that you do not wish to permanently remove. Women should not use **The Nuke** as it will permanently sterilize anyone with XX chromosomes. Children should avoid all contact with **The Nuke** as they are weak and prone to bouts of unspeakable foolishness. Weak-willed men should avoid using **The Nuke** as its singular goal in life is to crush its enemies, see them driven before it, and to hear*

the lamentations of their women.

Ranting Ever On: The Five Edition

There are days when you just need to rant and rave about stuff. Moments when you need to get it off your chest. You know the drill. If there is something that is bothering you or getting under your skin, this is a safe space to vent. But keep a few things in mind. First, do your best to keep the object of your rant as illogical and pointless as possible. Nobody has time for a rant about something serious and important. Second, try to keep it short and sweet. Long rants wear out their welcome very quickly. Finally, be honest and transparent. Nothing is worse than a ranter ranting about something that doesn't really bother them that much. It's plain to everyone around that it is an empty rant, devoid of purpose and passion. Mean it or keep it to yourself.

In our ongoing effort to be helpful and generous, we here at REO have decided to give you, dear reader, a short collection of rants to help guide you in your future ranting. A primer, if you will. Here are five mini-rants about five different things that are deserving of the best we have to offer. We hope you will enjoy this Ranting Ever On, Friday Five style. And please, feel free to add your own rant in the comment section below.

How Pluto has been Dismissed As Not an Actual Planet

Back in grade school, we learned the acronym My Very Educated

Mother Just Served Us Nine Pizzas to remember the planets. The truly awesome thing about this acronym is that we were getting nine pizzas. Nine! But now...now our innocence is lost. No more carefree hours of staring at that pizza planet in the sky (I don't think we can actually see it, but we can imagine its there). Now It's just My Very Educated Mother Just Served Us Nine... And that's it. Nope, nothing, nada. But there is hope. In recent years there has been a movement afoot to include all of the dwarf planets with the regular planets. If this dream transpires it will be Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Cerus, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, Pluto, Haumea, Makemake, and Eris. I have seen a number of suggested acronyms if this does, in fact, become reality. Unfortunately, none of the suggestions I read have included pizza, which makes me think many people are missing the important point here. Let me suggest My Very Educated Mother Christine Just Served Us Nine Pizzas Having Mucho Everything. So I say its high time we take back our childhood. Let's take matters into our hands and put that pizza back in the acronym as it so justly deserves. (Ben Plunkett)

Wendy's "Fresh-Never-Frozen Beef"

Why does Wendy's now advertise that their beef is fresh and NEVER FROZEN? It is in every commercial they do now. Freezing beef is now up there with being a Nazi as one of the worst sins you can commit in 21st century America. People freeze meat all the time. They buy giant deep freezers just so they can buy a lot of meat and freeze it.

Now Wendy's has decided that it is horrible to freeze beef. WHAT IS NEXT, WHERE WILL THIS END!?!?!?! (Mike Lytle)

Why Does Carey Elwes Have to Be So Much Cooler Than Me?

Yeah, Carey, I get it. You got to be Westley in *The Princess Bride*, getting to kiss Robin Wright, hang out with Andre the Giant, have the greatest sword fight of modern times and make women all over the world fawn. And you got a turn as the Dread Pirate Roberts, as if being a pirate isn't a lifelong fantasy of mine. Yeah, you got to actually be on the set with, run lines with, and act in the same scenes with George Costanza and other characters from *Seinfeld* once. No big deal. Not like I wouldn't light myself on fire to have had that opportunity. You got to match wits with Shawn and Gus as the mesmerizing, out-of-the-park home run recurring villain Despereaux in *Psych*. You even got to prove that when your role is a lame character, like Jerry on *Liar, Liar*, that you still make it totally unforgettable and quotable! You have the perfect looks, the sublime accent and the filmography I would die for.

