

SPONSORED CONTENT

# The Link

## What is the Link?

**M**y name is Haley Spitzfaden, and I'm one of the editors for the Link. What is the Link? What is this page doing in my newspaper? Who are all of these crazy high school artists, poets, photographers, and journalists? I am here to shed some light.

In 1970, ConVal High School was built. Soon thereafter, the ConVal literary magazine, originally called "Between the Lines," and most recently "Pulp," was established. In addition, the school newspaper, most recently called, "The ConVal Current" was established as well. Over time, these two publications had their ups-and-downs, both flourishing at times and of course suffering, as all high school clubs do.

In 2012, I was a freshman at ConVal and was considering joining the newspaper club. On the first day of meetings for The ConVal Current, I was sick. I thought this meant that I would not be able to take part in this club. Luckily, however, a friend signed my name and put down my email indicating that I was interested, despite my absence. By the end of that year, the editor had asked me, and our Link layout editor Sarah Kolk, to be junior editors. We jumped at the chance.

One day in 2013, I remember our senior editor came rushing up to Kolk and I with great news about the newspaper. "We have staples!" She exclaimed, and we rejoiced with her. Jumping up and down hugging. Staples in our printed newspaper meant no more folding every copy of every issue ourselves, and it also meant that we had a full six pages of content. We were doing well, and making progress with our publication.

Two years later in our junior year, we decided to transfer our print version of the newspaper and take the paper online. We thought we could run our issues online through a website rather than spending our budget on paper. This was yet another exciting time for our small publication, and we hoped that it would help our staff and readership grow.

However, the opposite proved true. But the end of that year, Kolk and I saw that the ConVal Current was dying. Our staff was small, and our publications were never on time. No matter how hard we tried, we were always struggling to find content, and readership was low. We bemoaned our situation with our advisor, Mrs. Bastoni. She asked us to get in touch with the students who ran the literary magazine, Pulp. We discovered they were having similar issues. So we had a large meeting - at least 25 students from both organizations - and we decided to work together. Since this new project would be a combination of the newspaper and literary magazine, we voted on a new name, and the Link was born.

We decided we wanted our publication to connect the community to our school and our school to the community. So, one of our first decisions was to get in touch with The Ledger-Transcript. To our great joy editor Ben Conant agreed to help us.

The Link will be part literary magazine, part newspaper, informing the town of the adventures, events, activities, art, and thoughts percolating at ConVal. Students will do all the work writing poems, drawing pictures, laying out the pages, interviewing, and more.

Looking back, it has been quite a journey. Pulp and The Current have celebrated multiple advisors, changes in student leadership, staples, publishing digitally and now back to print. And now, this year, we are excited to be sharing our work on a much grander scale. So, we invite you, the Monadnock community, to take this journey with us, to Link our school with our community.



Clockwise from top left: 3D artwork of a blue jay by Paris MacKeigan; photo of Riley Young by Jordan Cooper; a ceramic piece by Adam Lundsted; a pencil self portrait by Zoe Smith; Link photo by Mackenzie Burnside; anime drawing by Shelly Parhiala; pencil drawing by Oliver Ward.

## Linking Proud Partners:

Monadnock Ledger-Transcript proudly supports ConVal High School's student publication **The Link**

The Link offers opportunities to expand students' journalism skills while sharing an inside look at student life with Ledger-Transcript readers.

Check out "In Our Schools" (second Tuesday each month) and our scholastic coverage year round.

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## Humans of ConVal - By Lily Denehy and Riley Young



What got you involved in politics?  
"Seeing things change I want to see change, and a way to make those changes."



What advice would you give your past self?  
"Don't pluck your eyebrows so much."



What do you think the hardest part of your day is?  
"Waking up."



What are you doing right now?  
"I'm watching Jetman Youtubes."

# A day in the life: living and learning with cerebral palsy

By Jessica Fiasconaro

"During times of great vulnerability and challenge, we are ironically called upon to access tremendous mental strength, hope and faith often against a tide of our own despair. It's not easy to do this, but it is vital to our ability to support our forward momentum, lest we become swept up in our own darkness. When you can't find your faith borrow someone else's until you remember where you left your own." - Michele Shusterman, CP Daily Living

It was a nightmare. A real nightmare. But it couldn't have been a nightmare, because in nightmares you're asleep. And I was definitely awake. Each morning I go through the motions of a typical teenage high school student. Sometimes if I get up early enough, I like to think that I can even make myself look like one. (you know, minus having cerebral palsy, which for me, comes with the accessory of a wheelchair). Cerebral palsy is a neurological condition which makes my muscles stiff and hard to use. But maybe I shouldn't say I can make myself look like a typical teenager, because actually, I'm not the one doing it. I have a great staff who comes in at six in the morning Monday through Friday to help me get ready for school.

This is what a typical morning looks like.  
1 a.m.: Darn it, I have to pee! Should I get up and go, knowing I probably won't be able to be positioned as comfortably as I was before? Most nights I end up falling back asleep, but if I chose to get up, my choices are: Pee on the commode and then wait 10-15 minutes for the night supervisor to help me get back in bed, or I could use a bedpan and risk peeing all over the bed which requires rolling over a bunch of times while they change the sheets.  
6 a.m.: Still gotta pee, but am relieved when I hear the footsteps of my staff coming through my bedroom door. 6:02 a.m.: Chrissy, takes my clothes and begins hurriedly dressing my bottom half so that I can get to the bathroom. Fun fact: Most people wake up in the morning and put their pants on one leg at a time. I can do two legs at a time. It's one of my many talents.  
6:05 a.m.: She helps me get out of bed and onto the commode chair (this is what is called a "transfer", moving from one place to another. Frankly, I'm not too keen on that term. It's not like I'm transferring schools or something, well actually I did. That is part of the nightmare, but we'll get into that later). My type of transfer requires somebody to lift the upper portion of my body weight while I do my best to put weight on the bottom part of my body. Sometimes my legs decide they don't really feel like weight bearing, so we do another transfer



