

LEMON CREEK JOURNAL



**INSIGHTS & IMAGES OF CORRECTIONS ON THE LAST FRONTIER,
LEMON CREEK CORRECTIONAL CENTER, JUNEAU, ALASKA**

ARE YOU WELL?

OCTOBER 1, 2023

VOLUME XIX



Volume XIX, Wellness Issue

In This Issue:

Forward to Volume XIX	1
Message From the Superintendent	2
Commissioner Winkelman, "Thoughts on Wellness"	5
Recruitment	6
Employee of the Quarter	7
Gollum in the Mirror	8
Live Your Happiest Life	14
Wellness & Communication	16
Health & Fitness, Taking Control – Vol. 3	18
Name That Nipper	21

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.

Forward to Volume XIX

Wellness Issue

In this issue of the Lemon Creek Journal, we spotlight *Wellness* and feature different perspectives on what Wellness means and how to make it a reality. Pretty vanilla topic, right? Wrong. Of all the themes we have addressed in the Journal over the years, this has been perhaps the most challenging to put into words. We hope to challenge our readers as well.

Just what is Wellness? We can think of it in terms of physical fitness, the absence of illness, or the result of replacing internal conflict with a sense of well-being, to name a few. But how do you know when you've achieved it? What if you woke up tomorrow with the absolute certainty that yesterday was the best day you would ever have? How would it make you feel to know that you would never again be as spiritually satisfied, pain and ailment free, strong, competent, and emotionally unburdened in all the days left to you? That would definitely be rock bottom of the Wellness scale. Perhaps it is a good thing that Wellness is so undefinable, its highs and lows unpredictable, and its pinnacle unmeasured. It represents a life-improvement goal that will mean something different to each of us, but with a payoff too rich to ignore.

What we can say with certainty is that life is way too short to spend it preoccupied with physical limitations and burdened with dissatisfaction with who we are, how we have failed or how we appear in others' eyes. In whatever way we define the term, finding a path to Wellness and following it with determination and optimism is a quest worthy of commitment. We hope you will join us on that journey.



The Gift of Giving – Achieving Wellness Through Serving Others

By Superintendent Bob Cordle

It has been said, “If you want happiness for an hour, take a nap. If you want happiness for a day, go fishing. If you want happiness for a year, inherit a fortune. If you want happiness for a lifetime, help somebody.” I think it is safe to say that the author of this quote meant, in order to achieve lifetime happiness, you need to help somebody regularly.

In the July 2018 publication of the Lemon Creek Journal, I wrote of my father’s efforts to teach me the value of doing for others without being asked to do so. He taught me, when you see someone in need, you help, or if you see something that needs to be done, you just do it. Of all the life lessons I learned under his care in my youth, this one in particular has proven to be the most invaluable in transforming my life for the better. Sometimes we become preoccupied and focus too much on our own issues, to the point of even feeling sorry for ourselves. When this happens, self-pity can consume us, causing a temporary loss of vision for the needs of others around us.

In November of 2014, I boarded a flight to return from Anchorage to Juneau, after spending three days in training at the Palmer State Office Building. As I made my way to my aisle seat, one of the flight attendants began making the standard announcements over the PA system, you know the speech.... it was going to be a full flight, be courteous in sharing overhead space, smaller bags need to be placed under the seat in front of you, and so forth. I was tired and just wanted to go home. I had a good number of work and home projects to deal with once I returned, and quite honestly, I was frustrated and not feeling like my usual self. I really wasn’t in the greatest of moods and remember thinking, I didn’t want to talk with anyone on the flight home. Soon everyone was seated, and the flight attendant announced they were preparing to close the cabin doors. I couldn’t help but rejoice just a little, as the middle seat next to me was the only vacant one left on the plane. I glanced over at the young man sitting by the window, who was dressed in military fatigues. We smiled at one another, and I was certain we were thinking the same thing, as both of us began to claim the highly coveted

middle seat arm rests, located at my right and his left. After a moment, another announcement was made that we were waiting for one more passenger to board before we could secure the cabin door, and turning, I said to the young man, "So much for small miracles!"

Within a few minutes a young lady entered through the cabin door and began making her way down the aisle. She was holding a toddler, carrying three or four small bags, while somehow managing to hold onto her fountain soda and brown bag of fast food. Knowing she was going to claim the middle seat next to me, I stood up well before she arrived to allow her access. As she grew closer, she appeared to be exhausted and I asked her if I could help, as one of the airline employees began trying to find overhead space for her numerous belongings. The young lady tried to hand me some of her bags but was unable to do so because of her toddler. Smiling, I reached out for the little guy and asked, "May I?" She apologized as she handed her son off to me. I took a couple of steps back, allowing her and the flight attendant to secure the bags in the overhead compartment. Finally able to sit, she placed her diaper bag under the seat in front of her and sat down with the meal still in her hands. As I stepped into the row and took my seat, she reached for her son. I told her I would be glad to hold him until she was able to finish her meal. She stated she didn't want to burden me. I informed her it was no burden whatsoever, but rather a pleasure since all my children were grown or in high school, and it wasn't often I was able to hold a precious little one like him.