And yet all of that apparently isn't enough, as you have now signed on for Season 3 of *Stranger Things*. Why do you do this to me, Carey Elwes? Why do you take my perfectly content life and make me yearn for more? (Gowdy Cannon)

Clipping My Fingernails

I hate clipping my nails. It's boring. it's tedious, and it seems like I am having to do it more often these days. My nails just won't stop growing! Why do they have to grow so fast? I'll admit, I would hate NOT having nails because then my fingers would look like little fleshy protrusions growing out of my hands, but all this nail clipping is just a complete headache. Sadly, there is no good answer here. No nails and I'm a mutant. Long nails and I'm a creep. So I have to clip them. Fine nails! I'll clip you on a regular basis but don't expect me to be happy about it! (Phill Lytle)

Internet Lists

Do you know what we need a lot fewer of on the internet? Lists. Some lists are cool, such as this fine websites weekly list of musings from various contributors. I have benefited greatly from sitting down in the morning and creating a daily to-do list But I think the internet has really gotten out of hand and we need to stop. Every time I turn around someone is publishing some inane list of something and they are usually way more than just a few items. "Twenty-five reasons why the number two is cooler than the number eight" or "99 reasons that 1999 was the best year ever!" or "22 reasons that Barb from *Stranger Things* is the greatest character in the history of fiction". I haven't always felt this way. I remember when they celebrated 100 years of film with the top 100 movies of all time. I enjoyed watching that because it was compiled from years of cinema and it made me want to watch some movies that I had never before thought of watching. Now, however, we are just using lists willy-nilly as if they are some magic device that makes our opinion more valid. Why do we like making lists and looking at the lists of others? Is it because we like ranking stuff and seeing if others agree with us even if the things we are ranking aren't that important and/or really don't require any sort of ranking? Are we not content to have a group of stuff that we like that isn't broken down somehow? Do we have to catalog every single aspect of our life and share it with other people and then find ourselves arguing over the ways their list is different than ours? Maybe it annoys me so much because I've caught myself ten points deep into a 35 point list that I saw on the internet and realized that my life will not be improved by knowing all of the times that Hurley from *Lost* proved himself to be the smartest person on the island. Lists are not bad. Lists are fine if used in moderation. But can we please show a little restraint on our usage of lists.

I hope you will revisit the site next week when I publish my list of 19 reasons why I believe that *The Walking Dead* is all happening inside Jack from *Lost*'s head. (Jonathan Postlewaite)

BREAKING: Donald Trump Issues Comprehensive Apology

Washington D.C – In an impromptu moment of transparency, one that is without precedent in modern politics, President Trump spoke to the nation last night and issued the following apologies:

“I would like to apologize that my economic initiatives have produced record low unemployment for 14 states, and near record lows for many, many others. Not to mention how many new jobs were created in my first year in office. I feel terrible that so many more people are having to work for a living. I would further like to apologize that my racist policies have created the lowest unemployment rate for the African American and Hispanic communities in the history of our country. My bad. That’s on me folks. Also, it’s totally my fault that the stock market continues to break record after record in gains. If there was something I could do to slow it down to Obummer level numbers, I would. This I can tell you.”

The President continued with off-the-cuff frankness.

“I feel terrible that for the first time in decades, my administration has actually pressured North Korea enough to bring them to the table to discuss denuclearization. Personally, I would love to live in a world where we constantly had to worry about that little guy (Kim Jong Un) having nukes at his disposal, but you can’t have everything

you want. Well, I can but I'm super rich. But most people can't have everything. Because they are not rich like me."

President Trump closed his address with a few more moments of candor and self-reflection.

"I'm really sorry about the tax cuts. It was a great idea because it would be letting so many people keep more of their money. But the results were not that great. Not that great. Your average middle-class family will only get about \$1,000 to \$2,000 of benefits from this tax cut. San Fran Nan (Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi) said that these cuts are like crumbs to most people. I am rich so I agree with her on that. Obviously. I was hoping it would be a lot more but people in this country make so little money they couldn't get a bigger tax break. People just need to do a better job of being rich. It's not that hard to be rich. Just inherit a lot of money. DONE! You know what I'm saying? Anyways, that's all I have for today. I can make this promise though – I will continue to do everything I can, as long as it doesn't interfere with my tweeting and golf, to make America great again. We're getting there. We are winning right now but we will win even more in the future. Just so much winning we are all going to get tired of it."

