A close-up photograph of a person's hands in a yellow shirt, with their wrists cuffed together in front of them. The person is wearing metal handcuffs. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

# **LEMON CREEK JOURNAL**

**INSIGHTS & IMAGES OF CORRECTIONS ON THE LAST FRONTIER**

**LEMON CREEK CORRECTIONAL CENTER, JUNEAU ALASKA**

**IN THIS ISSUE:**

**DEALING WITH THE SMALL THINGS**

**OCTOBER 1, 2019**

**VOLUME XIII**



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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](mailto:daryl.webster@alaska.gov).

**Cover Photography:** Kris Weixelman

**Banquet Photograph:** Chilkoot Pass, by E.A. Hegg (1867-1948), Library & Archives Canada



## A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

**W**hen I was 16 years old, I took up rock climbing with my friend, Jeff in a narrow canyon about seven miles away from our family farm. Being teenagers, we were unable to afford the appropriate clothing, helmets, shoes, ropes, harnesses, carabiners, or other necessary hardware used for safe climbing practices, so we boulder climbed. Though injuries can and do occur from boulder climbing we were not concerned, as one is usually never more than ten to fifteen feet up, and we figured if we did lose our grip and footing the fall wasn't that far to the ground.

After a few months of practicing on boulders we became very proficient in the sport of climbing and soon

boulders became boring, so we decided to tackle something a little more challenging. In the opening of the canyon were cliffs ranging from thirty to one-hundred-and-fifty-foot high. We tried our skill with the thirty-foot cliffs and found it to be no problem, so we moved on to higher climbs and more difficult routes. Before too long we were scaling the one hundred-and fifty-foot cliffs with ease and soon it wasn't a matter of the height, but a matter of the difficulty that intrigued us. We backed down from no challenge no matter how unsafe the situation appeared. Our good judgement had long since left us.

About a mile further into the canyon were one thousand plus foot cliffs. On a hot August afternoon we decided we were ready and made our way up the main trail that followed the twenty foot wide creek through the narrow canyon and up to the base of one of the cliffs that the national guard and other experienced climbers used because it was rated a five twelve, which is difficult and reserved

for top climbers. Still possessing no gear, we began the ascent. The route proved to be difficult but eventually we managed to make our way up until we were approximately thirty feet from the top, taking time to rest on a narrow, sloping ledge. As we recuperated, we studied the rock above us. The last ten feet was an overhang that was going to require the use of only our upper body strength to complete the route. We were almost there and though we were nervous, neither of us wanted to give up. Once adequately rested, my friend asked aloud what we were both thinking, while staring straight up, "Alright, who's going first?" Without hesitation I smiled and started up. In less than sixty seconds I was at the base of the overhang and began trying handholds that would take me away from the cliff wall, leaving me suspended more than twelve hundred feet above the canyon floor, with no protective gear to lower me back to safety if I made an error. Even though the handholds were solid, the rock formation rolled toward the top, becoming smooth and looked almost impossible to navigate. I realized that once committed there was no turning back. Once my body left the cliff wall and I no longer had the aid of my leg muscles to support me, I would be relying completely on my upper body strength to finish the climb and if my fingers could find no more cracks to dig into, or knobs to clutch onto I

would be stuck and eventually would fall to my death.

As I studied the rock above me and contemplated the few possible routes available to take, I realized I had made a grave mistake and knew I could go no further without going on blindly. Clinging to the side of the cliff I looked down for the first time and beheld the reality of the nightmare I had gotten myself into. The twenty-foot-wide creek at the bottom of the canyon, from that height, looked like a piece of dental floss tossed on the ground and the one-hundred-foot-tall trees like tiny blades of grass. My life was in terrible danger and I faced the dilemma of all dilemmas, to continue on blindly in hopes that more handholds would present themselves or try and figure out a way back down onto the ledge where my friend was standing. I was stuck! Without the proper gear for climbing I could not be lowered to safety.

From below, Jeff tried to guide me down by having me lower my left foot onto a small toehold that protruded out of the cliff wall. It was the same toehold I had used to climb up, but I could not see it or feel it and the only way to return to it was to let go with my left hand of the rock I was clinging to in desperation. It simply wasn't an option. As the minutes passed, I began to develop scissor

legs. Scissor legs occur as a result of fatigue and exhaustion due to stress or standing in an awkward or uncomfortable position with your legs spread apart for a long period of time while climbing. The leg muscles begin to twitch slightly and if relief isn't provided soon, the slight twitch turns into an up and down motion, mimicking scissors cutting paper. As you can imagine, not being able to control your leg spasms for a climber stuck on the side of a cliff wall can be problematic.

I knew I didn't have much time before my legs, which were my greatest support, would start bouncing, give out, and would ultimately cause my fall. I had to act immediately or face certain death! I remember thinking of my mother, how was she going to take the news that I had fallen to my death, because I knew that more than likely my next move was going to be unsuccessful.

