



LEMON CREEK JOURNAL

INSIGHTS & IMAGES OF CORRECTIONS ON THE LAST FRONTIER

LEMON CREEK CORRECTIONAL CENTER, JUNEAU ALASKA

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VOLUME IX



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To our readers:

The Lemon Creek Journal is a quarterly e-Publication of Lemon Creek Correctional Center, Juneau, Alaska. The Journal’s mission is to inform, engage, and challenge Corrections professionals and the public to think critically about the challenges facing Alaska’s correctional system. So that we can be more responsive to our readers, please share with us your impressions and suggestions by emailing the Editor at daryl.webster@alaska.gov.

Photographs by Bonnie Webster, except where attributed.

Cover Photograph: Independence Day in Juneau, AK, Bonnie Webster, 2017

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!



We're celebrating here at Lemon Creek! Two years of the Lemon Creek Journal and still going strong. We've come a long way in a short time and we're proud of the high quality content available to our faithful readers, issue after issue. Check out the intriguing covers from our first eight issues on the pages that follow and read all the back stories in their entirety by accessing our archive at:

<http://www.correct.state.ak.us/institutions/lemon-creek-journal>.

We're confident you'll want to read more.

The Journal is published quarterly, without subscription. I'm often asked why we put so much effort into production of a non-profit, Ezine. The answer is simple. We're on a mission, providing entertaining and thought-provoking articles by staff writers and guest contributors, offering unique insights into the Alaska's correctional system, and preaching the message of professionalism, integrity, and cohesion.

We hope you'll join the corrections professionals, educators and adventurous readers who have discovered this hidden gem and remember, we'd love to hear from you.



A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

More than 20 years ago, my family sat in the overcrowded Spokane airport terminal impatiently awaiting the announcement for our next flight to board. Sitting directly across from us was a large muscular man dressed in street biker apparel. His arms, covered in tattoos, were literally larger than my thighs. His thick grey beard came down to the middle of his chest and from beneath his red bandana, long wavy hair protruded and disappeared below his shoulders. The description of this man isn't why I noticed him, what caught my attention was his facial expression...he looked angry, and I wondered if his weathered face could possibly look any rougher. He just sat there wearing a hard scowl and

I apparently was not the only traveler in the packed terminal who noticed him, because all the seats were full, except on either side of him.

My two and a half year old daughter, who could be timid at times, sat on my lap and apparently was staring in his general direction because eventually the two of them made eye contact and the stare down was on! With their eyes locked in on each other, his hostile expression continued to showcase his character and I wondered what my somewhat shy daughter was thinking, as his very appearance was quite intimidating.

There we all sat, the two of them refusing to be the first to look away, and I started to become uncomfortable with the situation my sweet daughter had put us in. Without breaking eye contact, she put her hands on my right knee, climbed down out of our shared seat and stood there with her new found opponent, locked in a death stare. I then decided it was time to take her for a walk and leaned over to tell my wife that I was going to provide her a change of

scenery. Before I realized what was happening, she made her way across the aisle and stood at the feet of this giant man, looking directly up into his eyes. I quickly started out of my seat to retrieve her, when to my surprise she unexpectedly reached her tiny hands out for the man to pick her up! As long as I live I will never forget what happened next. This mountain of a man, who wore the expression of anger better than anyone I have ever seen was completely caught off guard and sat straight back in his chair with his mouth wide open and his eyes like saucer plates. As if a coiled rattlesnake lay at his feet, ready to strike at any moment, his look of anger was instantly replaced by tremendous shock and disbelief. There was nowhere for him to hide, she had him exactly where she wanted him! She stood there with her little blonde curls and her arms outstretched waiting

patiently to be picked up and I could see that he was now as uneasy as I was. He looked at me as if he needed to be rescued, then locked eyes with her again, overcome now with a serene expression. He looked to me once more and I could clearly see from the change in his countenance that he wanted to grant her request and pick her up. All I could do in my dumbfounded state was smile and give a nod of approval. He slowly reached out with his large calloused hands and gently lifted her from the floor like a fragile piece of antique china, placing her softly at the end of his knee. Still looking into his eyes she melted his heart and a vibrant smile, that I don't think his face had seen in years, slowly took hold. I returned to my seat next to my wife, both of us looking on in astonishment as they exchanged baby talk while she played with the patches on his vest and fidgeted with the big gold chain that hung from around his neck. I felt a little bad when the announcement for our flight came over the speaker system and I had to separate the two newly made friends. He stood up and met me halfway across the aisle holding her close to his chest and as he handed her back to me he said, "Thank you!" His deep scratchy voice was filled with emotion. He continued, "This has been the best day I have had in a really long time." I replied by telling him it was my pleasure and that I probably enjoyed the moment as much as he did. He then said, with a smile on his face, "You might find this hard to believe, but this sort of thing doesn't happen to me every day!" Without hesitation I responded, "Oh no, I believe you!" He told me how much he loved his own children but hadn't seen them in years and it had been a very long while since he had held a precious little one like her. He gently patted her on the back and we parted ways, never to see each other again. That man's attitude and the course of his day were drastically changed because

someone was willing to reach out to him in a unique way, without judgement or prejudice. Having witnessed that exchange firsthand there are no words powerful enough to describe what was going on between her heart and his as she sat contently upon his knee, the two of them sharing a moment and talking toddler nonsense with each other.

Whether we realize it or not our outreach to offenders has tremendous value in their lives, even if they do not immediately recognize it.