While she ate her meal, the little guy and I bonded. He played with and slobbered all over my state identification badge while I made funny noises that caused him to smile and even giggle on occasion. With her meal finished, she thanked me and reached out to take him back. I said, "He is perfectly happy, and you look very tired. It is doing my heart good to make him smile." Then jokingly I said,

"Besides, I brought nothing to read." She smiled and introduced herself and her son (for confidentiality purposes, I will refer to her and him as Lisa and Travis). She then said, "Looks like you two are hitting it off pretty well, I would hate to break up the new friendship." She sat with her head tilted against the headrest looking fondly on her son for only a few moments before falling asleep. The little guy and I played and entertained one another for, roughly, the next forty-five minutes before she woke up. She asked, "Do you need a break?" Smiling I replied, "This is the break I needed." Still gazing upon her son, she smiled as the two of us continued to be silly. I asked her if Juneau was home, and she stated it was. While still looking at her son, she informed me they frequented Anchorage often for medical appointments, as he was experiencing kidney failure and was undergoing regular dialysis treatments. My heart sank as she described the potential outcome of his future. When she finished talking, we sat in silence for several minutes before I looked over and expressed my sympathy for their situation, and then asked, "How is mom holding up?" With tremendous emotion, she shared her worries, spoke of sleepless nights, her endless efforts to comfort him during times of discomfort and moments of intense pain. She said, he is generally a happy baby but often appears worn out from the stress on his little body. As we continued to visit, she smiled and looked down at my shirt, "You are covered in spit." I looked back and replied, "It is all good, it's just spit."

We soon landed in Juneau. She gathered her belongings, and I carried Travis as we made our way toward the baggage claim area. While waiting for the luggage, Lisa made a call on her cellphone and I overheard her say to the person on the other end, "It's okay, we will take a cab home." Once she hung up, I informed her my daughter, Hannah, was waiting curbside and I offered to give them a ride home. She declined with appreciation, saying that I had already done enough for both of them. With all bags gathered, I

assisted with carrying hers to the sidewalk and introduced her to Hannah, who helped me talk her into accepting the offer. We loaded up the Ford Explorer and drove to her residence in South Douglas, her sitting in the front with my Hannah, and me sitting in the back enjoying the last few minutes of spending time hearing Travis squeak and giggle, while still holding onto my state identification badge. The walkway to her apartment unit was steep and covered in snow. It took two trips to run most of the bags and luggage up to the front door. I then returned to get the little guy, who was still strapped in his car seat. I carefully carried him up the walkway while she and my daughter said goodbye. Once she joined us on the porch, she unlocked the door, and I placed Travis, who was still in the car seat, on the entryway floor of the mostly empty looking apartment room and helped bring in the remainder of her belongings. As she gave me a hug and thanked me for my kindness, all I could think of was I should be thanking her, and of course him. I boarded the plane that evening with a bad attitude, feeling overwhelmed, and yes, a bit sorry for myself. I temporarily lost sight of how blessed my life really is. The two hours I was able to spend with Lisa and that precious little guy forever changed my life, so much so that when I start to cross that thin line of, "oh woe is me", my mind goes back to that moment in time, and I reflect upon what really matters.

I hugged Travis and said goodbye as I closed the door behind me. I stood at the bottom of the porch trying to gain my composure before heading back down to my daughter who was waiting for me in our vehicle. It was cold. The sky was clear that night and the natural light from the full moon lit up everything around me, which somehow seemed to intensify the emotions I was experiencing. I felt sad, but I was also at peace. After a minute of breathing the crisp air, I turned around, walked back up to the door, and knocked. Lisa answered the door and smiled. I reached out for her left hand and placed in it the remaining amount of cash I had left from my trip. She

immediately attempted to give it back while saying, "This is a lot of money, I will not accept it." I smiled and said, "Thank you for trusting me and for sharing your time with me. You are a wonderful mother, Lisa! Travis is so fortunate that you are his mom!" She broke down and hysterically wept into her hands. After a moment she looked back up and said, "Please take the money back, I cannot repay you." I smiled and responded, "The money is for Travis. Please allow me to contribute to the upcoming Christmas season. It is my hope that it will be most memorable for the both of you." She stepped out onto the porch from the entryway and as she hugged again whispered, "Thank you so much!" Earlier that evening on the plane, I had made the comment, "So much for small miracles!", once I found out the middle seat was going to be occupied. Little did I know that the filling of that empty narrow middle seat would become a small miracle, and the best thing that happened to me in a very long time.

The smallest acts of kindness require little to no effort. The value of what one may consider to be simply just a good deed may be an immeasurable act to the one receiving the service, no matter how small it may seem. Offering a smile to someone, holding the door for a stranger, taking the time to listen, comforting one who is hurting, or delivering a meal for someone in need benefits us all and helps us regain our vision for what truly matters.

Service is what life is all about. – Marian Wright Edelman.

Great acts are made up of small deeds. – Lao-Tzu.

Goodness is the only investment that never fails. – Henry David Thoreau.

Thoughts On Wellness

From

Commissioner Winkelman

In the ever-evolving vocabulary of the modern world (who hasn't heard "remote work" or "social distancing"?), few phrases have taken on as much importance as "work-life balance." Whenever I hear it, a part of me wants to laugh out loud, while another part, the grumpier side perhaps, wants to give a long-winded lecture about the good ol' days. That just makes me think, you know, every generation has its own lingo and style—like how my own kids call me "bruh." But really, when you get down to it, the meaning behind the sentiment is often the same.

Ah, the echoing call of "work-life balance." It's everywhere these days. I truly value the phrase, especially in our hustle and bustle life outside these gates. But I hail from a time where phrases weren't just captions beneath a filtered sunset picture on Instagram or Snapchat; they were lived experiences, a reflection of society's deeper understandings. And "work-life balance" shouldn't be any different—it needs to be a philosophy, not a fleeting fad. Fads come and go. Philosophies can be a way of life.

Balancing work and personal life is like trying to stand on a seesaw. On one side, you have your career, the ever-watchful superintendent, and the constant radio calls that always seem to blare at just the "right" moment. On the other, there's family and friends, a realm of Netflix binges, weekend barbecues or boat rides, and, for some inexplicable reason, TikTok dance challenges. The aim is to not let either side of that seesaw touch the ground or, in real-world terms, not lose your sanity.