Though my mother didn't approve that I had taken up boulder climbing a few months earlier, she took comfort in the belief that I had no interest in pursuing cliff climbing because I had felt it was too dangerous without gear. However, in a short period of time, I allowed my athletic ability and arrogance to create a false sense of security, that in my mind I could climb anything, anywhere, without the necessary gear.

My dad had always told me that making the right choice, sometimes the harder right choice, was always worth it. He taught me that it was better to act for yourself than to be acted upon by others because of selecting a wrong choice. But now, I was not in control of myself, and to this day I have never forgotten the absolute fear engendered by that event. One of the things I took away from that experience is that it takes a certain kind of courage to stand back rather than leaping forward into foolish situations.

Below me and to my left about four feet away was a rock that extended about five inches out from the smooth cliff wall. Simultaneously, I let go of both handholds and fell toward it. For me to grab onto it with both hands required me to turn my chest and shoulders, that were pressed up against the cliff wall, away and toward the canyon floor. To this day if you ask Jeff how I got down safely to the ledge he was standing on, like me, he can't tell you. It has been 36 years since that brush with almost certain death and neither one of us can remember a single detail after I let go. Adrenaline fueled my motive to live and I somehow miraculously made it down to where he was standing twenty feet below me.

After catching my breath, which took several minutes, we realized the only

way to get off that particular route, without going up, was to literally climb almost directly sideways about another twenty feet, to where the cliffs met the timber. Once safely off the cliff and into the tree line we took time to sit and tried to recount how I made it down to the ledge without falling to the canyon floor. The event was a blur to the both of us and we couldn't grasp how on earth that could be! In spite of years of conversation, we still can't piece those final seconds together. What I do vividly remember is this. As we started the hour and half walk back down to the trailhead the mountain air never smelt so sweet, the sun never shown so bright, the song of the western meadowlark bird never sounded so pure, the love I felt for my parents had never been that strong, and the breeze that cooled my sweat-soaked body never felt so refreshing. I was alive! I had never felt so alive!

The messages contained in this issue of the Lemon Creek Journal are about the simple things, and not taking them for granted. It is true that the small things in life that are often the most important can be continuously overlooked. It is easy to get caught up in a world that demands our time to the point that we don't seem to have time for the small things. If this happens, or when, it is more likely than not because we either have allowed the world to set our priorities for us or we have become unknowingly careless with our time. A great man once said, "Life is to be enjoyed, not just endured."

I am proud to serve alongside each and every one of you! Please know, my door is always open, whether work related or not. Thank you all for all that you do!

Stay safe,  
Bob Cordle  
Superintendent II



## **EMPLOYEE OF THE QUARTER**

### **Officer Gary Locke**

**Lemon Creek is proud to announce the Fall 2019 Employee of the Quarter. Where superior performance is concerned, there are no coincidences, so it is no accident that 2016's Lemon Creek Employee of the Year and the Fall 2019 Employee of the Quarter are one and the same – Officer Gary Locke. When a shift runs below minimum staffing and help is desperately needed, Gary is there. When something needs to be done and no one is available, Gary is ready. When inspiration is in short supply and we search for a role model to encourage and inspire us, we need look no further than the officer who has been there, done that, and who has modestly worn the mantle of honored service – Officer Gary Locke. Congratulations from all your colleagues at Lemon Creek Correctional Center.**



## Buy early and avoid the rush!!!

These greenhorns waited too long to pick up tickets to last year's banquet but you can beat the crowd. See Lt. Irizarry or any Shift Supervisor to reserve your seats.

- When: December 21<sup>st</sup>, 6 – 9 pm
- Where: Elizabeth Peratrovich Hall.
- Your choice of prime rib or roast turkey with sides and desserts. Chicken nuggets, fries and fruit for the kids.
- Santa will visit with gifts for children
- Door prizes and silent auction
- Tickets go on sale October 17. \$30 for adults. Kids under 16 free.
- Come join us to celebrate the holiday together and honor those who have inspired us by their example.

# PHANTOMS & FALLEN ANGELS



BY DARYL WEBSTER

*That which does not kill us makes us stronger.*

Friedrich Nietzsche

**M**any years ago, when I was a young patrol officer, I was assigned a “Check the Wellbeing” call in a small apartment complex. Wellbeing checks were common but unpredictable. They might begin with a 911 call because the neighbors were arguing and things seemed to be getting out of hand. The blow-out could be in full swing by the time we arrived but between diplomacy and the threat of jail, we generally worked things out. Often, the wellbeing checks involved older people who lived alone and hadn’t been seen in a while. Sometimes they were just keeping to themselves but not infrequently, we found them deceased in some lonely and undignified pose and then had to determine whether their deaths were natural or something else. On this summer night, the caller was a young woman who had dropped off her two year old daughter with her estranged husband for a weekend visit. Come Sunday evening, he wasn’t answering the phone, so she called the police to go by and remind him to bring the girl home.