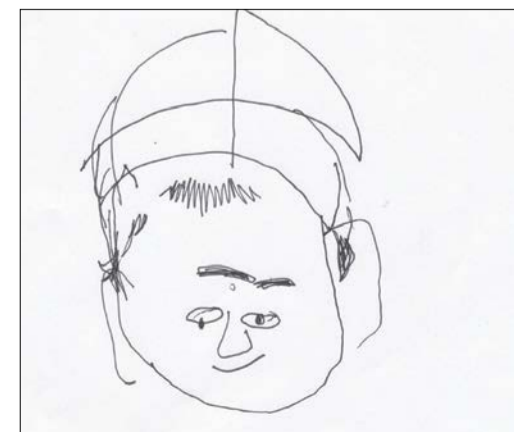
back to my wheelchair.  
6:10 a.m.: She helps me to get my upper body dressed, taking off my pajama shirt and putting on a shirt for the day. (I have to lay everything out the night before for time's sake, because even with assistance, these tasks take me much longer to complete for me than they might for you)  
6:12 a.m.: We brush my teeth and wash my face (these things I like to do myself at night when there is more time to practice Assisted Daily Living Skills.)  
6:20 a.m.: Chrissy brushes and styles my hair how I tell her. (Hair styles vary with the choice of outfit, of course)  
6:30 a.m.: I get my makeup put on for me (and we hope that my startle reflex won't go off and smear eyeliner everywhere)  
6:38 a.m.: I take my medications. In the mornings, I have 4 prescription drugs to take and swallowing the pills isn't always the easiest task for me - swallowing requires muscles too!)  
6:48 a.m.: The bus arrives in two minutes, leaving just enough time to get my coat on and rush out the door. It's freezing on top of the mountain at Crotched Mountain Rehabilitation Center, a residential school/facility for people of various abilities.  
6:50 a.m.: I arrive at the bus and the bus driver uses the controls to lower the ramp. I hope it works because it's -10' out and I don't wanna sit out here any longer. If it doesn't, Crotched Mountain will then have to arrange transportation to get me to school. I have to maneuver into a tiny space to get my chair tied down without running over any of the mechanisms, which I almost never do successfully. Before, I would get driven to school in my handicapped accessible van where no tie downs were needed. There was a device called an EZ Lock that was mounted to the floor of my van and I would drive in. The EZ lock would make contact with my chair and ta-da-ah! Set to go. I also had the option to make Dunkin's, McDonald's or Marylou's runs before



Jessica Fiasconaro asked people to say the first word they thought of when she said "cerebral palsy," and Sasha Brock turned the results into this word cloud graphic.

school, which I don't think the bus driver would appreciate doing now.  
7:33 a.m.: We arrive at school. My aide, Tammy, meets me on the bus to untie the chair and then I get lowered down on the ramp. I start my school day every morning by going into the Health Office to see Gretchen and Judi. (Who by the way, are some of the best nurses I've ever met and one of my favorite things about ConVal. Besides the food, of course! Sorry, Barnstable.) Anyway, I see every morning before class so I can have a private place to reposition my body in the chair. Having spastic CP, my body moves involuntarily and shifts in positions that aren't really comfortable. Sometimes it takes six or seven tries before I get comfortable, which usually makes me late for class.  
7:38 a.m.: I arrive in my first block class, AP English with Mr. Lambert. This is a good way to start my day, because English is my favorite subject. Tammy gets my books, iPad, and other materials I'll need and then I am ready to learn!  
10 p.m.: I am laying in bed, tired from the events of the day as my mind begins to quiet down for sleep.  
6 a.m.: Chrissy opens my door and I prepare

to start the events of the day all over again; sleepwalking in a tired slumber. I've learned that acceptance doesn't always come easy when you live with something that sets you apart from others, and I'm still searching to find that acceptance at ConVal.



This art assignment required students to draw a self portrait without picking up their pencil or looking down at the paper.



Logo by Sage Cawthern

Overheard in ConVal: "I will rate all humor on a scale of not funny, to Parks and Rec"



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# Creating community at the Makerspace

By Oliver Ward

“A gym for people who want to exercise their creativity.” That is how Roy Schlieben, executive director of Monadnock Art x Tech, explained the makerspace. While the makerspace movement has been around for a few years, Schlieben is helping Peterborough get its own little slice. Officially opened in September of this year, Monadnock Art x Tech is Peterborough’s very own makerspace. Schlieben said, “it presents a unique solution to the need to support artists, craftspeople, engineers and entrepreneurs in the region [and to] get businesses off the ground.” Put more simply, a makerspace is a place where people with ideas can turn them into a reality.

Monadnock Art x Tech works, as Schlieben said, like a gym. Makers pay for a monthly membership which gives them access to tools like 3D printers, various hand tools, and in the near future, a laser cutter. Anyone over the age of 16 can apply for a membership, although some tools require someone 18 years of age or older to supervise. Classes are also offered and high school students are encouraged to come. Examples of classes include guitar building, app design, 3D printing and more. Some classes, like home brewing, are aimed at a more adult demographic, but, in general, Monadnock Art x Tech is focused on helping young people turn their ideas into reality. A limited number of free memberships

are even being offered to high school juniors and seniors who want to utilize this new and helpful local resource.

To get a firsthand look, I enrolled in the six-week guitar making class with my dad and fellow Link contributor Sophia MacKeigan. Unfortunately, the group is primarily adults due to lack of publicity at ConVal. However, the class is very teen friendly and Sophia and I have been given the opportunity to build our dream guitars as well as learn about sound and electricity in the process. The makerspace offers many unique opportunities like guitar making and, as awareness is gained, even more will be created. If you can think it, chances are it can be made at the makerspace.

Classes are currently available to high schoolers, as are memberships. Monadnock Art x Tech is located in the Monadnock Plaza in Peterborough.

The makerspace in Peterborough was created when a group of artists, engineers, builders and business leaders came together to form a space for entrepreneurial and creative people to work together. According to Schlieben, Monadnock Art x Tech stands at the intersection of art and technology, which explains the x in the name. Anyone interested in checking out the amazing opportunities to create can go to [www.monadnockartxtech.org](http://www.monadnockartxtech.org) for more information and feel free to get in touch with director Roy Schlieben at [membership@monadnockartxtech.org](mailto:membership@monadnockartxtech.org).



Photo by Oliver Ward

Sophia MacKeigan unsheathes the neck of the guitar she'll build at the Monadnock Art X Tech makerspace club.