Today, with people outside dreaming of flexible hours and the luxury of working from their couches, here Corrections staff are, walking the toughest beat 24/7, still striving for that elusive balance. But here's the thing folks: **balance isn't a destination; it's a journey.** And just as you wouldn't expect to bench press 200 pounds on your first day at the gym, seeking balance takes time, effort, and a lot of trial and error.

As we try to instill the spirit of balance in the workforce, it's crucial to emphasize the philosophy, rather than the jargon. It's not about clocking equal hours for work and leisure, but about finding fulfillment and sustainability in both arenas. It's about knowing when to indulge in downtime and when to gear up and handle the next shift/work challenge.

In all seriousness, phrases do come and go, but their underpinnings remain. Today's "work-life balance" might have been yesteryear's "9-to-5," but the pursuit is the same: a life where work is rewarding but not all-consuming, and personal time is cherished, not squandered.

So, the next time you use "work-life balance" in a sentence, pause. Reflect on its deeper meaning and ask yourself: is my seesaw level? If not, adjust, recalibrate, and remember—it's okay to tip a little now and then. After all, that's how we find our true balance.

Cheers to a balanced life—whatever that may mean to you.



Lemon Creek Correctional Center in Juneau, Alaska is currently recruiting Correctional Officers. To apply, go to [Governmentjobs.com/careers/Alaska/](https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/Alaska/) and look for the statewide Correctional Officer I position.

Correctional Officers at LCCC Enjoy:

- Great Pay/Benefits
- \$10,000 signing bonus for first time applicants
- Financial Relocation Assistance
- Career advancement opportunities
- Premium schedule (7 days on/ 7 days off)
- Generous vacation leave
- Excellent training
- Great community to raise a family



For information, contact Lt. Irizarry at (907)465-6288. We look forward to working with you.

LEMON CREEK CORRECTIONAL CENTER

EMPLOYEE OF THE QUARTER

COII Jairo Colindres

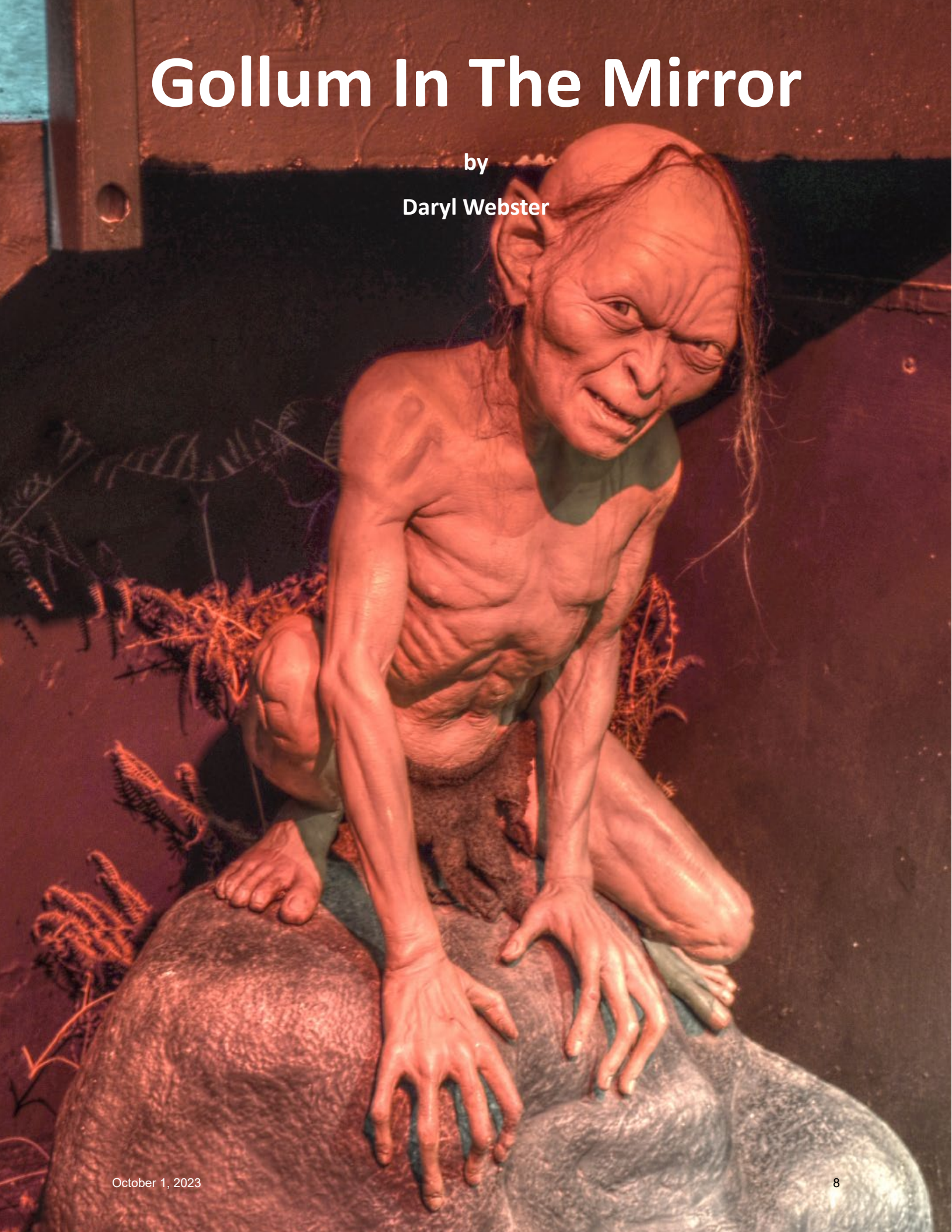


We take great pride in announcing Lemon Creek Correctional Center's newest Employee of the Quarter, Officer Jairo Colindres. The third quarter of 2023 proved difficult to navigate with staff shortages, maintenance challenges, along with weapons qualifications requirements for security staff. In spite of these demands and demonstrating the great spirit of Lemon Creek Correctional Center, Officer Jairo Colindres dug in and contributed immensely to our mission success.