On Brotherhood, Inside Jokes and Built-In Best Friends For Life

Michael: *What comes before anything? What have we always said is the most important thing?*

George Michael: *Breakfast.*

Michael: *Family.*

George Michael: *Family, right. I thought you meant of the things you eat.*

Last Saturday night, as the clock struck 11:00 PM in Chicago, meaning it was midnight in South Carolina, I posted seemingly random lyrics of a 1990s Blackhawk song called "Postmarked Birmingham" to my brother Jeremy's Facebook wall. The following morning, I texted him different lyrics from the same song. He was not confused by any of this, because it is sort of a tradition between us. The reason it wasn't random is that the song, which is about a man who gets a letter from a woman who left him and he has no idea why she's writing from Alabama, mentions the date April 22. So every year on that date, we share a childhood memory, a song we bonded over. And also of the CD that I desecrated by listening to before giving it to him as a Christmas gift. Which he will never let me live down.

I love inside jokes. I realize they are annoying if you're on the outside so I try to keep them to a minimum in public. And while I share them with all sorts of people in my life, there is no doubt that the deepest versions I have are the ones that I share with those who were there every step of the way from the time I was old enough to have memories until the day I departed for college in Nashville: my four siblings.

Quite often when my brothers Jeremy, Ashley and I are texting, if two of us disagree about something, the third one will reply, "I'm with you fellas". Because we have laughed together at *O Brother Where Art Thou?* several times together. (Sometimes there doesn't have to be a disagreement and it just gets worked in the conversation anyway.) Similar are the phrases "Seven Bushes" and "No more questions" from *My Cousin*

Vinny. And I'm pretty sure when each of us turned 33 years old, one of the other two was there to text, "Today...he is...33 years old!" from *Three Amigos*.

It's not all TV and movies either. When we were very young, I once chased Jeremy through the house, angry at him. When we got to our bedroom he fell down so hard the whole house shook. He was completely still for a few seconds and I was terrified he was seriously hurt. Then he finally peeked at me and piped up, "I shook the whole house!" And I can still text him those words today and we laugh about it. On another occasion, Ashley and I were playing basketball with some friends and an older guy we knew, who was clearly out of shape, stepped on the court and said, "Let's see if I can still get rim." He clearly couldn't and probably never could, which made the scene quite unintentionally funny. And so this quote has come up during basketball many times. And then there was the time in the 80s we were eating at our family's favorite seafood buffet and another group got seated just after us. And one of the men boisterously and half-jokingly complained to the hostess, "We're six miles from the buffet!" Except he said "buffet" the way it looks phonetically. That comes up every time we eat seafood even now.

My brother Tracy is ten years older than me and was in college by the time I was in third grade but we still share these moments. Over 20 years ago at the beach were staying in an oceanfront house. And an older lady was out sunbathing just in front, really close to us. As we stood there on the second-floor porch, Tracy dared me \$5 to hit her with a tennis ball. I obviously declined. But later when the ball really did fall from the porch and I had to go down to get it, I threw it back up to Tracy and it hit the ledge of the porch, ricocheted back towards the ground and hit the woman, who for some reason got really mad about it. Tracy gave me the \$5 and we still laugh about it in 2018.

My sister, Kim, is the only sister but we still have our

inside jokes, too. Once, not long after she got married I was hanging out at her house. She needed some meat from her freezer, which was in a separate storage room off of the house. I went out to get it and there were wasps. Being terrified of them I reported back with no meat. Kim, who is also terrified of them, decided the situation called for desperate measures. We put on raincoats and hats and gloves—basically, we covered every part of our bodies—and armed ourselves with brooms and mops. And we successfully procured the meat. And Kim loves telling that story to this day.

Another time we were sharing a room at the National Free Will Baptist Convention with her husband Mark and their daughter Camille. Kim bought three 24-count bags of sugar donuts for the week. At the end of the week, they were all gone. Camille claimed to have eaten zero. Mark said he had about six. So that meant between Kim and I, we ate approximately 66 sugar donuts in four days. We agreed to assume we both ate 33 so no one had to take the blame for eating the most. And to this day, we can't talk about sugar donuts without laughing.

All inside jokes are not funny, though. Some are extremely meaningful in a more serious way. A few years ago when I was home for Christmas, Jeremy introduced me to a song that was a "[Stopped Me In My Tracks](#)" song for him, as Phill wrote about for REO. He had me listen to it. And after hearing it, he and I made a vow that any time one of us hears "Colder Weather" by the Zac Brown Band, we will pray for the other one. We text each other that title every now and then to remind each other of our vow. Jeremy even eventually made the song his ring tone so he would pray for me often.