## ‘RAIN’ - By Michelle Jarest

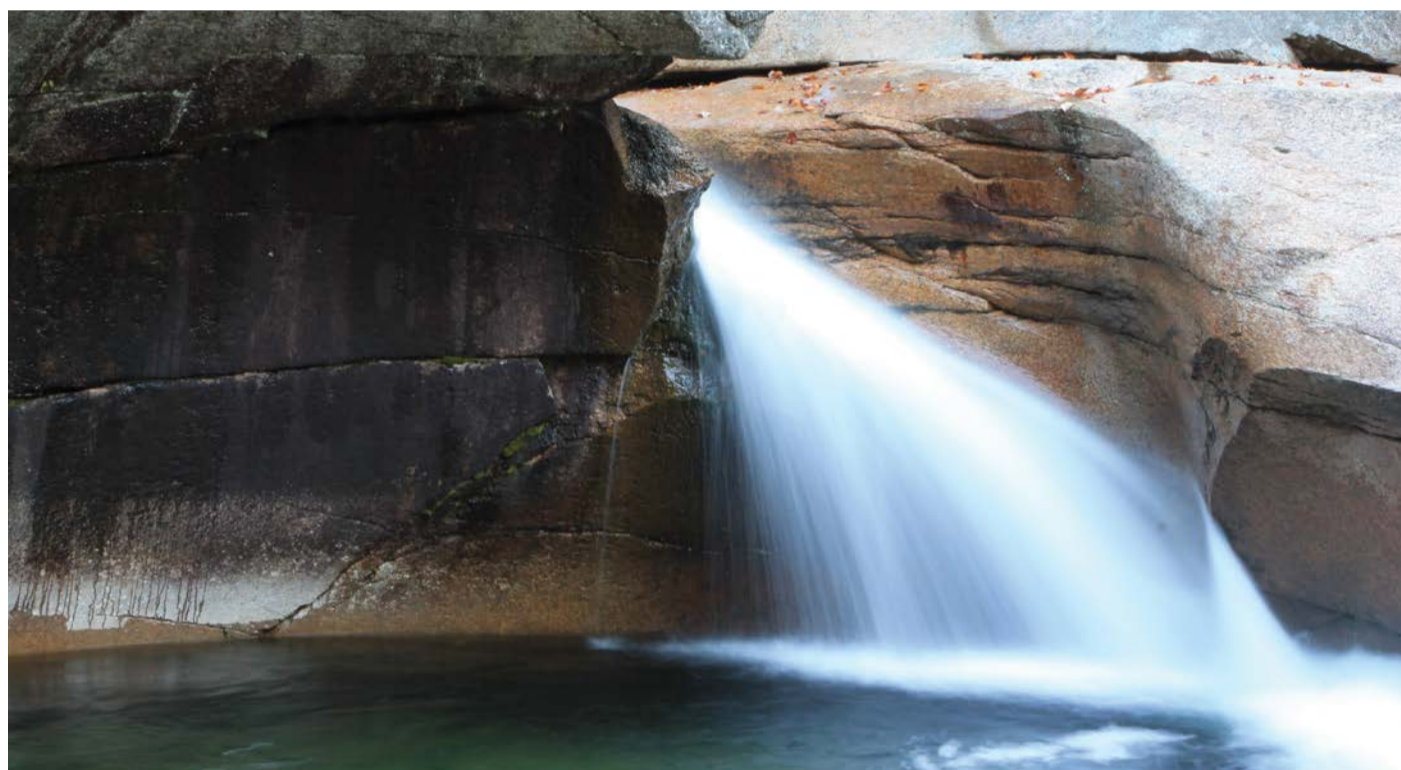


Photo by Aidan Boyle

Aidan Boyle and his father went out together to practice taking photos with slow shutter speed as part of a class assignment.

Rain. That one word, that one thing, has so many different meanings. Sometimes, I find myself in a downpour. Drenched with stress, responsibility, and sadness that soaks through my clothes and is absorbed into my skin, overwhelming me.

Sometimes, I'm surrounded by only a sprinkle. Small droplets of worry or fear that will linger in the back of my mind until I get just wet enough to realize that I had been neglecting their presence, and I am forced to wipe them off of my forehead. Sometimes, the rain doesn't last very long. I'll have those days where nothing seems to be going my way and I find myself in a rapid, angry, frustrated drizzle - the kind that could be refreshing, but instead it stings your skin and weighs you down, making your feet heavy so that you're forced to slosh through muddy water to get where you want to go. Sometimes, the rain lasts forever. I wander with rainclouds suspended over my head for days. No matter what I do, sunshine can't break the storm clouds. No matter how far I run, the cloud

never fails to follow. The raindrops in this cloud aren't very big, so no one else ever notices them. The pace of the rain is constant, nothing irregular that would catch anyone's eye.

I think this is the worst kind of rain. I never know for certain when it will end because it seems to always be there. I have tried to stop the storm, I really have. Nobody ever sees the clouds hanging over me. They never notice all of this rain that has been following me for so long because it's just normal. There is nothing special about this weather that I sense/rain is just a part of life. But the rain has been coming down for so long; it has been stinging my face all this time; it has soaked my entire being with so much water that I find it impossible to do anything anymore. I want to get rid of the grey, dark ocean that has formed around me. I want to see sunshine again, feeling the warm rays against my skin - but I can't. I'm tired and the rain has won.

So the only thing I can do now is tell everyone who ever ignored the clouds over

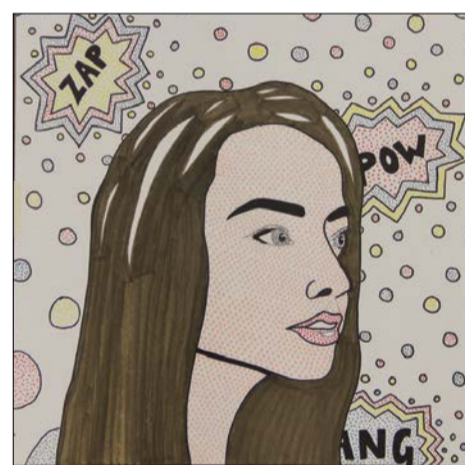
my head what's happened to me. At least they won't have to wonder - not that they would anyway. Just before the sea engulfs everything I've ever known and ever had, I shout. They probably won't believe me but I say that I can't escape the storm and that I will soon drown. After all, I'm the only one who's ever seen and felt the rain.