Officer Colindres's dedication to service and duty as a Field Training Officer, Shotgun Instructor, and overall team player, ensured that new recruits met standards for initial training and that officers remained proficient with their firearms. Officer Colindres made himself readily available on short notice for duty on days off, netting over 130 hours of overtime for this last quarter. Officer Colindres has brought great credit upon himself, Lemon Creek Correctional Center, and the Department of Corrections. Congratulations Officer Colindres!

Gollum In The Mirror

by
Daryl Webster



Gollum In The Mirror

Being out of shape and overweight has a way of sneaking up on you. That was my story a few years ago, when I carried way too many pounds on a poorly-conditioned frame. Bending to tie my shoes left me gasping. I went from leading hikes to struggling to keep up. My ever-so-blunt youngest boy took to calling me, “Fat Daddy,” and he was right. So, I went on a starvation diet, without the benefit of exercise, and lost nearly 40 pounds in four months. I was pleased with the new, trim me, wearing clothes that hadn’t fit in years. My lovably evil boy even stopped ragging me, so it took a while to work out why he kept looking at me so strangely. The truth was, I still looked like a wreck, only scrawnier. Call me an optimist, but as a Tolkien fan, I always fancied myself an Aragorn figure, so why was Gollum staring back at me from the mirror? I began to really hate that guy.

Fitness Lesson Number One: You don’t have to live in a cave and eat raw fish to look like Gollum, just cut weight without proper nutrition and exercise.

By coincidence, my lovely wife had recently joined an aerobic fitness class at the gym and was looking even more attractive than usual, so I asked her to take out a family membership and I began visiting the weight stacks. In the beginning, my workouts were short, about 30 minutes a day, a haphazard mix of whatever looked interesting. But I stuck with it and after two or three months, I began noticing improvements, so I worked a little harder, then harder still. My workouts expanded, first to an hour, then to 90 minutes, and the positive changes kept coming, if ever so slowly.

Years have passed and I’m still at it, learning along the way some hard lessons about motivation and dealing with adversity.

Internal Motivation

For much of my adult life, I gained weight, lost it, and gained it back. I tried every workout and diet fad but nothing took hold, because nothing drove me with enough force to stay the course. Then life intervened, in the form of late-stage fatherhood, and I found my motivation. As my babies became toddlers, then little boys, I realized that I was going to be *elderly* during the most critical time of their upbringing. I didn’t want to burden them with introducing the out of shape, grandfatherly gentleman as their father. I wanted to be, and they needed me to be, someone whose strength they could rely on. They would always have a father. They *needed* a dad, and I was the only one who could do something about that. That started me down the road to my big diet and from there to the weight room.

The “Elderly Dad” image profoundly moved me, because at my age, I knew that I wouldn’t be around to see much of my children’s adulthood. That realization birthed a powerful impulse to reject and resist the mental and physical declines that come with aging. I’m not delusional. Of course, I’ll eventually lose, but losing with courage and poise is a rare virtue. I’m reminded of a brief dialog from a movie gem, *The Eiger Sanction*, between the character of Doctor Jonathan Hemlock, a fictional American alpinist portrayed by Clint Eastwood, and one of his climbing partners, Anderl Meier, during their desperate retreat down the frozen face of the Swiss Eiger. As the two take a

momentary breather while clinging to a near-vertical sheet of ice, readying themselves to attempt their final pitch and knowing that they are almost certainly doomed to fall, the following exchange captures nervy elan in the face of nearly certain death:

Anderl Meier: *You're very good. I have really enjoyed climbing with you.*

Dr. Jonathan Hemlock: *We'll make it.*

Anderl Meier: *I don't think so. But we shall continue with style.*

Striving to stay fit and healthy in spite of age and injury is my way of continuing to climb with style. It is the most apt analogy I can manage to describe the level of commitment necessary for me to make fitness a lifetime habit. Wishing for a summer beach-bod is an understandable but unreliable motivator because summer is fleeting but fitness should not be. Wanting to be twenty pounds lighter or to take a couple of inches off your waist is not a long-term strategy for self-improvement, because it defers true satisfaction until those goals are reached. Once there, with the pressure relieved, most people begin sliding down the slippery slope before they've even finished patting themselves on the back. To succeed in the long term, one must find the motivation to pursue a fitness lifestyle that has no measurable goal and no point at which we can trick ourselves into feeling that we've "arrived." The daily process of becoming fit must be as gratifying as the results. You could do a lot worse in the motivation department than by following my example and laboring for the sake of people who love you and who need the best version of yourself that you can possibly be.

Fitness Lesson Number Two: Being fit for life is a journey, not a destination.

Overcoming Adversity

Fitness isn't free and it sure as heck isn't easy. Committing to fitness for life requires paying an opportunity cost to realize a fitness benefit, by carving out a part of each day for exercise and setting aside everything else you could be doing during that time. You will also have to deal with sports injuries at some point, hopefully minor, but occasionally not, because the human body is not indestructible. When you push its limits, you will occasionally exceed them.