In 2015 I attended a conference in which a block of time was devoted to a panel of three formerly-incarcerated persons who were currently under state supervision but would soon be off paper. Each shared their life stories. Two of them came from homes with loving parents who did their best to raise them to be productive members of society; the other was not able say the same as she was not as fortunate in her upbringing. They were all three very different people as were their life journeys, but substance abuse eventually led them all to the same place...prison. Each shared stories of personal heartbreak, sorrow and loss; loss of friendships, loss of family trust, failing out of college, unable to obtain gainful employment, and all because they became slaves to their drug addictions. Each articulated the misery and the hopelessness of being held hostage by drug dependency. Their addictions eventually took precedence over everyone and everything in their lives, leaving them with complete feelings of inadequacy and destroyed self-worth.

Their stories, though entirely different, had three similar components that each one attributed to their successes up to that point. All three clearly expressed that the healing process and pathway to a successful

recovery, and staying out of prison, could not take place without taking ownership, embracing acceptance, and welcoming support.

Interestingly enough all three members of the panel stated that ownership and acceptance did not completely occur until the element of accepting support came into the picture. The amazing thing was that all three revealed their biggest supporters to be employees of the department of corrections. All stated that they were resistant, defiant, and even untrusting of their DOC supporters at first. Once they realized that the support was truly intended to help them succeed, they accepted the assistance and guidance and the other two components became easier to face.

Reform without the human element is nothing more than the sound of an echoing empty room.

My career has spanned over two decades and in that time I have had numerous conversations with formerly-incarcerated people who have credited part of their success to probation officers, nurses, maintenance workers, correctional officers, and kitchen stewards.

This past June, while in Anchorage for training, I ran into a former inmate who had served 20 years here at Lemon Creek, from 1981 to 2001. I listened intently as he spoke

of the challenges and trials he faced after his release, trying to fit back into society, and in sadness he shared the story of the recent passing of his biggest supporter, his wife. He fondly asked about several officers, who had all retired, in hopes they were doing well, and then with a big grin on his face, he asked about Bruce Massey. He said with a full heart, "I love that guy!" He told me Bruce made a difference in his life while working for him in the kitchen for so many years. When we parted ways he asked me to say hi to Bruce while still wearing his unforgettable grin.

With our eye on reducing recidivism, the department is engaged in trying to find programs that invest in people. Please understand and recognize that you have the potential to dramatically change a person's life for the better by just continuing to be yourself!

In order for someone to change they first must have the desire to do so and though that desire may be there, getting started is obviously not always easy.

In all your duties continue to be decent, continue to be a good role model, continue to be fair, and continue to be you!

You have no idea what the impact of being you can have on those who you supervise within these walls.

Stay safe!

Bob Cordle



EMPLOYEE OF THE QUARTER

Bobby Montez

Officer Bobby Montez joined the Department of Corrections in December 2013 and in a short time, he has become a mainstay of his shift. Officer Montez became Post 1 certified within his first two years with DOC and followed up by becoming a CPR Instructor and a Field Training Officer. He was recently certified as a DOC Institutional Investigator and is working on joining the PTO program. Officer Montez is respected by his peers, who describe him as knowledgeable, capable and always willing to pitch in and help. We are proud to recognize Officer Bobby Montez as Employee of the Quarter

Love and the “Capital L” Leader

by

Daryl Webster



“Keep up the good work.” “Be a team player.” “Live up to your potential.” “Follow policies and procedures.” “Let’s make Lemon Creek the best facility in the state.”

How many times have you heard something like this from your sergeant, lieutenant, or the superintendent and me? Not one of these exhortations comes with a bonus, a pay increase, a promise of promotion, or public recognition. So why bother? What’s the point?

To begin with, if the main consequence of outstanding conduct was a bump in your paycheck or a medal on your uniform shirt, then excelling as a CO, a PO, or an administrative officer would be nothing more than a transaction. It might help your personal finances, and recognition is always nice, but it would make you no better at heart than whoever is dragging along at the bottom end of the performance scale. Doing good work has to mean something more, something internal and personal, or it is forever something less. Let me suggest a couple of aspirations that I’ve always tried to live up to and admit right up front that I have failed a good deal of the time.

The title of the article sucked you in, didn’t it? Keep reading.

Leading With Love

Leaders: Love the people you lead. Oh, yuck....I said the “L” word, but if you are committed to being a conscientious, successful, ethical, “Capital L” leader, there is simply no other word to adequately describe the regard you must hold for your team members. Commit to less and you’re simply a supervisor. Since we’re in squishy territory, I’ll offer myself as an example. I have a daily need for the *love* and mercy of my Creator because I am the embodiment of imperfection. I *love* my country. I *love* my wife and kids. I feel great affection (*love*) for my friends. I *love* good, single-malt Scotch whiskey. Five expressions of “Love” and each of them different. Loving Leadership draws something from them all.

Leading with love requires you to accept the reality of your shortcomings and to recognize that leadership is a transcendent obligation. You don’t have to be religious to be a good leader, but you must accept that the mantle of leadership is greater than you are and requires you to strive for a level of perfection you will never attain but toward which you can never stop reaching.



Leading with love recognizes the inherent worth and potential of others and seeks at every juncture to make them better.