The picture from above is from the 2013 Outback Bowl when Jadaveon Clowney knocked the Michigan RB's helmet off on a spectacular play that has been viewed millions of times on Youtube. The Gamecocks won the game on a Steve Spurrier drawn up and dialed up bomb with 11 second left. But neither of

those plays were what made the day truly special. It was getting to share those moments with my brothers and my dad. I don't remember it but after Clowney made the hit and forced the fumble, Ashley says that I said, "Who was that guy?!?" As if it was to say that it was so amazing I had to ask, even though I knew. Like responding to a superhero moment. It was a special time to relive over and over.

When I got married in 2015, Ashley gave one of the best men speeches and said our mother always told us when we were fighting as children that our siblings would be our best friends when we were adults. She was right. Boy, was she ever right. Because Kim, Tracy, Ashley and Jeremy absolutely know what I think of them. That no matter what happens, or how far from South Carolina I am, that, "I'm with you fellas". They truly are my best friends for life.



Young Boy Boycotts Company That Makes Boys Cots.

San Francisco – Tristan Moore, 10 years old, has officially announced that he is launching a boycott. His target? *Cots and Stuff*, a company based out of Johnson City, Tennessee, that makes, among other things, portable sleeping devices. Young Tristan chose this cot making company for his boycott when he heard about the other boycotts happening all over the country.

Says Tristan, “I didn’t know what a boycott was so I asked my parents and they said I’m only 10 years old and shouldn’t be worried about boycotts. I was still confused about boycotts when I remembered that Mrs. Riding (Tristan’s 4th-grade teacher) always tell us to break words down into smaller parts so that is what I did. **Boy Cotts**. So I looked around on the internet and found a company that made cots for boys. So now I’m boycotting a cot company that makes cots for boys. That made about as much sense as anything else.”

If that makes little sense, you are not alone. We pressed young Tristan for a better explanation on the boycott.

“Um... I don’t know. There was that lady on TV that people were boycotting and then there was all that Starbucks stuff. It seems like people love to boycott stuff. I thought it sounded fun. But I still have no idea what a boycott does. Maybe

someone that has boycotted can explain to me what a boycott is supposed to do. As far as I can tell it's just a funny word that gets a lot of people angry or excited and then it doesn't really do anything."

Maybe Tristan understands boycotts better than he realizes.

REO Pays Tribute: F. Leroy Forlines

I have lost count of the great Free Will Baptist leaders and individuals I have heard say Leroy Forlines had a profound impact on their Christian life. Teacher, writer, speaker, thinker, and short-term missionary, all of these were chapters in one of the greatest books in Free Will Baptist history. God continues to use his spiritual legacy in all of these roles, educating and inspiring many generations of Christians. His passage through the brief span of time given to all men and women has left a lasting and extremely significant footprint for many generations of disciples who have followed and are following his lead.

Forlines had felt a call to the ministry as a teenager. He was born in 1926 in Greenville, North Carolina, the eldest son of John and Leta Forlines. Early in his life, he worked as a mechanic at Elbert Smith's Esso Station. In October 1944 at the age of 17, he converted to Christianity. Two years later he decided God was calling him to preach. So, in 1948 he moved to Nashville to begin his education for the ministry at Free Will Baptist Bible College. During his time as a student, he preached his very first sermon on a downtown Nashville street corner. It was also during his early years that he was deeply

impacted by L.C. Johnson's class on Arminian Theology. Throughout these college years, he had a strong role in student body leadership, serving as the president of his 1952 graduating class.

After graduation, he immediately entered the ministry, serving as pastor of First Free Will Baptist Church in Newport News, Virginia from June 1952 to August 1953. He resigned this role and returned to Free Will Baptist Bible College to join the teaching faculty, a role which he would continue to hold full-time for almost 40 years. In 1957 he met and fell in love with Carolyn Le Fay Gilbert. They married and had two sons, Jon and James.

During those early years in the professorship, he was continuing his own education. In 1959 he attained his M.A. from the Winona Lake School of Theology. In 1962 he earned his B.D. from the Northern Baptist Theological Seminary. In 1970 he earned a Th.M from the Chicago Graduate School of Theology.

In 1963, he began working with the Commission for Theological Integrity and was made its chairman. He would remain highly involved in its leadership for the next 50 years. He officially and publicly stepped down as its chairman at the 2012 National Convention.