Instead of finally sinking into the murky depths like I had expected, I felt a warm hand grasp mine. Then I felt more hands support my legs and back. I was lifted further and further out of the water until I was standing on solid ground again. I looked around to see all of the people that had helped me escape the churning waters, but all I could see was the sun and its bright rays warmed my skin. Just like I'd always hoped. I realized that the storm clouds were gone and I was still tired, but the rain had not won. I did. I have a voice and the rain will never take that from me. The rain cannot wash away the sun, it can only hide it. But now I know the sun is still there and I can always reach it, even if I need a little help.



Photo by Yamari David

Anthony David shows off his ConVal fashion.



Alexandra Williams drew this self portrait.



Artwork from Mrs. Mitschmyer's class by Evie Iwanowicz.

## Revolution

By Emma Canty- Carrel

Everyone has that something that they are encouraged to do, and probably want to do, but don't do because they are too afraid. “The Revolution” was that something for Caleb Putnam and many other students.

I encourage all of those who might be scared to visit “the Revolution.” I promise no guillotines will be found in the conference room at Monadnock Community Hospital where this group meets.

Founded and run by ConVal Social Studies teacher Eric Bowman, the Revolution is an ethics project that has been an outlet for students and teachers alike since 2003. Having studied religion, philosophy, and ethics in graduate school, Bowman was looking for a way to put “belief into practice.” He did this by becoming a teacher, and going on to form “The

Revolution Ethics Project.” His goal was to create a forum for students to discuss ethics, faith, ideas, and sometimes politics as it applies to their everyday life.

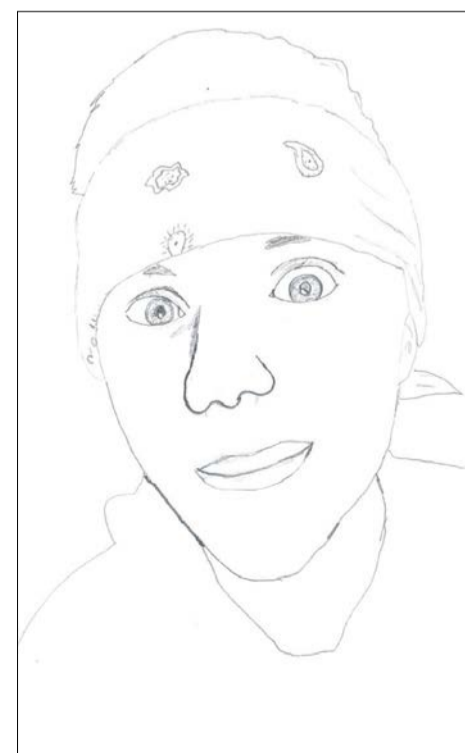
The nickname “the Revolution” was actually coined by Bowman and the group of ConVal high school graduates who made up the group in 2009. Since then, “the Revolution” has widened its scope to mostly current ConVal students and graduates. However, other community members are welcome to join the discussion. Bowman hopes the group will, “grow beyond our little corner of New Hampshire.”

Meeting Wednesday nights at 6:30pm, the group discusses some of the great philosophical thinkers such as Nietzsche, Tolstoy, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Gandhi, and Ludwig Wittgenstein.

ConVal Junior Caleb Putnam describes “the Revolution” as an “opportunity for people to talk about an interesting issue and go into it in depth.” Everyone is encouraged to participate in the discussion, but if that's not your speed, try just sitting back and observing the variety of opinions. It is truly enlightening and, at times, downright hilarious.

After senior Haley Spitzfaden finally made it to her first meeting one year ago, she realized that it was basically a culmination of all of her favorite things: discussing anything and everything, explore what is wrong in the world, and try to figure out how to change it.

And so, I urge you to put yourself out there. This is an opportunity that could greatly change your perspective, how you think about life, and it might even change the world.



Self portrait by Ben Wray in Mr. Bills graphic design class.



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## GSA: A missing link at ConVal

By Sophia MacKeigan

If you're new to ConVal you may be a little curious as to why we don't have a Gay-Straight Alliance club. This is, after all, a high school, and so gender and sexuality are topics we are curious about. Having a Gay-Straight Alliance club provides a platform where students have the ability to discuss such topics. For many high schoolers, having this type of safe place is crucial. So why don't we have one?

This year, the GSA has been put on hold after losing an advisor. Since it is required for clubs to have teachers supervise them, no advisor means no club. But, between sports, drama productions, music, and countless other clubs, spare teachers are few and far between.

However, lack of a teacher and a club, doesn't mean the need disappears.

Dylan Loll, a junior, has been working very hard this entire past quarter to find a new advisor. "There's some kids who can't be themselves at home 'cause they're not out yet to their parents," Loll continued. "I remember going to GSA as an ally, and I ended up discovering who I was and what I identified as."

"There's so many clubs that are fun and stuff, and GSA is too, but it's really about being a safe space, and helping people find who they are, and feel less alone in their struggles," said Chris Badejo, a junior.

"I just feel like ConVal doesn't have enough awareness that this is a thing here," said agreed Loll.

Both Loll and Badejo said they are hoping a GSA club will return

before they graduate. "It should be a 'need' not a 'want' kind of thing," said Badejo.

Badejo and Loll are only two among the many others who work at ConVal still to support and the queer community within the school.

Minority students at ConVal don't report feeling turned away. In fact, most students at ConVal feel supported. They acknowledge that there will always be harmful jerks in every kind of social setting, and high school is far from the exception. But misunderstandings and harmful interactions aren't the focus when it comes to queer issues or conversations anyway.

As with society at large, the main problem within ConVal, isn't some classic-evil – burned at the stake for being gay story – it's more a lack of understanding. Not having a GSA leaves students feeling that there isn't a place to work towards understanding. Today, it's not as common for students to be made to feel like lesser people because of who they love or how they identify. Students don't report being told they, "...will be damned to hell forever if people find out." Instead, students at ConVal are more worried about 'coming out of the closet' because they're not sure how to explain their perspective: that gender is a far broader term than 'boy' and 'girl' and that often one's birth gender has practically nothing to do with it. Students want a place to share their feelings about how popular culture represents them. Having a GSA at ConVal would provide this. Students know that in order to understand, to communicate and to discuss there must be an exchange between groups, and on the topics of LGBTQIA+ issues, the local high school GSA is a good place to start.



A 3D cardinal made of paper strips made by Mackenzie Lucas.