Leading with love requires you to make a commitment to your organization that comes from the recognition that the organization is imperfect, but that it is also good. It is hard to love the Alaska Department of Corrections. As organizations go, it is just too big, too dispersed over the vastness of Alaska, and too marked by regional peculiarities. Lemon Creek Correctional Center is easy to love, particularly if you've had the experience of working elsewhere in the criminal justice system. For a host of reasons we can get into some other time, Lemon Creek has managed to become a workplace that is professional, secure, humane, and as long on professional cooperation as it is short on workplace drama. It is a good place to work, with good colleagues, good leadership, and a recognizably unique culture.

Leading with love requires you to draw on

the best elements of the love you feel for your family and friends and to apply it to those for whom you are responsible, even if you are not necessarily close outside the workplace. It is a level of love that does not require affection to be returned, is neither earned nor bought, that recognizes the inherent worth and potential of others and seeks at every juncture to make them better. It lays its life down, usually figuratively but literally if necessary, to protect, preserve and nurture other people.

What does the love of Scotland's finest contribution to mankind offer to the leadership dynamic? It is complex, genuine, abiding, and unmistakable. A leader's love, like a good 15 year Scotch stands on its own and it only gets better with age.

Serving With Generosity

Generosity? Ok, it's an unusual use of the word, but it returns us to the question of why anyone should do an outstanding job, when the material incentives are no different than those offered for doing an average job. Let's answer this question by asking a couple of others.

Do you respect your boss? If you can answer in the affirmative, good for you, but you might also answer, "No, my boss is wretched, unworthy of respect, and incapable of reforming." Since this is an opinion piece and not the Ten Commandments, I'm going to opine that I've never met that boss. I have worked for, and cordially loathed one or two bosses in my time, though not at DOC. They earned my low esteem, trust me, but in both cases, our working relationship could have been much more productive and far less miserable

had I been willing to extend to them a little of the forgiveness and grace I often need and had I been willing to accept their right to lead, even though I resented them and their leadership styles. The bottom line was that I made myself more miserable and our team less successful by refusing to adjust to bosses I didn't like. In the first case, I could have been more accommodating than my boss deserved, supported him, and helped him and the team to succeed. He and I might never have become friends but we could have worked together. Instead, I transferred to a different team and resolved the problem by leaving it in my rearview mirror. In the second case, I found the situation so hard to stomach that I quit and went to work somewhere else. In retrospect, I don't feel very good about the way I acted.

Therein resides a clue to dealing with a problem boss. In all likelihood the boss's mother loves him. His dog thinks he walks on water. He may be socially inept, inexperienced or unskilled as a leader and if so, an opportunity exists for you to demonstrate generosity by helping him to get his leadership act together. Every young leader who survives to be a successful old leader can point to someone on his team who was patient with him when he struggled to lead and who helped school him in his new and difficult responsibilities. In such cases, leaders, generous team members and

A leader may be socially inept or inexperienced and therein lies an opportunity for you to demonstrate generosity by helping him to get his leadership act together.



Every young leader who survives to be a successful old leader can point to someone on his team who was patient with him when he struggled.

their teams benefit. If you find yourself on a team where problems with your leader seem irreconcilable or if your boss is the reincarnation of Attila the Hun, tactfully raise the issue with the chain of command. If no other resolution is available, you may need to look for a new environment to fit into.

Do you respect each other? It is easy to be generous with people you like. You work together, play together, help each other and affirm each other's self-worth. But when the boss seems unreasonably demanding or the officer in the next post isn't carrying his weight, "Giving" just isn't a natural response. As we've conceded before, there are intolerable relationships that are impervious to reasonable resolution and these are the dysfunctional few that get bumped up the ladder or lead to grievances, litigation, or changes in employment. How many times has that happened during your

career at Lemon Creek? Darned few. We generally find ways to resolve our differences or we grow callouses over the wounds thick enough to enable us to carry on in spite of the irritant. Let's just consider another alternative to keep in our toolbox, that we might label, "Respectful Tolerance."

The pop psychologists of the self-help industry encourage us to constructively confront those with whom we have serious differences. "Don't suppress resentment," they say, "Vent it in a non-threatening manner and the two of you can work through the problem." That is a wonderful prescription. Use it, because it works. Except when it doesn't. When that happens, Respectful Tolerance offers a counterintuitive alternative to fighting or fleeing that combines elements of tactful avoidance and positive engagement. Slap a band-aid on the problem relationship, avoid the differences of opinion you're never going to resolve, then carry out your duties

with the kind of respectful generosity you aren't receiving. Go out of your way to assist your troublesome colleague or boss. When he needs help, be there for him. When he does something well, publicly recognize him. Stop expecting positive behavior you're not likely to get and you just may find yourself getting it when you most need it and least expect it. Remember, if things go as badly as they potentially can in a prison setting, even a mother's love won't save you. The courage and commitment of the officer in the next post just might, even if he doesn't like you.

This is a lot to ask of people working 12 hour shifts, seven days a week, locked up together in a prison workplace. The difficulty of practicing professional love and generosity is also the source of their power. Extending tolerance, respect and grace to people whose motivations are a mystery to us is not natural and it is not easy. These are virtues reserved for people of strength and character and practicing these virtues only makes them stronger.



Superintendent Cordle
Cordially Invites You to Our

2nd ANNUAL HOLIDAY & AWARDS BANQUET

December 15

6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Tickets go on sale 9/1 end 12/1

Elizabeth Peratrovich Hall
320 W. Willoughby Ave
Juneau, AK

Tickets can be purchased from the Shift Supervisor

Cost of admission is \$30 per adult, children under 16 eat for free. Dinner includes 2 main dishes, 2 sides and 2 different types of desserts. Wet bar will be available.