I knocked on the door. No answer. When I tried the knob and it opened right up, I paused at the doorway, just to one side. Entering someone’s home without permission is a good way to get shot, uniform or not, so best to introduce yourself, loudly. I would have taken that precaution anyway but for some reason I couldn’t quite define, I hesitated to cross the threshold. The apartment was hot and still and very, very quiet. The heavy air muffled my voice. In I went, through the kitchen, down a hallway to the left and into the bedroom, where I spied the little girl. She lay like an angel in her jammies, tucked into bed, a stuffed animal beside her on the pillow. The animal’s fur was mussed and still a little damp from having been used to smother her as she slept. Her father sat on the floor of the bedroom closet, a thin clothesline knotted tightly around his neck, the other end tied to a stout dowel rod. Beside him lay a suicide note, scrawled in brick-red crayon. I don’t remember exactly what it said, self-pitying drivel like, “Forgive me,” “Can’t live like this,”

but I remember turning to my partner and saying in a hushed tone, “My God, I wish I could bring him back and kill him myself.”

My police career was exceptional in some ways but pretty typical in most. I remember the idealism, the adrenaline-stoked insanity, fights and chases and crack house search warrants, practical jokes, triumphs and unfulfilled ambitions, colleagues robbed of their lives and others who took their own. Even my partner from that long-ago call passed away before her time. When it is all said and done, a criminal justice career is many things, but prominently among them, it is an exercise in ghost gathering. Mine follow me faithfully and leading the procession is a tiny girl, her tousled hair spread across her pillow, pretending to sleep.

All of you here at Lemon Creek, wonderful people I know you to be, busily perform your duties and fill your own memory chests - with fondness, God willing. Much of the difficulty you experience on the job rolls right off your back. Some of it, you absorb and at its best, those experiences season you and make you a little wiser than you might have been in a more sheltered life. At worst, you carry them home and occasionally inflict them on those

who love you the most, proving I suppose that that which does not kill you may not make you strong at all, it may just make you miserable and miserable to be around. Should you gather a few ghosts along the way, I hope you exorcise them or share them with someone who can help make sense of their whispers. Reaching that accommodation can be as essential as air when the persistent past threatens to haunt your future.

I’m not too wise myself and I don’t have it all figured out but take it from me. My small daughter is no angel, but each of the countless nights I’ve put her to bed, surrounded by her stuffed menagerie, I’ve kissed her and loved her with a little more ferocity than a father who has never seen a murdered angel with his own eyes. My phantoms haven’t killed me and if they haven’t made me stronger, they have at least taught me to hold more tightly to the life and loved ones I know are only mine on loan and to appreciate all of the things, great and small, that remind me of how good and purposeful and hopeful life can be.

May it be so for you.

Daryl Webster



## **SPOTLIGHT ON SECURITY & TRAINING**

# **Finding the Little Things**

**By Sergeants Bo Pierce & Chuck McCracken**

How many of you remember your first week on the job? If you were like me, you were eager, energetic and ready to jump in and tackle any task thrown at you. I was raring to go in and search inmates and their living areas to find contraband and bust the bad guys. The first time I was able to enter a mod or dorm and do a full shake down, I just knew I was going to find something big and be the hero of the day.

The day finally came. We were all called to booking and the institution was put on lock down. We were informed that there was believed to be a cell phone and some drugs in B mod. I was the newest officer on the floor. The next newest officer had been here for seven years. I started in Room One and worked my way to Room Five. I was fast, I was confident, I was thorough, and I found nothing. Another officer came along behind me and asked if I had checked Room Two. I replied that I had. The officer rechecked the room and found a small cellophane wrapper with some marijuana in it.

I couldn't believe that I missed the contraband in that room. I asked the officer where he found the small package. He told me it was in the vent by the overhead light. He said he saw just a small glimmer coming from the top righthand corner of

the vent. When he got closer, he could see the cellophane and pulled it out. I learned that day that it isn't how fast or how many areas you search, but how well you pay attention to the little details of the area you are searching. I also learned that even with my background and experience, I wasn't the same as the officers around me, who had years of specific experience conducting searches in a prison setting.

The same can be said about pat searches. We recently had an inmate attempt to take an entire case of cereal from the kitchen. The officer who had just taken over Post Five did what I like to call the "Lemon Creek Sweep," which is a quick swipe across the top of the shoulders, down the sides and then each leg from about the knee down. Only this officer didn't even go across the shoulders. The inmate came out of the kitchen with a case of small individual boxes of cereal on his shoulder like he was holding an old-style boom box radio. The Post Five officer did his modified Lemon Creek Sweep and sent him on his way without looking twice.

The inmate made it down the stairs and almost past the Post Two officer when the officer stopped him and asked him why he had the box. The inmate replied that he was taking it to make a toilet seat cover. The Post Two officer then let the inmate go about his business. The very bold and lucky inmate proceeded down the hallway to the mod entry door where the Max officer happened to be standing. When the inmate passed the Max officer, the officer stopped him, inspected the box, and found it was full of cereal. The officer took the case of cereal and reported it to the SS.