Opportunity Costs: I am a lifelong procrastinator. If there is any potential scheduling conflict between working out and the rest of my daily life, my workout invariably suffers. Every time I have tried to do home workouts, I have failed. Every time I have pursued a fitness routine without scheduling my workouts at a precise time each day, I have failed. Every time I have set my workout periods after business hours, when I am tired and just want to get home, I have failed. That leaves only the early morning and a stop at the gym on my way to work. I highly recommend it. The alarm clock wakes me at 0430 each morning. I throw my gear and work clothes into a bag and head for the gym.

The moment I start my truck in the morning, I pointedly force every other consideration; family, business, bills, *everything* out of my mind and focus entirely on that day's workout. At the gym, I pop in my ear buds and throw myself into the daily routine, concentrating on each repetition and striving for perfect form, pushing or pulling weight until I can't budge it. When the workout is done and I've cleaned up and headed for work, I feel as if I've launched myself into the workday like a rocket. That brief interlude in the gym is the most physically, mentally, and emotionally cleansing time of my entire day. I look forward to it and hate life when I miss it.

Sports Injuries: Anyone can exercise regularly, eat properly and be comparatively fit and well without turning the process into an episode of Mortal Kombat. Just be aware that if you vigorously pursue fitness, as I do, there is a fair chance that you will have to deal at some point with an injury. The harder you push yourself, the more likely it becomes, particularly as you age. The unquantifiable but substantial benefit of fitness lies in its contribution to the avoidance and prevention of injuries that plague us when we are out of shape.

Learning and practicing proper workout techniques to avoid or minimize sports injuries is especially important to older athletes like me, but it applies to everyone. Prior to becoming involved in weight training, I injured both of my shoulders while doing chores at home. I distinctly remember hearing and feeling them “Pop,” though there wasn’t much pain at the time. This led to consecutive rotator cuff surgeries on both shoulders and one bicep reattachment. I’ll spend the rest of my life kicking myself for not getting fit earlier and avoiding those surgical ordeals.

Still, those painful episodes taught me belated but priceless lessons about which movements increase the risk of injury, which movements mitigate the risk, and how far I can push myself to overcome adversity. This knowledge has served me well, both inside and outside the gym. But are the fitness benefits worth the risks and the costs?

Fitness Benefits: Convictions mean little unless we are willing to put them to the test, and I mean **THE TEST**, the one where the consequences of failure bite all the way to the bone. To me, living fit and well is the lifestyle equivalent of climbing the icy Eiger, where one either fails spectacularly or emerges stronger and more determined than ever. Spectacular failures are easy enough to find. Think of going to the gym in January, with a New Year’s

resolution to turn your life around, then quitting before the end of the month. Think surgical suites, stitches and scars, months of recovery, and prolonged physical therapy. Been there and done that. But I would do it all again to experience what I’m about to share with you.

The other day, I picked up my 14-year-old eldest son from high school wrestling practice. When I asked him how practice went, he painted a grueling picture of the team’s conditioning routine, with the “bigger guys” having to do even more than anyone else. When I asked him for his definition of “bigger,” he replied, “The guys who are really muscled up... like you.” I dare anyone to conjure up a sweeter moment for a sixty-something dad than when his teenaged son holds him up as some standard of masculinity. How much effort and pain and yes, even *injury* was it worth to hear those few naïve but heartfelt words? I’ll tell you how much. For validation like that, you’d have to kill me to keep me out of the gym.

Fitness Lesson Number Three: Fitness is the only drug worth the price of addiction.

Get Off The Fence

This is where I should presumably say that if you’re not actively working out, what are you waiting for? It is a valid question. The urgency of investing in fitness without delay is difficult to credit when you are twenty-something and all your body parts are fresh and functioning. But about the time you hit the big *Three-O*, your metabolism, body-composition, and flexibility begin to change. In my admittedly unscientific experience, most people have a 10-year window between the ages of 30 and 40 to either adopt a fitness lifestyle and prolong youthfulness, or coast into middle age and begin the sad process of accepting one physical and self-esteem limitation after another for the rest of their lives. That is not to say that you cannot commit

body and soul to a fitness lifestyle later in life. I did. But the rut you must dig yourself out of becomes deeper and steeper the longer you wait.

But I'm not going there. Instead, ask yourself, "Am I happy with my health?" "Does my body composition permit me to live the lifestyle I value and am I at peace with it?" If you can answer affirmatively to those questions, you don't need advice from me. Fit or not, you should pursue the course that fulfills you. But if you aren't happy in your own skin, or if your body limits fulfillment of your desires, do what I did and seize control of your destiny. Find the motivation that comes only from dissatisfaction with the present or ambition for a better future and let that drive you down the path to fitness and health.

The obstacles we must overcome to improve our fitness & achieve wellness are only as daunting as our ambitions. Don't be afraid to fail and don't let temporary setbacks derail you when you do. Just as importantly, don't be impatient or self-conscious about your limitations, because Change Will Come if you stay the course. It won't come quickly, but why should you care? The moment you adopt

fitness as a lifelong endeavor, you effectively eliminate the finish line because you don't need it. How rapidly you progress from Point A to Point B no longer matters, because you are improving yourself every single day and that is the only payoff that counts.

Now, turn the page and you will see two photographs. The first photo shows Gollum taking a gym break from filming *Lord of the Rings*. No, it's just me on Day One at the gym after nearly dieting myself to death. I can't look at the image without grimacing because it starkly illustrates all that is unattractive about the desperate disappointment, self-consciousness, and sense of defeat that drove me to better myself. I'm sharing the pic with you with great trust and humility to show that if I was able to improve on THAT, *you* can improve on you.

The second photograph is the present day me, admittedly not God's gift to fitness but better than I was, happy with who I am, and absolutely certain that every early morning workout, every drop of sweat and every ounce of pain is worth it to never have to see Gollum in the mirror again.