Children will be served Chicken nuggets and French Fries.

Silent Auction, Door prizes, Santa Claus and Much More





SSG Edgar Irizarry, An Khe, Republic of Vietnam

FAMILY IS EVERYTHING

by

Lt. Ed Irizarry

We normally think of Family as a group of individuals related by blood or marriage. These are the people who will be there through thick and thin, sharing with us the good times and holding us close when times are bad, with a shoulder to lean on, a hug or an ear to listen. Family doesn't have to stop there. We may adopt close friends into our family, the ones who are always there providing aid and security. When you have a bad day at work or school, struggle with a breakup or suffer unexpected illness, family is always by your side with love and support, making it easier to face troubled times. They love us unconditionally and understand us when times are difficult.

We're all just people in need of emotional support, no matter where it comes from. The need is universal. At work, we need a pat on the back to reassure us that we are doing a great job. It reveals itself in teaching or coaching young children. And of course, it is what we expect most from family.

Who understands that need the most? Yes, Family. Our families understand us like no one else. Not only do they accept us for who we are, they also provide us with emotional and physical protection. We always find ourselves returning to them. When vacation is done, at the close of a long weekend, at the end of the day, or just at the spur of the moment, we make our way back to family, to the center of our being. There, they help raise our children when we are working, training, or sick, shaping personalities and beliefs, and joining in to instill the values that make us and our children who we are. How many times have you talked about family values,

discerning what is right and wrong, choosing the "*hard right over the easy wrong?*" Probably a lot, because family is at the core of who we are.

This brings me to my next point. Holiday season is approaching. This is our time to be with family, to talk with them on the phone more and send letters and gifts. We will join friends and loved ones at dinners, parties and friendly get-togethers. There will be laughter, food, friends, games. Togetherness at its best and best enjoyed responsibly. What is one thing that always brings family and friends together? Yes, FOOD! The ultimate icebreaker. The main event at so many gatherings. How often during gatherings do we find ourselves migrating toward the kitchen? How many times while fashioning the ultimate dessert do little crumb-snatching children or the occasional crumb-snatching adult come sneaking in to lick the mixing bowl and beaters or sneak a cookie, fresh from the oven. Just setting down these words, I am overcome by childhood memories of my father, who was an excellent cook. I remember him making special treats and I remember crumb-snatching them, sure of my clandestine skills. It was not until years later that I learned he knew what I was doing all along, that he was just smiling and watching me. I inherited my father's passion for cooking. When I was young, he would let me help him and I learned from him. He was my family. He guided us as children, directed us and helped us develop our beliefs and values. At times we did not approve of the discipline he administered, but then again what kid does?

Let me share a quick story. I had to return home one time from a military operation to heal up. Arriving home, I fetched two beers and sat with my father. As I laid my crutches on the couch and popped the beers he asked me why. I handed him a cold one and told him that I finally understood why he was the way he was. You see my father spent three years in Vietnam, two of those years with the 173rd Airborne and a year with the 2nd Cavalry. Once I spent some time in a hot zone, I understood him better. Then he told me something that still rings like a bell with me. "Son," he said, "They teach you how to drive a car and give you a license. They teach you how to fly a plane and give you a license, but no one teaches you how to be a dad. You just become one. I was doing the best I knew how with what I had."

I thanked him and told him that I appreciated all the discipline, because without him I might not have made it. He then began to speak softly to me about his time overseas and we spent the night talking and sharing. I hold the memory of that night dearly. My father was a man of conviction but not without error. I will close this story with saying that my father looked at me in the end and said to me, "Son, you will make many mistakes in your life, as I did at your age. I cannot stop you from making those because you may make them without thinking. That is how I learned to make good decisions now. And that was from making bad decisions. As you grow and learn son, just remember a few phrases please. One is that you must make the hard right over the easy wrong when it comes to choices, second is that people will always remember you for the good things you do but will never forget you

for the bad things you do. Lastly son, *family is everything.*"

I have to say it took about 35 years to realize that my father was the smartest man I ever met.

Now back to where I was headed before I digressed. We all have been crumb snatchers or have one or two running around. So, with holiday feasts approaching, I'd like to share a couple of my favorite recipes. I hope some of you will try them and share them with others. Some of you here at Lemon Creek have had the chance to try my 'Deep Fried Peanut Butter and Jelly Sandwiches.' Yes, you read that correctly. Deep fried PB&J. I said the same thing many years ago as a child when my mother told us kids what she was making. We all looked at each other in bewilderment but then again, Mom could fry water and make you love it. So, after eating my first deep fried PB&J, and waking up from the resulting food coma, I wanted to know how to make them for myself. I only realized later that these sandwiches were not just a meal, they were my mom's way of administering sedation, so she could have a break from us hellions. In the wilds of her kitchen, Mom took on the persona of "Jim" from Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom. Deep fried PB&J sandwiches were tranquilizer darts she plinked into all us little varmints. We barely had time to get our plates in the sink and crawl into our beds or stumble into the den before we succumbed to the effect of potion. So, should you decide to try this delicious treat, here is the recipe. I have also added another recipe for

a quick and easy appetizer. Be advised that my measurements are sometimes a “pinch,” a “handful,” a “shake,” and a

“good shake” (a little more than just a shake) but you get the point. Experiment and Enjoy.