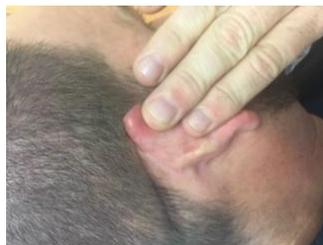
There is no excuse for this inmate having made it as far as he did. There could have been far worse things in the box other than cereal. If not for the vigilance of the Max officer, the case of cereal would have made it all the way to the mods. When looking for the little things, "Observation" should be at the top of the list.

During your pat searches, look for the little things. In one scene from the movie, "The Patriot," Mel Gibson's character (Benjamin Martin) and his sons prepare to ambush a party of British soldiers. Martin tells his young son, "aim small miss small". In the film Martin is referring to shooting the target at hand (British Soldiers) but this tactic applies equally to our pat search techniques. If we are looking for the small things, we will more than likely find not just the small things, but the large things as well.

When conducting a proper pat search, you should first ask the inmate for his shoes and his hat if he has one. When searching the shoes, check all the nooks and crannies to include pulling out the insoles. Don't just turn them upside down and tap them together. When searching a hat, be sure to check the sweat band on the inside of the hat by running your fingers all the way around it. When you are done with the hat and shoes, set them aside, away from the individual so he cannot slide something in while you are conducting the rest of the pat search.



For the rest of the pat search, a good rule of thumb is to go from top to bottom. Start by having the inmate open his mouth and use his fingers to flip up his top and bottom lip, in order to see his gums, then have the inmate run his fingers around his cheeks to expose the rest of the inside of his mouth. After the mouth is cleared, have the inmate show you behind each ear, and especially under his hair, if he has long hair. Then have him show you the palms and the backs of his hands, with fingers spread wide to ensure he is not holding anything between his fingers.



Next, you should have the inmate turn around, so that he is facing away from you and have him stand with his legs more than shoulder width apart. His arms should be outstretched to his sides, parallel to the floor. Place one hand at the top middle of his back, where you can grab his shirt collar and take him off balance if he tries to resist you in an aggressive manner. With the other hand pat down one side, starting where the arm meets the shoulder and working your way down to the hand,

before continuing under the arm at the wrist and working back up to the armpit. Pat down the side to the waistline, then move your search to the front just below the neck and run your hand down the chest area to the waistline, where you should run your hand/fingers under the waist band from halfway around the front to halfway around the back. Switch hands at the top middle of the inmate's back and repeat the process on the other side.



Once you have completed the upper body, move to the legs. Using both hands (one on the outside and one on the inside of the leg) move your hands up into the groin area as this is a common place to conceal contraband. Inmates bank on the assumption that you will feel uncomfortable reaching into this area, so prove them wrong. From the groin area, pat down toward the foot, pulling pants out of the socks if they are tucked in. Also, pull the sock away from the leg to ensure nothing is tucked into the top of the sock. Have the inmate raise his foot and pat the bottom of each foot to ensure that nothing is taped there. Repeat this procedure on the other side.



As you search, remember to pat and squeeze and *think* about what you are feeling. Do not rationalize what you feel. Check on it. Remember too that random and frequent pat searches are one of the many tools you have, to ensure that we all go home safely at the end of shift. If you look for the little things, you have a better chance of finding the things that can cause the most damage.

We would like to thank our resident house elf for helping us with the photos.



“Master has given Dobby  
clothes. Dobby is Free!!!”

Lighthouse photo: Alnes Lighthouse, Norway. Photo by Henny Stokseth. Courtesy Wikimedia Commons



# The Little Things In Life

By Lieutenant Ed Irizarry

**H**ow many times have you said this phrase to yourself or to others around you? Some will remember thinking it during times with family, friends, or alone. Many times, we shrug it off as just a “saying” or say it to ourselves without really catching the true meaning of the words.

So, what is the first thing that comes to mind when you hear “the little things?” I would venture to say most people immediately think of Family. I know I do. I think of my time with my Family and close friends, remembering those moments of sharing closeness, love and happiness in the smallest of moments. Think of the little things you do that bring a smile to your loved ones’ faces. It could be a simple gesture or even a game with your child that brings joy and laughter. For example, when my

son was much younger, we played a game every time I came home from work. I would always have some candy somewhere on my person and he would go on a search and rescue mission through coat pockets, pants pockets, or my pack to save that candy. In the big scheme of life, that candy was a little thing but my son, now nearly a teenager, still talks of the Candy Search and Rescue Mission.

How do we define little things in life? They defy definition. The “little things” hold different meanings for everyone, depending on upbringing, regions lived in and the life experiences that transform us into who we are and shape our views. This teaches us to recognize that others may see life through different glasses. I would recommend listening not only with your ears but with your

eyes when experiencing another's thoughts and views of the "little things". I personally enjoy experiencing those moments as I ask myself what journey this person has had in life and what may have formed their personality. I have found we all do not have the same thoughts on the little things. They are strongly different, especially given the diversity of everyone, however I do believe there is a common agreement of the true bottom line of this term's meaning. I believe it is something that has been etched deeply into our Core Values and beliefs. It is set in the foundation of our upbringing, cultural background, our direct and indirect families and friends.