## Pipeline should not pass

A Science Investigative Assignment for Bio Class

By Bailey Robbins-Ogo

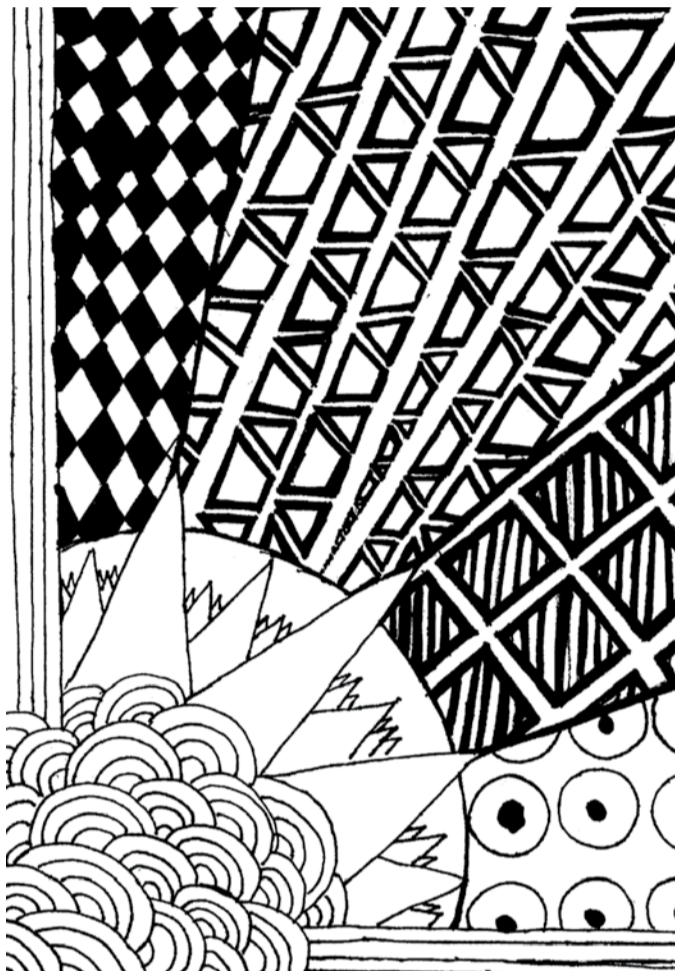
The New Hampshire pipeline, also known as the NED (Northeast Energy Direct Pipeline) was proposed by two huge and very wealthy energy corporations, TGP (Tennessee gas pipeline) and KM (Kinder Morgan Energy). This pipeline will stretch for about 418 miles across Pennsylvania, New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts and New Hampshire. 77 miles of which will stretch across the southern part of New Hampshire. Along with this pipeline they also have to build 9 new compression stations, 13 new meter stations, and 12 modifications or relocations of existing ones, and possible building of processing plants and distribution factories. I am strongly against the building of this Pipeline, mainly for three reasons: the fact we can't use it even if it runs through our state or town, the dangers of having this pipe, and the environmental damage it will cause.

My first point is that they are trying to put a big "natural" gas pipe through our towns and state and we will get hardly any of the gas that goes through this pipe. They proposed some numbers on how much gas we will receive and it is appalling. This pipeline will carry 2.2 billion cubic feet a day of "natural" gas, of which 600-700 million cubic feet a day will be given to New England. Also in one of Kinder Morgan statements they say, "Because of its close proximity, the NED New Hampshire pipeline would provide the opportunity for gas service to some of the following towns: Keene, Swanzey, Rindge, Jaffrey, Amherst, and New Ipswich among others." but then in very small text at the bottom of the paper they say, "Kinder Morgan currently does not own or operate local distribution systems, and this is not in our business model." This statement means that they plan to put a pipeline through those towns and there is a possibility of making local distribution systems, but in their plan for this pipeline there is no plan for local distribution.

My second argument against this proposal is the dangers that this pipe brings to our small towns and communities. These pipes are for the most part safe but there is always that what if, the compression station along the pipeline are very prone to explosion but gas is not visible at if there is a leak in the pipe near the facility and a spark or anything goes off the entire facility could ignite. Also leaks of aging and existing pipelines are a noticeable contribution to climate change and threatening public health. Also the danger of emptying our wallets, we will pay much higher taxes and just for us not being able to use the gas. Kinder Morgan states, "In addition to NED lowering natural gas prices, it will also lower electric prices since 52% of the New England electric grid is currently fueled by natural gas." but they don't tell you until much later in the proposal that us New Englanders will be paying extra on their taxes for 5-10 years. Keep in mind the harm this causes to our atmosphere, and the economical cost this will bring to the common taxpayers.

My last argument on this proposal is that it will cause devastation to our environment. Kinder Morgan said in their statement that the area they want to lay the pipe has to have a 125 foot clearance, width wise. But keep in mind this pipe goes on for 418 miles. They also have to clear any trees or any sort of vegetation in that 125' clearance of the pipe, so 418 miles of just mud and dirt. This will leave so many animals without their home and may even cut through your backyard, yes, that's legal, this company (if passed) has permission to build on your property and on state property at will. Anything in their way that may obstruct the pipe or cause damage to it will be removed or destroyed. So for all of you hunters, environmentalist, and tree huggers, say NO to this pipeline because it can and will kill our environment.

In conclusion the pipeline will cause more harm than good, and should not be passed. The only thing this pipe benefits is the wallets of the companies down south trying to build this pipe, TGP and KM, so if we pass the bill that allows the construction of this pipe than we are making some southern business owners rich, killing our environment and endangering our own people. So when people ask you Yes or No to the Pipeline, look them straight in the eyes and say NO.



An "adult coloring book page" from Mary Goldthwaite-Gagne's art class.



Bridget Grady drew this pencil self-portrait in art class.

## Student-Directed Plays

By Marisa Bernabeo

On October 16, the annual ConVal Student Directed Plays Festival was held in the Lucy Hurlin Theater. It showcased three different plays directed by students, two of which were also written by students. The four fifteen-minute shows featured were: "Children Are Not Coloring Books," written and directed by Nick Batty. The play highlighted the issue of lack of acceptance for gay youth in the modern religious family. "Dear Diary," which was written and directed by Mya Poluchov, about the story of one teen's struggle with depression. "Pity The Fool," written by D.M. Larson, and directed by Ingrid Aho. This play was a comedic romp surrounding the bizarre events of one art gallery showing. And, "Blackout," a surreal horror-thriller written and directed by student Patrick Sherlock. The effort put in by the actors, directors, and stage helpers resulted in four unique and interesting plays.