DEEP FRIED PB & J.

- Bread
- Peanut butter (your choice of type)
- Eggs
- Milk
- Vanilla
- Cinnamon
- Jelly (I use strawberry preserve jam. Costco brand. Nothing fancy)
- Frosted Flakes



Fried Peanut Butter & Jelly Sandwich

Now the secret!! You must use the oil from Costco. It comes in a 5-gallon jug. It has red lettering, which indicates that it is for deep frying or pan frying. That oil is commercial grade and will not burn or

smoke. It comes out white and milky but when heated turns clear. THAT my opinion is the big secret. If you use regular oil from the store it will smoke and not be as good. You can filter it through cheese

before complete cooling if you desire and reuse.

Put the frosted flakes in a gallon zip lock and smash to make the coating for the sandwich. Make the sandwiches with peanut butter on both slices, but jelly on only one side to keep from soaking into the bread. Take 3 eggs, milk, vanilla and cinnamon in a bowl and mix all together as if you are making a wash for French toast.

I just pour about 2 cups of milk or so and then some vanilla and cinnamon. I mix it to look a little brown and so you can smell the cinnamon and vanilla.

Take your PB&J sandwich and soak it in the egg and milk mixture. Be sure to submerge it and flip it. Make sure it soaks up the wet mixture. After holding it above the mixture to reclaim the drippings, coat both sides well and the edges too with crushed frosted flakes. Let the sandwich sit for about a minute. I make five at a time at home and then fry them, so sitting for longer than a minute is ok. Make sure your oil is at 350 degrees (and always have an extinguisher handy). Safety first.

I use two spatulas that will not melt in the hot oil. I put the sandwich in the oil and let it cook for about a minute. I then flip the sandwich and let it cook for another minute or so, until lightly brown and then remove. Place on plate and top with whip cream, ice cream, maple syrup or your choice of topping. Let it cool a little and dive in!!

PREPARE FOR IMMEDIATE FOOD COMA!

Queso Dip

- 1 pound of ground meat cooked and drained.
- 1 block of Velveeta cheese (sold at Costco by 2 blocks packages)
- 2 bottles of Pace picante sauce (sold at Costco in a 2-jar package of salsa.)

Sometimes I use about a pound and a half of meat. Your choice. Also, while cooking the meat I add minced garlic (about 2 tablespoons), half a diced onion, pepper and a dash of red pepper flakes. If you are feeling brave you can dice up a serrano pepper and cook it in with the meat also. After cooking the meat, drain and place back in pot. Take the Velveeta cheese and cut into blocks. This makes it easier and quicker to melt when added to the pot of meat. Once the cheese is cubed up add the salsa to the meat. Place the heat on low-medium. After mixing one and a half jars of salsa into the meat, add all the Velveeta cheese cubes to the meat and salsa mixture. Mix thoroughly and watch. At this point, you may want to reduce heat to low. **DO NOT BURN THE CHEESE**. Continue to mix as the cheese melts. Add more salsa if you wish after the cheese melts thoroughly. Once the cheese is good and creamy, do a taste test. Hopefully you'll like. You can serve with chips, bread bites, add to shredded pork sandwiches. Your imagination is the limit. It has always been a hit at our gatherings. Enjoy.

Keep your eyes peeled for more recipes as we head into the holidays. Take care and stay Safe.

Lemon Creek Correctional Center wants

YOU!!



Lemon Creek Correctional Center in Juneau, Alaska is currently recruiting Correctional Officers. To apply go to Governmentjobs.com/careers/Alaska/ and look for the Correctional Officer I position in Juneau, AK.

Why be a Correctional Officer at LCCC:

- Great Pay/Benefits
- Career advancement opportunities
- Premium schedule (7 days on/ 7 days off)
- Generous vacation leave
 - Excellent training
 - Great community to raise a family



If you have any questions contact Lt. Hoff at (907)465-6288 or Sgt. Headings at (907)465-6205. We are looking forward to talking to you.