You see I have had the opportunity to travel the world and experience so many different cultures. Along the way, I became close to many families in my travels. I met families who were prosperous and others who were destitute. In one case, my companions and I were invited into their homes and over a period we forged a bond that was as strong as family. In some cases, these families did not know if they would live to see the next day, let alone what they would feed their children. Some would not venture far from their dwellings to find food for fear that they themselves would become food

for the surrounding wildlife. In other parts of this region, families had plenty of food but feared the human element that would take without asking and leave carnage and destruction behind. One thing that I learned from these families was their belief in the little things.

I want to share with you my experience with one village family. After securing the family, the father wanted to venture out a short distance to dig up a root. Now to you and me it was "A plant root". You will ask yourself what is so important about a plant root. It's in dirt, and it's just a root! I had no clue or idea why this father wanted it so badly that he was willing to risk his life to obtain it. We were able to allow him to dig this root up. I will tell you I have never witnessed someone so proficient in what I call Root Retrieval. This man was a walking tiller machine with the night vision of a cat. I was truly impressed with his skills. Apparently, this root is sought after for its nourishment but hard to come by as predators lay in wait for those who may seek it. He gathered this item and we slipped back into the dwelling. What I witnessed next moved me emotionally and has been forever burned into my memory.

This father gave the root to his wife

This father gave the root to his wife who then prepared it for the two children. I watched this unfold as the mother fed the children the root. When the father was offered some, he refused and gave his portion to his wife. The wife then fed the father's portion to the children. The children quickly ate what was left. The father came to me in the darkness of the dwelling. I could see tears running down his face. He could not speak English but he was able to communicate his thanks to me. Time stood still for me. This was something we had to see to understand. What was such a *little thing* to us, just a simple meal, was the *Biggest thing* to this man and his family. A part of me felt sorrow, some shame in how fortunate we are and that sometimes we take our good fortune for granted. I also felt gratitude to not have to live this way, as did the villagers who sheltered us for the evening. Lastly, I felt pride for having been a part of a moment that humbled me. You see, it was a little thing, the simple act of doing our job and providing security to the family that allowed them to have a truly Big moment. As often as I think of that man and his family, I'd be lying if I told you that I never shed tears at the memory.

As you read this, I want you to picture times you have had with your fathers and mothers. Was there a time as children when your family was eating at the table and you wanted something more because you had finished your portion? You eyed your fathers' plate as he watched you stare at his serving. To your surprise, he shared his meal or just gives you all of it. You probably dove in without hesitation. Now think about you as a father and doing the same for your child. When this happens to me, I just smile and ride the flood of emotions. I never thought as a child about how easily my father would give away his food to me. I never gave a second thought about my father giving up his meal. Now as a father, I do not hesitate to give away my meal to my child. I ponder as a father how easy and without hesitation it is for me to do that. I just smile and say to myself, "the little things," those little things like my willingness to give my child the best I can. And of course, the other "little thing" is my child.

There are many things in our lives that can be considered "little things". Whether it is family, friends, co-workers or even job duties. We must take the time to tend to and make the little things happen. Though small, these are the things that keep us moving forward. They keep us

grounded. Making sure the little things happen as we perform our duties will prevent big things from happening that may cause difficulties.

In closing I wish to thank you for letting me share some of my life moments and thoughts with you all. I hope you can reflect on moments in

your life, as I have, that make you smile about the little things in life. I also hope that you will take a moment and enjoy those special moments more with your loved ones and friends. “Enjoy the little things in life, for one day you’ll look back and realize they were the big things.”

A photograph showing several police officers in tactical gear on a wooden structure, possibly a porch or balcony, during a tactical operation. The officers are wearing white shirts, dark pants, and black tactical vests. One officer in the foreground has "POLICE" written on his vest. They are holding firearms, and one officer is aiming a rifle. The background shows green foliage and a wooden building.

# THE LAW OF SMALL THINGS

By Daryl Webster

# The Law of Small Things

By Daryl Webster

**W**hen I was a rookie, no matter what else I was doing, I kept one ear glued to the radio, waiting for the occasional “Any unit to assist SID?” SID was the acronym for Special Investigations Division, which was our department’s unit tasked with high level and interstate narcotics investigations. A request for a patrol unit to assist SID meant that they were preparing to serve a search warrant and needed a uniformed officer to help make entry. An ungodly scrawl of static would quickly follow as every rookie on that frequency scrambled to be the first to key up and volunteer, but if you were quick enough, and I was very quick, you could beat the rest of the pack to the airwaves and get the call assignment. So it was, that on one particular evening, I headed to wherever the operational briefing was being held, eager to join the circus.

I don’t recall the specifics of the briefing but it was a typical narcotics search warrant gig. That seems a contradiction of terms to describe an operation where literally anything could happen. The very fact that a common uniformed officer would find himself at the head of a line of

burly, bearded narcs, busting into a drug house was significant. Not too long before, a drug dealer had shot a local narcotics officer during a warrant service and escaped conviction because the officer was a narc and looked more like an outlaw biker than a cop. The druggie thought his house was being invaded by rivals and opened fire. The court bought into his reasoning. Thereafter, every narcotics search warrant featured a uniformed officer, so if the suspect’s trigger finger got too itchy and he plugged the “Uniform,” there would be no legal defense. Where was the down side?