Gym Day One: Gollum Wears A Beard



Present Day Me

Live Your Happiest Life

By

Cherie Wolfe

Kitchen Service Supervisor, LCCC

I am writing this as I sit on a plane on my way back to Juneau from a ten-day visit home. My relationship with my family is the most important thing in my life and maintaining that relationship is part of my happiness. Other parts of my happiness include spending time outdoors, connecting with friends, learning, and experiencing new things.

Maintaining happiness is a very important part of our health and wellbeing and every individual experiences that differently. There are several different dimensions of health that are interconnected and each one needs to be maintained. These dimensions include Physical, Mental, Spiritual, and Emotional Health. When these dimensions are out of balance, our health and wellbeing could be too.

Stress and anxiety can cause inflammation and illness, so trying to achieve balance is very important.

Physical Dimension- Exercise lowers heart rate and blood pressure, strengthens muscles, and enhances immunity. Hormones and blood sugar rebalance; energy levels increase; cells, organs and tissue repair; and the immune system regulates. Try anything! Walk, run, bike, climb, garden, dance- It all counts! Please don't forget to drink water.

Mental Dimension- Depression and anxiety may weaken the body's resistance to inflammation and infection but meditation, breathing

exercises, yoga, and mindfulness can strengthen it. As stress reduces, productivity improves, creativity increases, and decision-making skills sharpen.

Emotional Dimension- A good mood can go a long way in supporting a healthy immune system. Laughter lowers stress levels and releases neuropeptides which are the proteins that help maintain immune tolerance and may help fight disease. Laughter really is the best medicine.

Spiritual Dimension- Studies have shown that experiencing positive emotions and altruistic behavior can boost the immune system. Finding a sense of purpose or showing kindness towards others can lead to improved health and greater resilience. Connecting with loved ones, becoming part of a community that shares your passions, and making time for self-care are all ways to experience positive emotions. People experiencing positive emotions have lower risk of catching a cold than those that experience loneliness and anger.

There is no one way to achieve this balance and it looks different for every person. For me it means diet and exercise, getting outside, reducing stressors, maintaining relationships, trying to eat less sugar (I love sweets), and I've enrolled in classes to become a Health Coach.

For others, this balance might mean a hobby, going to church, cooking, going to school, remodeling, trying to quit smoking, or even changing careers.

The food we eat provides fuel for our bodies, and the fuel we choose can make a big difference in how we feel. The wrong food choices can make you feel tired, less focused, or even bloated and inflamed. The right food choices can give you an energy boost, keep you focused, and feeling healthy overall. Cook at home more often, using more natural ingredients and more variety. Every individual has different dietary wants or needs but try to incorporate more color on your plate. Each color offers a different nutritional value so the more color the better. Eat seasonal ingredients when possible because they are naturally good for the body. Keep snacks healthy, such as nuts, seeds, fresh or dried fruit. Avoid eating too much refined sugar and processed foods, and be sure to wash it all down with, yes, you got it, water.

Take time to recharge! Sleep is the best way to do just that. Your body heals mentally and physically while you sleep. Find a relaxing activity when bedtime nears, whether it's reading a book, meditating, taking a hot bath, or doing a puzzle. Avoid phones, computers, and televisions at bedtime.

Most of us have very busy schedules and whether we are at work or not, breaks should be a part of that schedule. It is very easy to get depleted so try relaxing for a few minutes throughout your busy schedule. Step away for a break from intense demands, nourish, hydrate, find a new location, different light, get outside, participate in a short activity, find a pleasurable interaction, find a quiet place or solitude, and don't forget to breathe.

Keeping your space clean and organized plays a big role in keeping your mind clean and

organized. A clean and organized space is easier and less chaotic to look at and can have an overall soothing effect on the mind. Try to obtain habits that make cleaning and organizing a daily process rather than a once in a while project.

Clean up financial clutter. Messy finances can cause a lot of stress. This is one of those areas that can take a lot of time to clean up but with discipline and motivation, it can be done. Believe me, I am no expert on this, but the struggle is real. There are a lot of helpful resources out there to help you get started and stick to your goals. Rewarding yourself is always a good way to keep yourself motivated. Take a close look at your progress each month and treat yourself to a small job well done reward.

It is important to choose what is best for your individual balance towards a happy healthy life and to understand that once your goals are set, these changes don't happen overnight. Achieving these goals and making those changes is a process that takes planning, motivation, and determination, while maintaining a positive attitude. Surround yourself with supportive people to help you stick to your goals and to help keep you on track.

Remember...the relationship you have with yourself is the most important one you will ever have.

Wellness and Communication

by

Andrew Shand, LCCC Mental Health Clinician

Reflection, and the changing of the seasons seem to go together. This is specifically pertinent for this time of year, the autumnal equinox. The fireweed turns to fluff, the darkness creeps in, the air turns cooler, fresh snow appears on the mountaintops, and the slowdown in pace welcomes reflection.

Wellness, a worthwhile point of focus for anyone, is a critical point of focus for people who work in high stress environments, like correctional institutions. The routine stress and risk to safety necessitates a more pro-active approach to wellness, to maintain a sense of balance.

This article will focus on maintaining harmony within social environments. A comfortable, copasetic, existence with family members, friends, neighbors, and co-workers greatly benefits individual wellness. Dysfunction in these various relationships, of course has the opposite effect. Maintaining harmony in these various relationships takes some level of time and attention. This article was sparked by my recent DOC sponsored trip to Palmer for *Stronger Families* Training. This training focused on strengthening relationships as a path towards wellness. The trainers, appropriately so, spent a great deal of time on communication.