Behind the scenes of each play a lot of hard work and time was put in. The rehearsals were entirely guided by the student directors who had to step up and take charge of their show in order to make their vision a reality. Each director planned their own rehearsal schedule, and had to find ways to work with and prepare their actors. Nick Batty, director of, "Children Are Not Coloring Books," said the experience taught him a lot. "Theatre is a very positive and organic art form. So when we all got together during our technical rehearsals... it was a great atmosphere and all of the actors and directors strengthened [their plays]... in a rather short period of time".

However, the learning process did not stop once the plays were performed. After each play was shown, three adjudicators were available to address the directors and actors, and give feedback. The adjudicators were ConVal alumni and college student Sarah Hurley, Jason Lambert, a ConVal English teacher and actor, and Keith Stevens, producer of The Peterborough Players. Actor Jason Frank of "Pity the Fool" said of the adjudication process, "It was incredibly helpful for me (as an actor) to hear the opinions of such established theatrical connoisseurs. I believe that both myself and my peers really benefited from this experience."

This collaboration between the students at ConVal and the local community was a beneficial and informative experience. From the directors sharing their art, to the actors lending their performances, to the adjudicators giving advice and sharing ideas, the festival ended up being a melting pot of positive experiences.



Bandsaw box made by Sam Klint in Mr. Ewing's woodworking course. Photo by ConVal Alumni Hannah Henderson.

Overheard in ConVal: "It's like as big as a tater tot" \*referring to a grape\*\*



## SPONSORED CONTENT

# Clubs

### MONDAY

- Spanish Club meets every Monday after school until the late bus, in Room 119. Mr. Kennedy and Ms. Pacheco are the advisers. The Spanish Club also sells pizza every Wednesday in the Link, right after the bell rings at 2:20. \$1 for a small slice, and \$2 for a big one. Contact vpacheco@conval.edu or rkennedy@conval.edu with questions.
- German Club meets Mondays after school until the late bus in Frau Hodgden's room. Contact chodgden@conval.edu with questions.
- French Club meets Mondays after school until the late bus in the French room (#118). Mr. Bickford is the adviser; contact gbickford@conval.edu with any questions.
- The ConVal Dance Team meets Mondays after school from 3:00 to 4:00 in the cafeteria.
- Anime Club meets Mondays after school until the late bus in Mr. O'Brien's room. Contact gobrien@conval.edu with any questions.

### TUESDAY

- Ocean Bowl meets after school every Tuesday from 4:30 to 6:00 in Mr. Cloutier's room. You can contact kcloutier@conval.edu with questions.
- Equestrian Club meets on the first and third Tuesday of every month in the Peterborough town library at 2:30. Contact snixon@conval.edu with questions.
- ConVal's literary magazine/newspaper Link meets Tuesdays in TASC in Ms. Bastoni's room in the DLC. The Link will accept submissions of art, writing, poetry, and photography for publication. Submissions can be scanned (if visual artwork) in Ms. Bastoni's room. Writing, poetry, and photo submissions can be emailed to conval.link@gmail.com. Contact abastoni@conval.edu with any questions.
- Envirothon meetings are held on Tuesdays after school until the late bus in Ms. Wood's room. Contact dwood@conval.edu with

questions.

### WEDNESDAY

- The Revolution Ethics Project meets Wednesday nights from 6:30 to 8:30 in conference rooms one and two at the Monadnock Community Hospital. Community members and students are welcome. Contact ebowman@conval.edu with questions.
- Math Team practices two Wednesdays in a row in TASC in room 210 before attending meets. Upcoming meets will be on Dec. 16, Jan 2, and Mar. 2. The adviser is Mr. Morris; you can email him at gmmorris@conval.edu with any questions.

### THURSDAY

- History Club meets every Thursday after school until the late bus in Mr. Bowman's room. Email ebowman@conval.edu with any questions.
- SOUL (Student Organization Unified in Leadership) meets every Thursday in TASC in room 211. Ms. Ingram advises. New members are welcome!

### FRIDAY

- The ConVal Maker's Club meets every Friday after school until the late bus in Ms. Wallace's room. Contact bwallace@conval.edu with questions.
- Art Club meets Fridays after school in Mr. Putnam's room.
- Thespian Society Meetings are the first Friday of every month, in the LHT, after school until the late bus. All are welcome.
- The Bridge the Gap bible study group meets every Friday from 2:25 to 3:00 for bible study and religious discussion in room 118. All people interested in the Christian faith are welcome. If you have any questions, contact skrapohl@conval.edu.

### SUNDAY

- ConVal's Interact community service club meets the first Sunday of every month from 7:30 to 8:00 in the Peterborough Community Center. Mrs. Fletcher advises; contact her at jfletcher@conval.edu with any questions.

### OTHER

- Chemistry Club meets Mondays and/or Tuesdays after school until the late bus in Ms. Milne's room. Contact mmilne@conval.edu with any questions.
- ConVal's Christian Prayer Group meets every morning for 5 to



Photo by Mackenzie Burnside

7 minutes in the VLACS Lab (room 117). The group is not associated with a specific denomination of Christianity; anyone is welcome. The group takes prayer requests in the box in the cafeteria. Sra. Krapohl advises. Contact skrapohl@conval.edu with any questions.

- Listen to the announcements for information about Youth & Government, which does not (as of yet) have a set schedule. You can email ngagnon@conval.edu or cheider@conval.edu with any questions.



Photo by Stacy Kolk

# Events

### 5TH BLOCK CLASSES

• 5th Block Classes are held on Tuesdays and Thursdays after school until the late bus. The classes cover a range of topics and are for credit. Registration forms for the classes are in the main office. The fall semester classes offered included robotics (taught by Ms. Fabianski), photojournalism on the web, and yearbook (taught by Ms. Bastoni). Listen to the announcements to learn which classes will be offered next semester. Contact jreitnauer@conval.edu with any questions.