The entry plan was pretty typical for the time. A surveillance team had eyes on the target house and on their signal, we caravanned into the neighborhood and parked down the street. In the early morning darkness, we formed into a line by order of entry and hustled through shadowed front yards to the target. Two officers branched off to cover the back of the house, while the rest of us staged on the porch. On cue, I hammered the door with my fist and shouted, “Tulsa Police with a search warrant!” and here we step into the world of parallel universes, where you have to choose the path of reality.

In one universe, my knock and

announcement went unanswered. I stepped aside and an officer in a greasy leather jacket, looking very much like Thor, the God of Hell's Angels, but with a battering ram instead of a hammer, busted down the door. Because the favored tactic of that era was "Dynamic Entry," I burst in first and took charge of the front room, while other entry team members sprinted straight to preassigned areas of the house, knocking down anyone and anything in their path, so that the entire structure was occupied, almost simultaneously, within seconds. The point of the exercise was to so shock and awe the occupants that they wouldn't have time to swallow or flush their dope. Dynamic entry was pure controlled chaos, loud, violent, disorienting, and stupidly dangerous compared to modern, more deliberate methods of clearing structures, but that's how it was, in one universe anyway.

In a parallel universe, the force of my knock caused the door to begin swinging open because, uncharacteristically for self-respecting drug dealers, they hadn't bothered to properly shut and lock it. My "Tulsa Police with a search warrant!" was amputated into "Tulsa Po.....!", as a large hand smacked the small of my back and propelled me through the

doorway, pinwheeling across the room and over the back of a couch. By the time I collected myself, the structure was pretty well secure. The SID sergeant brushed me off and slapped me on the back (again). "Great work!" he said in a booming voice. "You can go now."

Here, we introduce the Law of Small Things in various forms:

*Sometimes it's a hard world for small things.*

**(Character H.I. McDunnough, narrating as otherworldly bounty hunter Leonard Smalls annihilates a bunny with a hand grenade from the back of a speeding chopper in the Coen brothers' 1987 classic, "Raising Arizona.")**

*It's the small things that always bite you on the ....*

**(Anonymous Correctional Officer)**

*If you take care of the small things, the big things take care of themselves.*

**(Emily Dickinson)**

Leonard Smalls and most Correctional Officers are cut from

different cloths, (though I wouldn't put it past Alaskan COs to blow up a bunny at least once, just to see what it was like), but their points have merit. It is a hard world for bunny rabbits and scrawny rookies whose limited life choices include taking a bullet for the team or getting heaved through the door of a dope house, just because some narco-loser forgot to latch it.

Emily Dickinson has my vote. I like to think of the Law of Small Things as the truth behind every work of fine art. Pick your favorite, Da Vinci's "Mona Lisa," Michelangelo's "Creation of Adam," Mad Magazine's "Alfred E. Neuman." Each is classic in its entirety, composed of countless small details - a nose here, a finger there, but every detail carefully rendered and arranged in its proper place to create a masterpiece greater than the sum of its parts.

Think about the component parts of a correctional officer's job; security checks, keeping log books, performing count, supervising movements, overseeing laundry and food distribution, writing incident reports to name a few. None of these duties, by themselves, are brain surgery but taken together they represent a challenging profession that not everyone can handle as well as you. Performing each component

duty well, typifies a skilled correctional officer. Performing any one of them poorly could threaten the security of the institution.

We've had some issues this year with walk-throughs, log books, inmate pat-downs and safety procedures in Max. We were fortunate to be able to remediate and take advantage of these learning opportunities. If they teach us anything at all, it is that corrections, as a profession, is about performing small duties, by the book, every time. The gratification earned from doing these small duties well is admittedly pretty low. The true consequence of superior performance in our profession is measured by what we hopefully never see - - injured officers or missing inmates.

So, returning to a younger me and the multiverse, years later, as a vice-narcotics sergeant, I often thought back on that search warrant and on the Law of Small Things. I planned and led over 200 narcotics search warrants and conducted countless stings of one kind or another with no serious injuries to our officers. Along the way, I learned some small lesson from every operation...like checking the doorknob before hammering down the door. Among the more memorable lessons:

- When you pull an iron security door off its hinges with a tow chain and a pickup truck, don't be surprised when half the wall comes off with it.
- If you're working undercover in an adult movie theater and someone taps you on the shoulder, be prepared for a visual apocalypse when you turn around.
- Never trust infants. The little drooling poopers manage to hide dope in car seats, diaper bags, baby food jars and stuffed animals. I know because I've found it there.
- Think like a dooper and search places where you would hide your stash. If you are unlikely to search there, that is precisely where you need to be looking.