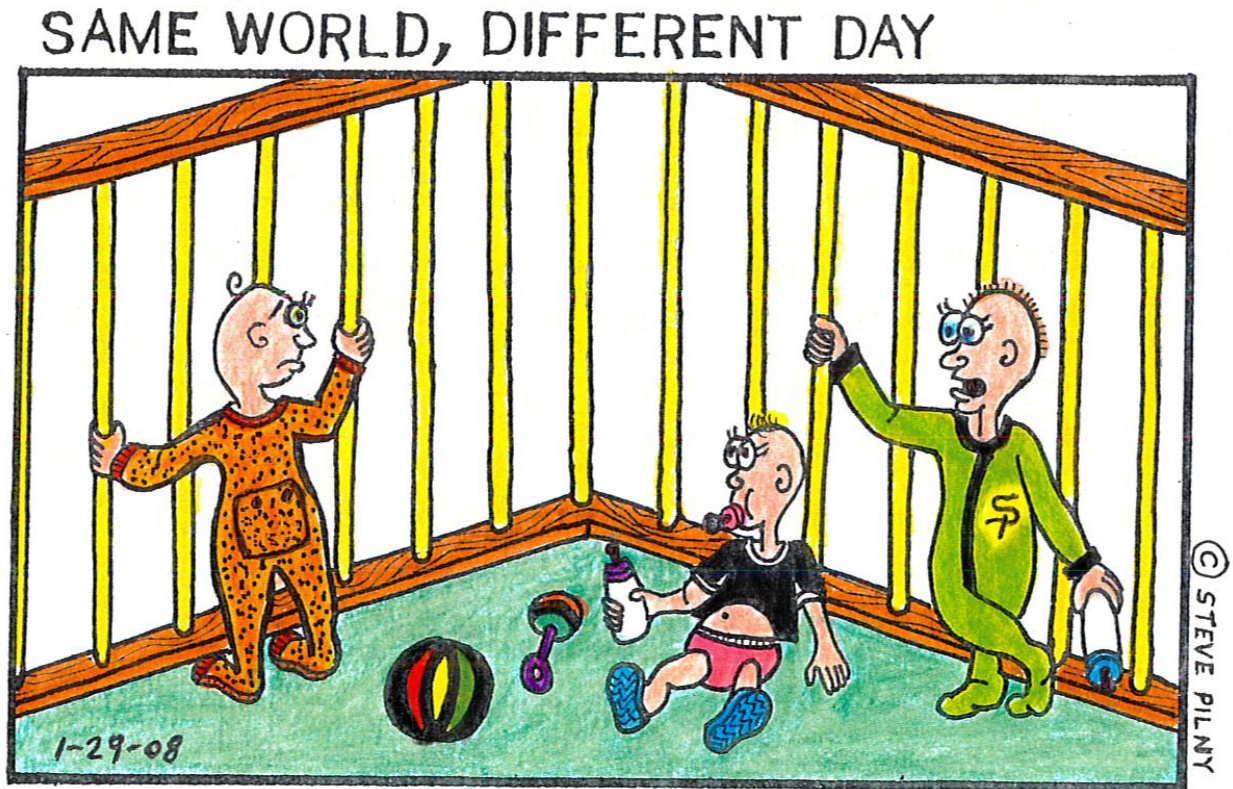


SAME WORLD, DIFFERENT DAY

Seen through the eyes of Steve Pilny

We are proud to introduce Officer Steve Pilny and
welcome him to the staff of the Lemon Creek Journal.

We hope you enjoy his humor as much as we do.



"SO...WHAT ARE YOU IN HERE FOR?"

SAME WORLD, DIFFERENT DAY



SAME WORLD, DIFFERENT DAY



"MY FUR HAS MUCH MORE BODY AND SHINE WHEN I PUT 'MOOSE' IN IT!"

FROM THE SECURITY SERGEANT

by

Sgt. Bo Pierce

Dealing With Change

When I took over this new position, no one told me that I would be responsible for writing a section of the Lemon Creek Journal. I now realize what is meant by the warning, "You need to check the fine print before you sign on the dotted line." Up until now I have been blessed by Lieutenant Irizarry (when he was in the training Sergeant position) covering for me and carrying the load of this responsibility. After many protests and whining and crying that obviously fell on deaf ears, I have embraced the opportunity to write something that someone out there might want to read. I am not big on talking and as many of you know, writing is not what I would call one of my strong points, but I will do my best to share some good information about myself and the career we have all decided to pursue. In this, my Journal debut, I will tell you a little bit about myself and how I come to be in this position.

I started my career on January 2, 2001. Officer Martin Carabajal started the same day and later that year we both went to the academy together. To this day there is a heated rivalry between us over who was hired first. He is ahead of me on the

seniority list but I contend that this is because his last name starts with C and mine starts with P. Over the first few years of my career I tried to get Superintendent Carothers to admit that I was the first interview

in the morning and I was offered the job first but he has refused to admit to what I know to be true. My Shift Supervisor then was Scott Wellard, and Bob Cordle and Bruce Busby were the Booking/Max Officers. I was made to feel right at home and was put on a shift that had a lot of senior Officers, so I was the rookie for quite a few years. Within a few months Scott asked me if I would like to work Booking one day a week. He and I got along well and he thought I had the right temperament for the job. I started out one day a week and soon moved up to two days a week. A few years later, I started working half a week sharing Booking duties with Bob Cordle. Fast forward a few more years, working for a few different SS's and I was given the opportunity to be the Shift Supervisor.

After being in Booking as a Booking officer or as a Shift Supervisor for a total of about 15 years I was asked to take over the

Standards/Property Sergeant Position. Now I must admit that at first I was not happy with this idea and did not want anything to do with it. I have since come to realize that I am the kind of person that does not like change, but after thinking about it and the fact that the people who were asking me to do it were the same ones who stepped up and did what needed to be done even when they didn't want anything to do with it, I decided to embrace the change and try my hand at something new. After about two weeks in my new position I realized how burnt out I was in Booking and how much stress I was carrying around that I didn't even realize I had until it was lifted off my shoulders.

Once I embraced the fact that change was not as bad as I thought it might be, I found myself enjoying the job again (and I was not as grumpy at home either, which my wife has pointed out quite frequently since the change). It took me some time to settle into my new position and to figure out my new duties, but it was a new experience that also brought with it some excitement as well. I was never what you would call the most studious person in school but I have learned over the years that when I am learning about something that interests me, it is not as bad as it was back when I was in school. I won't go into all of the duties and responsibilities of the Standards Sergeant Position. I will leave that up to the new Standards Sergeant, Sergeant Johnson who I think also should have a regular article in the newsletter. (This is me hinting and winking at Superintendent Webster).