Often, significant ruptures in relationships have their roots in misunderstandings or communication differences. Most relationship ruptures can be mended with some thoughtfulness and consideration in the context of how people receive messages of appreciation. The *Stronger Families* curriculum,

consistent with noteworthy book *The Five Love Languages*, by Gary Chapman, encourages thought towards how people within our social circles best receive messages of support or appreciation. Oftentimes people deliver and receive messages more effectively in certain categories, as opposed to others.

The five general categories of Appreciation Style are:

Affirmation: expressing appreciation with words. For these people, consider:

- Writing an encouraging email to a team member.
- Sending a text message echoing positive thoughts.
- Verbally express these thoughts to the person, directly.
- Take note of significant dates in their lives, such as birthdays, and anniversaries.

Service: expressing appreciation through contributing to a task for someone else. For these people consider:

- Completing a chore, outside of your routine that is supportive to someone else.
- Holding Gate 6 for a team member.
- Helping in carrying a heavy load.
- Preparing a cup of coffee for another.

Gifts: expressing appreciation through giving a gift. For these people consider:

- Small surprise gifts.

- Offering care packages during times of hardship, or anytime for the matter!
- Giving a person an item that you know will interest them.

Time: expressing appreciation through spending time with others. For these people consider:

- Spending time with another during lunch, or break.
- Inquiring about something happening in the life of another.
- Asking about someone's weekend.
- Asking about someone's family.
- Showing interest in a person's hobby.

Touch: expressing appreciation through physical contact. This appreciation style often comes with a disclaimer - Be sensitive that while some communicate with touch, others may not. With that said, touch is an important means of communication within many backgrounds, and cultures. For people with this appreciation style, consider:

- Giving a fist bump to express a job well done.
- Offering a pat on the back after a difficult time.
- Offering a hug to communicate support or connection.
- High fives!

Most people fall into several of these categories. Which ones best apply to yourself, your loved ones, your teammates!? As you

reflect, can you identify messages of appreciation you may have overlooked? While being sensitive to the appreciation style of others can be helpful, it can also be helpful to understand when others are attempting to deliver a supportive message to us. Sometimes if someone is attempting to show appreciation in a way that is not consistent with how we receive support, we can overlook the sentiment. When others are making an effort, take notice! An important component of wellness, or self-care involves not only taking care of our own needs, but considering what is supportive for those in our various social circles.

This article describes one component of the *Stronger Families* curriculum that many DOC employees will be exposed to in the coming months. I encourage everyone to be open to the lessons of *the Stronger Families* message. Consider how you can be a change agent, in guiding your social circles toward a more harmonious experience.

While staying in touch with the needs of your social circles, be sure to continue prioritizing your own self-care, too. That may include taking part in the opening of the various hunting seasons, enjoying the silver runs, enjoying the hiking trails in cooler temperatures, foraging for tasty fungi that sprout from the ground in the fall, or really...whatever floats your boat! After-all, we live in Alaska, a unique place with a lot to offer- lean into it, enjoy it!



Health & Fitness

The Lemon Creek Journal features Sergeant Kyle Schramm on Health & Fitness. Kyle's practical knowledge and experience in the fitness field is imposing, and well worth sharing. Look for Kyle's byline in future issues!

Taking Control – Volume 3

By

Sgt. Kyle Schramm

Welcome back to the uphill battle for a better YOU! I hope you have been working on bettering yourself and starting to build healthy habits. Now that we have covered many of the basics and understand what it means to live a healthy lifestyle, we can start diving deep into the specifics! I hope you now have a general idea of what you want to do with yourself and have a rough game plan on how to reach this goal. Remember, we are in this for the long haul, but we need to set short-term goals that are more easily achievable in the near future. Keep going! I believe in you as you should believe in yourself!

Let's talk about muscle building. What is muscle building and exactly how do we do it? Well, it's exactly how it sounds, it's BUILDING MUSCLE. "Hypertrophy" is the more scientific term used and that's what we will call it from now on. Hypertrophy is defined as "the enlargement and growth of skeletal muscle fibers." So how do you think we should train to build the greatest amount of muscle possible? Through hypertrophy training, which involves building your muscles up so that they can withstand more workload and the everyday stressors that come with life. When building a house, you build the foundation first, right? You want that foundation to be as strong and stable as possible. Nobody would spend time and money building a house with no foundation. What

would happen to that house? It wouldn't last long and it would crumble under its own weight, due to the lack of a solid base. That's exactly what would happen to you without a well-developed muscular structure.

Creating that foundation and building your muscles from the ground up is crucial for your long-term plan. The knowledge and experience you gain by muscle building sets you up for heavy lifts, intense sports, work, and everyday life. I firmly believe that everyone should devote most of their beginner training to muscle building so they can learn their body and its limits. Learn as well the movement to each exercise, while strengthening ligaments, tendons and connective tissue to help prevent injury.

Hypertrophy Training:

With hypertrophy training the main focus is going to be intensity of effort, training frequency, and muscle stimulus. Intensity meaning how hard your workouts are and how much effort you put into each repetition and set. Training frequency means that you are hitting each muscle group at least twice a week and with optimally 15-20 sets a week. Muscle stimulus refers to how much activation and muscle cell break-down you are getting per workout.

Training Intensity: The key to knowing if you're training with enough intensity is by basing each exercise off a simple 1-10 difficulty scale. 1 being as easy and calm of an exercise as possible and 10 being the most hardcore and exhausting exercise that brings your muscles to muscular failure. For hypertrophy training you want to stay in the 7-9 range. This is going to ensure you are pushing yourself hard enough to stimulate optimal muscle growth but not so hard that it hinders recovery. By pushing too hard, this would make you sore for extended periods of time, ultimately bringing your training frequency down. Knowing what your personal 1-10 difficulty scale is, requires taking

time to figure yourself out and playing around with different weights and exercises.