Mercifully, most of these lessons don't apply directly to your jobs here at Lemon Creek but you get the point. Pay attention to the small duties as if they are important, because they are. Search like you mean it, because you should. Do all of the small things and do each of them with care, because collectively they are the BIG thing.

Photo courtesy of [www.secretservice.gov](http://www.secretservice.gov)



## Gear Head

By Sergeant Jerrod Andrews

Often times throughout my day I reflect and yearn for a simpler time, a time when the world just seemed to rotate at a slower pace. There was less drama, less of an urge to rush to the computer to order the latest electronic devices, and a time when sweet tea was not purchased out of a plastic jug, but instead made on the back porch. The news was truly unbiased, and you were given the facts without the opinions. Families would gather around the tv to catch the latest episodes of Leave it to Beaver, The Dick Van Dyke Show, Mr. Ed, or my favorite, The Three Stooges. Rocket and space shuttle launches were televised and the world watched in eager excitement. It was a celebration of the human race and what could be achieved when a people pulled together as a one! Adjusting the rabbit ear antenna was done with the utmost precision, where the slightest miscalculation would have a catastrophic effect on your viewing pleasure. Neighbors looked out for each other, and family was always the top

priority. When I think of my younger days I often reflect on my Grandparents. Their simple and basic lifestyle calls to me in my dreams. The little things they had in their house now live in mine and are a constant reminder of who they were and what they stood for. Strong, sturdy, and independent. Able to stand the test of time.

One of the greatest traits I took away from them was their will to overcome adversity with independence. They did this through self-education, trial and error, and using what they had available to them. They would build or fix things themselves as best they could. I have no doubt that by the end of their lives they had saved themselves tens, if not hundreds of thousands of dollars because of their old generation self-reliance. The ability to create or repair is one of the most satisfying things I can do for myself. Facing repair challenges in the modern era is difficult. Folks nowadays would rather pay someone to make the problem go away or pay to replace something than take the time to fix the problem themselves. We have become a wasteful society because so many items are no longer repairable due to lack of parts and the costs accrued at repair facilities. I prefer to learn new things and I enjoy being as self-reliant as I can. Working on my own projects has taught me a lot of life skills that I would not have learned any other way. I thank my grandparents for what they passed on to my family. I wouldn't be the man I am without their influence.

For the past 20 years I have worked on motorcycles and cars for money, and as a hobby. I am frequently asked about building things, repairs, and maintenance. As summer ends, this is the time when I get in gear and catch up on my vehicle maintenance. There is nothing worse then working on cars during a downpour, or a snowstorm. Been there, done that, don't want to do it again. One of the best things you can do for your vehicle is an oil change. With a little bit of mechanical know how, and just a few simple tools, this can be accomplished in as little as 10 minutes. The basic requirements are a set of wrenches, an oil filter wrench, a drain pan and 5 to 7 quarts of oil, as recommended for your type of gas engine, or a few gallons for certain diesel engines. That leaves only the oil filter. There are 2 types of filters typically used in the automotive industry. The more common of the two is the screw-on metal cannister style filter. The other is an exposed filter that is placed inside of a cannister which is permanently affixed to the vehicle. When purchasing the exposed style filter it is a good practice to check the box for a large rubber o-ring that will get replaced at the same time.

Getting the car in the air is the best way to help you have a positive experience. Plenty of clearance aids in mobility while under the vehicle and creates a less claustrophobic environment. A floor jack with jack stands rated for your vehicle's weight is arguably the safest. I like the ease of using drive-on platforms. They are quick and easy. Because I see design flaws in most everything, I use wood blocking to the underside of the ramps for safety purposes in case they collapse. Placing a piece of wood, a sheet of styrofoam, or even an old blanket on the ground also makes the task more bearable.



Pictured on the left is a typical front engine, rear wheel drive vehicle. On the right is a front engine, front wheel drive vehicle. Because of the tight space in front wheel drive cars it is good to keep in mind what side of the vehicle the motor is on in comparison to the transmission. It is a good idea to verify this so that you don't accidentally remove the wrong drain plug and empty your transmission of its fluid!



Next, line up your oil pan under the drain plug while keeping in mind that if the engine has been run recently, the oil will be hot to the touch, and that is not something you want to experience for yourself. Again, been there and done that too! Remove the drain plug and let gravity do the work! Be cautious not to drop the bolt in the oil pan as it may be difficult to retrieve later. It is always a good idea to have an extendable magnet on standby just in case. Inspect the oil as it comes out to make sure the fluid is consistently the same color and looks similar to very dark coffee. If it looks milky, finish the oil change and call a tow truck and mechanic. Do not run the motor as there is most likely something more severe going on inside the engine. Another thing to look for is small metallic flakes in the oil, giving it a shimmering appearance. Also, very bad. Finish the oil change, don't start the engine, and call a mechanic. Once the stream of oil has diminished to a drip, replace the drain plug, taking care not to over tighten the bolt. Its only task is to keep the oil from draining out and nothing more. Wiping the oil off your work area to keep it clean has a side benefit. If you ever look at the underside of your car and see new deposits of oil, you can go back and double check your work or look for a problem in another area.