Two years of learning new duties and finding my own rhythm as the Standards Sergeant flew by, and then I was faced with another opportunity to step up and fill a position that needed to be filled. Having already faced my fears and my dislike of change, the opportunity did not seem as bad or as daunting as the change from Shift Supervisor to Standards Sergeant. The fact that I was offered windows that actually faced outside of the facility and not into another room with florescent lighting was a plus. Not dealing with an endless string of inmates with no idea what door sign means that reads, "Do not enter unless you have been called for" was a great incentive. The fact that some of them have no clue what a tooth brush is and what it is for made my decision just a little bit easier than before. After quite a few discussions with my wife and some restless nights and a lot of praying for guidance, I became Security Sergeant and took on a whirlwind of new responsibilities. The learning process started all over again.

Starting fresh can be challenging and rewarding at the same time. I have seen a lot of good people put into this position and I have heard how busy it is and how it has chased off one good officer after another. I must admit that at first I was a little overwhelmed and had a lot of the same feelings that I had when I took over the Standards/Property position. I guess that sometimes you just have to take the good with the bad, do the best job you can and try not stress about the rest.

In this new position I am looking forward to doing things I always wanted to do but never

got around to, like working with all the weapon systems we have here and helping with training for these systems. I have always enjoyed all types of firearms and shooting sports. I was a range officer for most of the past 17 years and look forward to working with more than just the shotgun. I know there are going to be times when I will ask myself “What the heck were you thinking!” but I also know that having a window to look out at the sunshine and the trees sure does help me get through some of the busy and stressful times. It also doesn’t hurt that Superintendent Cordle has found a way to designate Training as its own position again.

One other major plus that has helped me get through tough times over the years is the fact that we work with some amazing people here at Lemon Creek. I am not an outgoing person and as many of you know I am somewhat of an introvert, but I have made really good friends here and I know that the people who work here are some of the best people around. I have spoken to a lot of people from around the department and they all say the same thing, Lemon Creek has way fewer problems to deal with and we just seem to get done whatever needs doing. We don’t have staff fighting with administrators and with each other that I have heard about happening in some of the other facilities and I think that has to do with the quality and the caliber of people who work here at LCCC. I have personally witnessed Staff doing amazing things for each other, on and off duty.

This Job is not a walk in the park, nor is Lemon Creek the kind of place that makes

you feel all warm and fuzzy every day, but it can be a very rewarding place to work.

Friendships here are built on the comradery of fellow officers who have experienced the same trials, challenges and frustrations that people outside our profession just wouldn’t understand. These are the people who will make a difference in your life and stand by you when times are tough. They are also the ones who will be here to lend a hand to pull you up out of the muck and mire that sometimes comes with this job. There is a lot to be said for people who have seen what you have seen, shared the same struggles and are willing to crawl back into the quagmire to give a hand to someone in need.

Let me leave you with a few realizations and observations I have had over the years:

- Sometimes change is a good thing, even if you don’t see it at first.
- To all of you who have stepped up and taken on more than your share, like FTO’s, PTO’s, and Range officers; and anyone who instructs Taser, firearms, control tactics, or any other training we have needed to do over the years, Thank you for what you do.
- I know that you don’t always get the recognition that you deserve but I think that this administration is trying to fix that. The awards banquet, the Journal, and the activities

we have begun doing together are all ways of building team spirit. We spend a lot of our time away from our families, so it is nice to have a second family you can count on to be there for you when you need them.

- I encourage you to take a chance and find something you want to do, whether it is to become a PTO, range officer, first aid instructor, an

investigator, or even just to learn more about a position that you might want to apply for. Find something here that you are interested in and jump in.

- I believe that the only reason I have made it almost 18 years in this career is because I have worked with some great people and I have found a place where I can help make a difference.



GEAR HEAD

BY SERGEANT JERROD ANDREWS

“Walk a Mile in Her Shoes” is a worldwide event, dating back to 2001, where men march to raise awareness of rape, sexual assault and gender violence towards women. Back then, a small group of men decided to think outside of the box to help raise awareness of issues facing women. They chose to walk one mile for the cause, not in a pair of comfy, fluffy slippers, but in women’s high heeled shoes. Since then it has blossomed into a very successful yearly tradition in many parts of globe. Millions of dollars has been raised and given to rape crisis centers, domestic violence shelters, and programs dealing with sexualized violence education, prevention and remediation, all thanks to this event. DOC and the ACOA have taken part in this event for a number of years as well, with officers like yourselves trading duty boots for a fresh

set of pumps and collecting thousands of dollars in the process to help support these worthwhile causes.

That being said, my wide and flat man-feet aren’t likely to see the inside of a pair of high heels any time soon. Although I very much give credit to those men who can pull it off, I simply am not one of them. I’ve been hard on my feet and they need all the footwear help they can get.

In the Corrections business, we are on our feet so often and for so long in the course of our daily duties that I figured this article would be a great opportunity to discuss a matter of great concern to those of us with boots on the ground. Literally. Our feet are probably the most neglected part on our bodies, yet they take the most abuse. Just

consider placing your hands inside stiff leather mittens and leaving them there for 13 or more hours a day. If that sounds as miserable to you as it does to me, then you have an idea of what we are doing every day to our feet. Each day we go home, kick our boots off, and breathe a sigh of relief. And why not?