Although Forlines retired from a full-time position from FWBBC in 1992, he has remained involved in its work, being granted the honorary title, Professor Emeritus. In this capacity, he continued to teach at the college until five years ago. But he kept fairly regular hours in his Welch office until the college campus moved to Gallatin. He has also taught overseas throughout his retirement. Beginning in 1996, with the assistance of Free Will Baptist International Missions he made numerous trips to lecture in Ukraine and Russia to Baptist pastors.

Forlines's ministry has spanned six decades. He has written

multitudes of great Christian articles and books during his long ministry. Among his best and most influential may be Biblical Ethics, Biblical Systematics, Morals and Orthodoxy, The Doctrine of Perseverance, The Romans Commentary, Classical Arminianism, and The Quest for Truth. His entire career has been characterized by writing book after book. He just finished another one for which he is now seeking publication. For his hours of writing and study, he uses an office which Sylvan Park Free Will Baptist Church graciously provided after the school's relocation. Welch has an office waiting for him in its Gallatin facilities into which he will soon relocate once again.

Today, Leroy Forlines is a healthy 91-year-old, having celebrated his most recent birthday in November. He and Fay continue to reside in the house they have lived in for almost 55 years.

Ranting Ever On: Mondays

Let's take a brief look at six days of the week: There's Tuesday, not a bad sort, really, but rather non-descript; Wednesday, better than Tuesday because it marks the halfway point of the week, and there is Awana to look forward to; Thursday, which is a bit more interesting and funny than Tuesday especially if there's a good comedy on that evening (an event which is increasingly rare); Friday, the coolest, most awesome of all the weekdays and mark of the march into the lazy, hazy weekend (theoretically); Saturday, probably the most enjoyable day of the entire week of all civilized society; Sunday, the glorious day of fellowship with God and His disciples here on earth. Your opinion of these will change from person to person based on your lifestyle and habits, but

most will be united on the subject of my loathing, the epicenter of my rant: Mondays.

I doubt that very many people out there are thinking, "My goodness, he hates Mondays? How very unusual" or "I can't believe he would stoop to such a low view of such a kindly, fun-loving day." No, I doubt that. We all know that Monday is horrible (for most of us). It's famous for that status. Even Garfield the iconic cat hates Mondays. Garfield who just sleeps, eats, and watches TV all day every day. It's the February of the week that we experience at least four times a month, sometimes more.

Monday is so horrible because...well, it just is. I don't know why, exactly. Just a freak of nature, I guess. That and you're just coming off the sugar rush level highs of the weekend. Also, you're beginning the mundaneness and drudgery of the work week all over again. So I guess those are two pretty good reasons. I guess. All I know for sure is that it is the day of the devil. Let us unite in an international movement to ban all Mondays. We'll have the famous Mamas & Papas song, "Monday, Monday" as our theme song. The song actually starts out rather pro-Mondays ("Monday, Monday, so good to me; Monday morning, it was all I hoped it would be") so one might jump to the conclusion that it is full of lies and that the truth is not in. But then it launches into great truths like how we can't trust Monday and that it just turns out that way, that every other day is fine and dandy except for Monday's which are always tear-inducing. Let us stand together and rage against the day, my brethren, let us sing our songs of revolution. Yet, sadly, my friends, I greatly fear that Monday, Monday, is here to stay. Oh Monday, Monday, how we despiseth thee. OH MONDAY, MONDAY!!!

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.