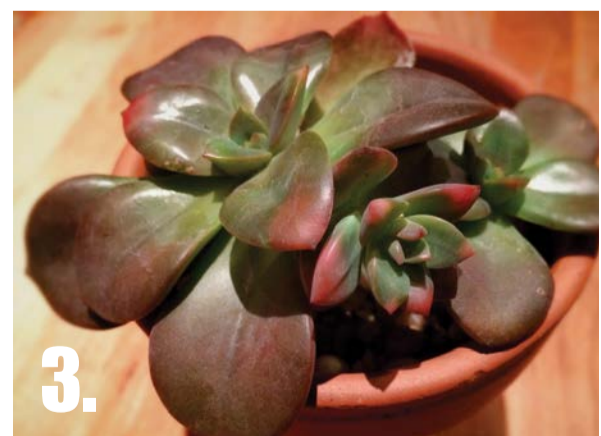
### SPRING SPORTS

- In order to participate in ConVal sports, you must turn in your golden ticket before the team's first practice. There are three steps to getting a golden ticket:
  1. Register online at on the FamilyID website. New athletes may have to create an account before they can register. You can find the link to the FamilyID site on the ConVal Athletics Dept. site, convalathletics.org.
  2. Have a current physical (within two years of the season) on file. A link to the physical form is also on the athletics department website. You can turn in your physical form in the athletics office (by the gym computer lab), or fax it to 603-371-0393.

3. Have a current Baseline ImPact test on file. The athletics department administers the tests during Golden Ticket weeks in the gym computer lab (room 652). There is no fee to have the test administered. You can find more info about the test on the athletics department website.
- Gold Ticket week for Spring Sports will be from February 20 to April 5. Times during which athletes should stay after school to get their Baseline ImPact tests will be announced and posted on the athletics department website as the season approached.
- Spring Sports offered at ConVal: Boys' and Girls' Lacrosse, Outdoor Track, Softball, Baseball, and Tennis. Info about coaches for all of these sports is available on the athletic department's website.

### COMMUNITY EVENTS:

- The ConVal band will be holding its Spring Concert on March 15 (rain date March 16) in the ConVal Gym at 7:00.
- The ConVal music department will have its annual Pops Concert on May 26 in the ConVal Gym at 7:00.
- School Board meetings are held every other Tuesday at 7:00, usually in the SAU. The School Board agenda is posted on the district calendar on ConVal's website (cvhs.convalsd.net).
- The Peterborough Community Theater holds free film screenings through a partnership with PBS and NHPTV on Tuesdays at 7:00. A list and description of movies shown can be found online at pctmovies.com.
- The Peterborough Farmer's Market is held every Wednesday from 3:00 to 6:00 outside at the Peterborough Community Center.



## Black thumb biology: Plants you can't kill

By Thayer Taft

There are many benefits of keeping houseplants from aesthetics to air purification. There's just one problem: caring for them. For a busy student, it can be difficult to keep track of homework, let alone houseplants. So, here are five easy-to-care-for plants that fit any living space and are perfect for students.

### 1. Pothos (Epipremnum aureum)

This plant is known as devil's ivy. It is a tropical vine that prefers low to medium light and actually benefits from forgetting to water it. It's almost impossible to kill, except by watering too often. So, only water when the top one or two inches of soil has dried. Long stems hang from the pot, so it's also a great choice for hanging planters. Pothos are available in green or variegated varieties, so there's a few options to suit your style.

### 2. Aloe (Aloe sp.)

Aloes are an easy variety of succulents to keep. Like most succulents, they prefer gritty soil and full sun, as their native environment is the desert. Aloes should only be watered once every one or two weeks in summer, and about once a month in winter. If you forget to water plants, Aloes are the perfect plant for you! Keep in mind that watering more frequently than recommended can cause rot, so if you think your plant might be thirsty; make sure the soil has dried well since you last watered it. A wide variety of aloes are available to choose from. One type, known as Aloe vera produces a healing sap. There are also colorful hybrids, such as the 'Christmas Carol' Aloe pictured here. There are even Aloe trees, but it's probably best to avoid those while living in a cold climate or a dorm room.

### 3. Echeveria (Echeveria sp.)

Like Aloes and their closest relatives, graptopetalums, echeverias are sun-loving succulents. They are slightly less tolerant of overwatering, so be particularly careful not to water this one too frequently, also. Despite this, echeveria are still very hardy and are also a great choice for anyone who tends to forget about their plants for a few weeks at a time.

One of the most fascinating things about echeverias is the ease of propagation. A rosette cutting, a piece of stem, or even a single leaf can root and produce its own plant. Many interesting forms of echeverias exist. Pictured here is Echeveria 'chroma,' a hybrid variety.

### 4. Air Plants (Tillandsia sp.)

Air plants are smaller relatives of the pineapple. They are epiphytes, meaning they grow on top of trees without

soil. For this reason, they should not be placed in soil, as it may cause rot. Instead, driftwood, interesting rocks, or dry sand can all make for cozy living arrangements for the air plant. Because they survive in the wild without soil, air plants are adapted to absorb nutrients from particles in the air. However, they must be still watered regularly, either through misting or soaking for 20-30 minutes.

Most air plants are monocarpic, flowering once before changing colors and producing pups, which may be separated and grown on their own.

Pictured here is the Spanish moss (Tillandsia usneoides), the smallest of the air plants. It forms long strands of many plants which can be seen hanging from tree branches in the Southeastern U.S.

### Tips:

- Do research. Plants' needs can vary widely, and this list gives only a brief overview of houseplant care.
- Know your own temperament. If watering once every two weeks is still too much students should keep searching, especially among succulent species. On the other hand, if they feel bad letting a plant sit in dry soil, maybe an orchid or an African violet is best.
- Know your pots. In the age of Pinterest, a recent trend in plant care is to pot plants in cute containers such as teapots or glass jars. Usually, these containers lack drainage holes, meaning water will pool and cause root rot, even in species which require more water. Adding rocks to the bottom does not resolve this problem. The plant must be placed in a container which has a drainage hole, and some species, such as most succulents, require gritty soil which drains quickly.





## SPONSORED CONTENT

## Student Poetry

## FEAR

-or-

## The World as Seen by a 17 Year Old

By Liam Baldwin

Our lives are filled with autonomous ignorance because the fear that comes with looking to the future is the same fear that steals our hopes and dreams We hold tight to these things protecting them with mental walls because success and failure are life and death You show me a face inside a high school I'll show you a person who is tired, scared, or hopeless I'll show you the tired teacher who loves their students and their wife and their kids that finds no time to enjoy the fleeting moments I'll show you the scared student who gets great grades and does three sports and two clubs and is one failure away from collapse I'll show you the hopeless student who understands the future who fears it who throws themselves away trying to ignore it You look at a student body you see jerks and punks and nerds I see fear Because high school is an egg and no one knows if their fate is a nest or a frying pan



Isaac Bacon took this photo of an egg to demonstrate the effects of light on objects.