Years ago I found a YouTuber by the name of “athom3666.” He produced a funny little video titled “Barefoot Running,” in which he brought up some very interesting facts about shoes and what they do to our feet. Humans, he points out, have walked this earth for thousands if not millions of years, yet shoe trends have changed drastically in just the past 150 years. From custom arches inside shoes, to platforms, pumps, and even those Sketchers that have very rounded soles that are supposed to help leg strength. He also produced a video titled “Tough Mudder Training,” which I found to be a bit humorous, showing his journey to fitness,



also done barefoot. But that’s another story.

Many years ago, just a few weeks prior to my first day as a Correctional Officer, I asked Lieutenant Harry Green what type of footwear I should purchase. Per his recommendation I bought my first pair of Danner Striker II GTX’s at a cost of about \$135. They met the criteria for the kind of footwear I needed for work, and a brand name he stood behind. Many of their boots are made right here in the USA and they offer re-soleing of your worn out boots to maximize their life. This gives you essentially a new pair of boots without the long break-in period that leaves your feet fatigued and blistered. However, the Strikers I bought were not made in America and the quality was just not as high as I had come to expect from the Danner line. After about two years of very hard use, the tread was gone, the soles had split, and there was no value left, not even as a house project boot. To their credit, they served me well. They

were made with Gore-Tex and they kept my feet nice and dry year round in Rover and on the range in the mud. The leather itself seemed high quality and kept a nice shine.

The laces needed replacing on a few occasions, which was a minor inconvenience. Also, I found the standard width uncomfortable and needed to special order the wide version. Interestingly, the leather really sealed in

the heat and made for some intriguing smells when removing the boots. The good news, if you can call it that, was that the boot itself did not hold onto the smell as grudgingly as my feet did. Perhaps that is a credit to the material that they use inside of the boot itself. Even though I felt the quality was subpar in comparison to how the company represents itself, I did order a replacement pair. Unfortunately I was let down even more and have not purchased another pair since. On my second pair, glue was smeared in places it did not belong, and certain features that made the boot look better had been replaced with low quality materials, giving it a shoddy look. The Gore-Tex was still a key feature in this boot that did function appropriately. On a rating scale I would give these particular boots 2.5 gears out of 5.

Check out these Danner Striker II GTX boots. If you look closely, there are multiple splits in the sole and heavywear marks. The leather though, could still be polished to a parade gloss. Over the years, I've heard that the American made version of Danners has been top notch. The cut of leather that they use is hand-picked at the factory for that particular boot, and the soles are of a much higher quality with excellent stitching to keep everything connected just right.

My more recent boot of choice has been the Under Armour Valsetz RTS. It currently retails between \$90 and \$130 online and is sold locally at Sportsman's Warehouse. I can't say enough about the comfort of these boots. After a proper break-in period, I can honestly compare them to a slippers. The grip is amazing on every surface I have been



on and the soles seem to hold up better than most other boots I have worn. Another great feature that the manufacturer doesn't talk about is the compound they use for the

soles, which makes them both durable and soft. This also renders the soles almost completely silent when doing nightly walk throughs of living units. As the primary



portion of the boot is fabric in lieu of leather, it is also breathable like a tennis shoe. When laced up, tight my feet tend to overheat, although not nearly as much as they do in leather footwear. I did have a lace come apart on my first pair, though I blame that on some sheet metal that nicked the lace.

The biggest drawback to these boots, for use in Southeast Alaska is the fact that they are not waterproof. In a community that considers Xtra Tuffs to be excellent running

shoes that is a very substantial draw-back! Long days in Rover during the rainy and snowy seasons may make you reconsider these as a uniform boot. There are many companies that make waterproofing sprays and although they may work well for a while, waterproofing compounds will never replace a good waterproof boot. I find that walking through tall grass with dew in the morning is enough to make my feet feel moist. Nevertheless, this is a boot that I plan to purchase for a third time. On the comfort scale it gets 4.5 out of 5 gears. The overall

score...not so well. I give it 2 gears out of 5, primarily for lack of water resistance. For those of us who are outside frequently, wet feet in squishy boots is one of the worst feelings to have to deal with.

Ultimately, I choose comfort as my top priority, so I have had to come to terms with purchasing footwear more frequently. Check out the boots above. These are the Under Armour boots I have worn virtually every day for about a year. Notice that the soles are in incredible shape and show little wear, considering the amount of use they have seen. There is also very little visible wear in the crease, at the flex point behind the toes. Now, check out the same style of boot below after nearly two and a half years of hard use. This is my first pair of greatly abused Under Armour boots.

The wear on these boots is clearly visible and I have really put them through the mill. Note the major blow outs on the sides near the toe flex point. But look at the sole, which has held up remarkably well after many miles of use. In my opinion, these boots surpass Danners in sole quality and grip.

Stay Safe!

Jerrod

Realistically, even though boots may appear to be in great shape, the materials break down over time, depriving you of the foot support you enjoyed when they were new. But we all get old, right? On the other hand, a chunky, leather, stiff-soled boot may last longer. Your priority may be quite different.

Find out what is important to you and do a little research. I find that researching online Law Enforcement forums provides me with a lot of great information on products. And don't overlook your co-workers as sources of information. They can provide you with many of the answers you seek and help you make wise footwear decisions. You may favor boots with zippers along the sides for ease of use, and others that employ a wire system with a ratchet knob that removes shoelaces from the equation entirely! No one knows your feet better than you and what features will satisfy your requirements. At the end of the day your boots are bound to be more comfortable than a set of high heels! Prioritize your feet, because no matter what kind of day you have, they will always walk you home at night.