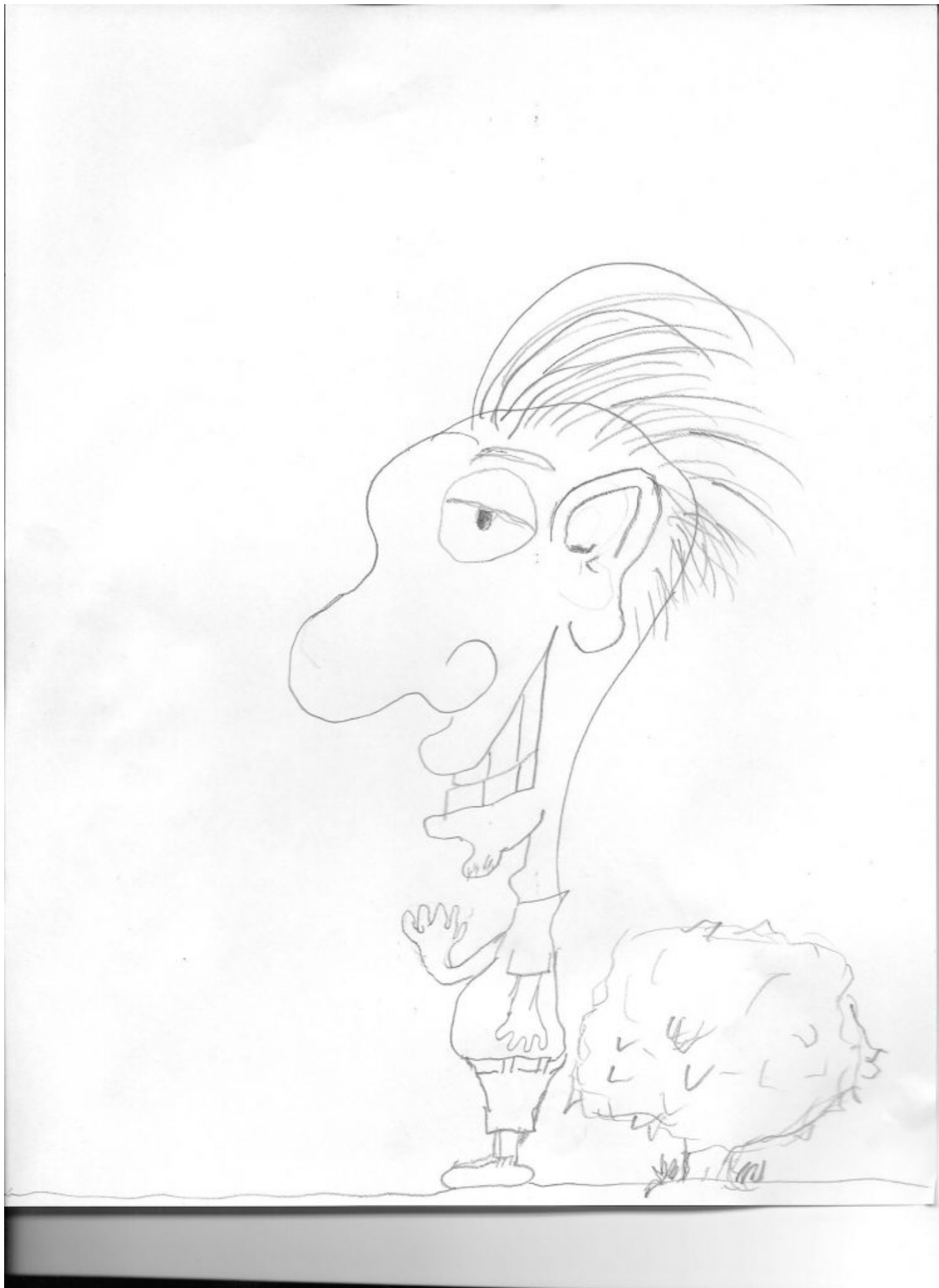
The younger stretched out his hand, took the pencil, and lunged at the elder. He stabbed him then. He stabbed him with force, anger, and indignation. The elder stood there, shards of a pencil lodged in his hand, confusion etched on his face. How had it come to this?

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.

Millions Watch Porn Star on

Sunday Night, Some on 60 Minutes

Continuing an unbroken record that stretches years, millions of Americans sat down Sunday night for around 30 minutes to watch a porn actress.

“I do this once a week usually. Sometimes twice” said one young man who wished to remain anonymous. “I’m sure I’ve seen Stormy Daniels before, but it was weird seeing her with clothes on.”

There have been over 7 billion web searches for pornography since the start of 2015. Also, 1 in 5 mobile searches is for pornographic content.

“Wait, she actually has a life?” another anonymous man commented. “I always thought her entire existence was for my personal exploitive use. I’m really surprised to think of her as, well, another human being.”

24% of smartphone owners admit to having pornographic material on their mobile handset.

Not everyone was happy with the porn star’s fully clothed, non-sexual appearance on 60 minutes.

A third anonymous man remarked, “I am a big fan of Miss Daniels, but I feel like she really sold out Sunday night. It seemed very shameless of her.”

64% of Christian men and 15% of Christian women say they watch porn at least once a month.[1. All stats courtesy of [Covenant Eyes](#).]