I stopped taking care of my flowers,  
they started to die.  
I stopped taking care of myself, I started  
to die too.

- Anonymous ConVal student



Still-life drawing by Marion Winchester.

## (manicule)

By Bailey Kirkpatrick

The manicule, in inky vesture,  
Gestures toward the left,  
Left alone for many years,  
Years he was bereft.  
Bereft of those who knew his name,  
His name, the manicule,  
The manicule in deepened thought,  
Thought everyone the fool.  
The fools, they did not know the purpose,  
The purpose of the pointing hand,  
The hand that guides eyes toward the margins,  
Margins that are the footnote's land.  
Footnotes that land upon the paper,  
Paper that is filled with ink,  
Ink that forms the manicule.  
The manicule, the forgotten link.

8.29.15

By Caroline Riffle

friendzoned a boy last night.  
he texted me at 11:39  
'hey'  
and i replied, because four summers ago  
he and his cousin and my best friend laughed until we  
cried, in a tent too small for four people and all of their mos-  
quito bites  
'hi'  
i've laughed at so many boys  
who begged and chased and threatened for a glimpse of  
something more than what they could find  
in shady corners of the internet  
but i thought  
(because deep down i still hoped that i was wrong about the  
world)  
that this boy was Different  
because three summers ago we sang along to taylor swift,  
and our misremembered lyrics collided with the noise from  
that beat up bluetooth speaker, and dripped from the walls of  
the bus  
and we washed our hair in a freezing river, cooked each  
other breakfast on the side of a mountain, wondered what we  
would do when we were too old for this  
and when he asked what i was doing i told the truth  
'nm just chillin hbu'  
even though i'd seen the screenshots  
and i knew why he tacked 'haha' onto the end of each  
sentence fragment  
when nothing i said was funny

but i asked him how school was going  
because two octobers ago he and his cousin and my old  
best friend sat on the floor of my room and prank called an  
idiot who fell for every stupid word we said  
and i traded away the candy i couldn't eat, and costume  
makeup smeared across our faces and fingers and the carpet  
as we laughed until we cried some more  
that was the year i started wearing makeup  
and my cup size went from an A to a B  
to a C  
and i guess that meant i had to make a trade without even  
realizing it  
a kitkat for an almond joy  
arguments about aquaman for late-night snapchats  
and i guess there was a misunderstanding somewhere  
along the way because  
i friendzoned a boy last night  
even though i thought we were already friends  
and i guess he forgot  
about all of our inside jokes, because no matter how often i  
tried to change the subject  
'so ur taking ap history wow me too'  
he didn't seem to process anything more than the fact that  
i hadn't said Yes or No yet  
i friendzoned a boy last night  
because i wanted to talk to him and he wanted to look at  
me  
and when i told him what he couldn't see, he wouldn't talk  
anymore  
(which confused me because he always talked before  
back when he dated my friend  
and puberty hadn't done me any favors yet.)

## Monolith

By Becket Gourlay

She stood atop the monolith. The glossy black surface seemed to hum beneath her feet. Her undecorated white shift stirred around her legs in the slight wind. Just below, no matter where she turned, a sea of endless white smog curled and roiled, stretching into infinity.

She was stranded. A step in any direction meant a quick descent off the current safety of the pillar, and she knew, with an almost gut-wrenching certainty, that the fall would be long, and that the end of that fall would occur, fatally, far beneath the mist. And as if some unforeseen power heard her thoughts, and was determined for such a fall to ensue, the wind began to pick up. Not so much gradually, as exponentially.

In a short time, she was struggling to keep a steady center of gravity, forced to crouch. As the wind grew more ferocious, she became aware with horror, that she was sliding, almost undetectably so. Soon, her foot hung over the edge, and more and more leg joined the foot by the second. Her legs dangled, at-

tached to the pillar by fingertips and pressure of abdomen on the surface. Seconds grew longer, and her time grew shorter. By now, her arms were all that remained on the top, the rest of her furiously searching for a form of hold.

If anyone had been around, they would have heard her elicit whimpers and fear-tinged moans, as impending doom crept near. Until the last possible moment, she hung on for dear life by her fingertips, but the surface of the monolith seemed to work with the wind, becoming, it felt to her, more smooth and slippery. Finally, she closed her eyes and a strange calm came over her as she accepted her high-velocity fate. On a shaky exhale, she allowed her fingers to slip the last few inches, sending her hurtling into oblivion.

Impact never reached her, and as she cautiously opened her eyes, she was dazzled. The sun, turned on high, pelted her face with a malicious heat. A landscape of white sand, like the fog, expanded endlessly, infinitely. A high layer of clouds were the only objects that occupied the sky.

One single thing, bizarre beyond words, caught her attention. It was a ladder. The ladder reached into the minimal clouds and she could see no end. But the fact that a ladder was in a desert was not what struck her. What stood out to her was the ladder's being. It was crafted entirely out of poorly twisted and bunched black, thin fabric, knotted and tied into sides and rungs. The loose ends fluttered in the wind that did little to cool her back.

She touched the side of the ladder, and found, to her sur-



Photo by Libby Blake

prise, that the ladder was very structurally sound, almost as if the fabric was wrapped around wood. At a loss for anything else to do, not wanting to risk a trek through the desert, she took a breath, put her hand on an eye-level rung, and began to climb.

She climbed, and climbed, and climbed. For a while it was tireless work, sometimes feeling brave enough to take them two at a time, but as she went, her arms and legs began to feel the throbbing burn of the monotonous effort. She now and again glanced down, gauging her progress, the height no

longer threatening, after her ordeal on the obelisk. She was far up, very far up, and the end of the ladder, so close, taunted her and her screaming arms. As her arms and legs threatened defeat, frustrated tears began to leak from her eyes. She felt like giving up, letting herself fall onto the sand and end it all. But she felt that something important waited at the end of that ladder. She could actually see the last rung. So she bared her teeth against the pain, and, grunting, pushed onwards and upwards. Soon, she was grinning at the final rung, and reached for it... To be continued



Want more? Catch the next issue of the Link at the Toadstool Bookstore Feb. 9