Training Frequency: The most optimal hypertrophy training would include hitting each muscle group 3 times a week. However, this is pretty unrealistic for a novice lifter. You WILL be sore. You HAVE to take rest days to ensure you are recovering and letting those muscles grow. So, if we can aim to hit each muscle group twice a week that will guarantee we hit our 15-20 sets, spread out over the week for muscle growth. I understand that everyone has a personal life that plays a large role in how often you can train. But remember, nothing can replace health and wellness. You are investing in YOURSELF. Here are a couple of tried and true workout schedules that have weathered the test of time. Three days on, one day off which will have you training 6 days a week. If that does not work or if you need another rest day try three days on, one day off, followed by two days on, one day off and this will have you training 5 days a week.

Muscle Stimulus: Muscle stimulus is really going to be dictated by how much muscle breakdown you're getting. Are you hitting your difficulty scale of 7-9 on each set? This will ensure you are getting lots of blood pumped into the muscle and are stretching out the fibers. You want to FEEL like you're working out the muscle. A good tip is to get a good "Mind-muscle connection." That means to literally THINK about the muscle you are actively exercising and to focus on the concentric and eccentric movements (the lifting and lowering phase of the movement). The difference between thinking about what you had for dinner 2 nights ago and focusing on the movement of the weight and the connection to your muscle can be a large factor in stimulating your muscle enough to get a good workout. Remember, hypertrophy is the building of muscle by first BREAKING DOWN the muscle and then letting it rebuild! So, make sure you TEAR those muscle fibers (in a safe and controlled way)!

Final Tips: We want to stay in the 10-12 rep range on all exercises. This is going to help stimulate muscle growth by really making sure we get good muscle breakdown and lots of time under tension to inhibit stress on the muscle. This will also humble you very quickly as you discover how much weight you can use on each exercise to meet your rep range with the appropriate intensity. Let's also keep the rest periods between sets down to a minimal 1-2 minutes. This will help you train recovery and muscle endurance. Also, so you don't get "cold," we want to keep that heart rate going and that blood flowing to the muscle.

Now get out there and experiment with different training schedules and figure out what works best for you. This is a huge learning phase so be patient with yourself. You need to learn your body and let it adjust to the new lifestyle you're putting in place!

NAME THAT NIPPER

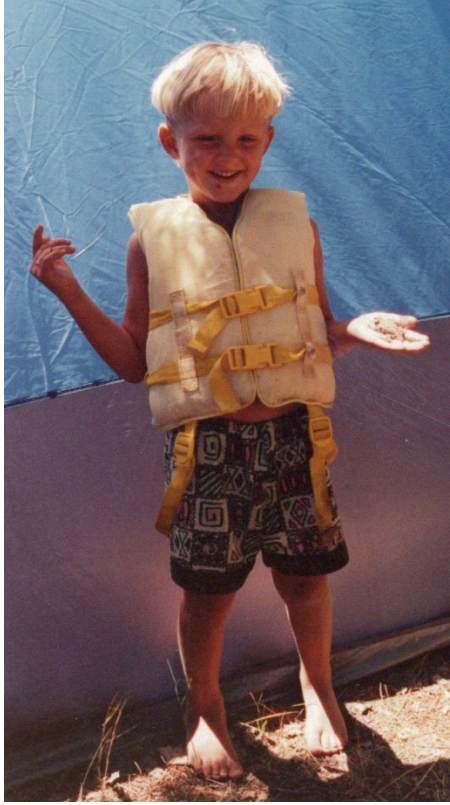
Check out the following photographs. You know these people because they all work at Lemon Creek Correctional Center. They've just grown a little. Identify them correctly and win a door prize ticket, doubling your odds of being drawn for one of the many prizes to be awarded at the Holiday & Awards Banquet on December 2. One winner will be selected from each floor shift and one from administrative day shift. To win, be the first in your group to email Superintendent Webster with all 8 kids correctly identified (Or be the first to identify the most). Contest closes October 11. (Hint: They're all administrative &/or supervisory personnel).



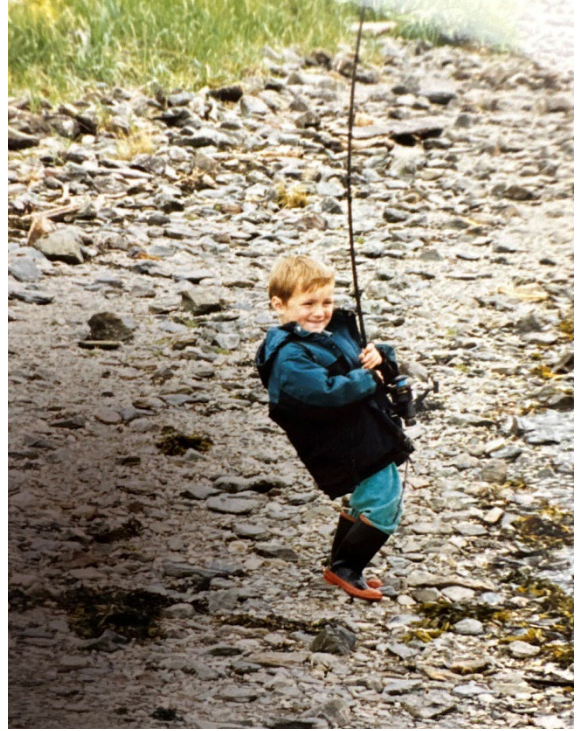
#1



#2



#3



#4



#5



#6 (The short one)



#7



#8