If you have a canister style oil filter, it will most likely be most accessible under the vehicle. Locations vary. These are typically hand tightened, but sometimes require a filter wrench for removal as they may have been set in place for quite some time, exposed to the elements and possibly hundreds of heat cycles. Pictured on the right are my tools of choice. Because I work on such a variety of cars, I have multiple styles, as there is no one size fits all. The filter will have oil in it, so be sure to have your drain pan ready to catch it. The filter will become slippery during removal as oil runs down the sides once it becomes loose. Inspect the top of the filter to verify that the gasket is still attached to the filter. If the gasket is left behind, and



the new filter is installed with its own gasket, you will create a fail point as two rubber items coated in oil are sandwiched together. It could create a dangerous hazard where the left-behind gasket gets shifted out of place during vehicle operation, forcing pressurized hot oil to be sprayed on a hot engine or exhaust. Sometimes it is all about the small details!



On the left is an old filter with the gasket attached. Pictured on the right is a new filter with gasket. Gear Head pro tip of the day! Add oil to the new filter before installing. This will help ensure that oil is delivered more quickly to those areas that need it most. A dry filter will rob your engine of the oil it needs at first start up and can create



unnecessary wear on critical components. Also, a dab of oil around the new gasket makes hand tightening a little easier.

Next is the exposed style filter which is more common in newer vehicles and is a bit less messy to deal with.



Often, they're accessible in the engine bay rather than under the vehicle. With modern cars utilizing plastic so much, you may need to remove the decorative plastic cover from the engine. These generally just pop out of place without any tools and simply clip back in place. Pictured on the right is the engine with the cover removed. My finger points to the location of the oil filter on this Chrysler built 3.6 liter V6. An adjustable wrench works just fine to loosen the cap, which contains the filter. The o-ring that was mentioned above



replaces the one on the cap. Have a plastic bag handy to catch the filter when it comes out, so as to not drizzle oil all over your motor. Install the new filter in the same manor in which the old one came out. There is no need to add oil to the canister as you did with the previously mentioned filter. I also tighten the cap just a bit more than hand tight.



Now that everything is buttoned up, you can put oil back in the car. Each engine will have its own required amount. The owner's manual will tell you the correct amount of oil that you will need. Always keep an extra quart around in case some gets spilled. Pictured on the left is the oil fill cap with the recommended oil viscosity. Funnels make the process a lot easier. Old 2-liter bottles with the top cut off can be used as well! Once

the appropriate amount of oil has been put back in the motor, reattach the cap. I always do a quick check under

the car to make sure no oil is pouring out. Make one last visual check to be sure you put your drain plug and filter back on. After that, start your engine and let it run for about a minute. Turn it off and give it a few minutes before checking the oil. This will give the oil a chance to drain down through the engine and back into the pan, giving you the most accurate reading on the dip stick. Locate the dip stick for the engine. Pictured right is where it is located on this Ford 5.4 liter. If you have an automatic transmission you may locate a dipstick for that as well. So, make sure you are checking the correct one. ATF is generally red in color in case you pull the wrong stick. Your oil dipstick will have markings at the bottom to show you the appropriate amount needed as well. If the oil is smeared on the stick and is



unreadable, wipe it off with a clean rag and then check again. Add oil if required. If you accidentally put a quart or more in extra, do your best to drain out the appropriate amount to get you to the correct level. Too much oil can be just as bad as



too little! Dispose of oil and materials in accordance with your local, state, or federal laws. While under the hood, do a quick check of your air filter as well. It is a commonly overlooked item and it should be checked frequently for dirt build up! As always.....

Stay Safe!

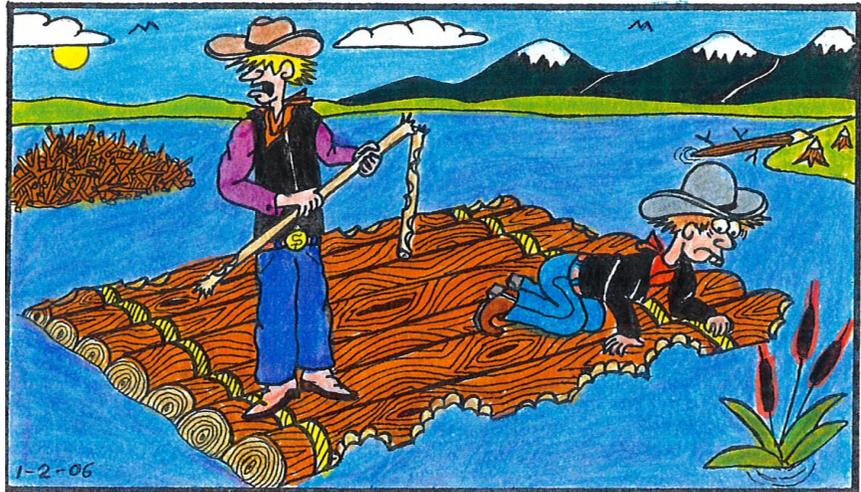
Jerrod



# SAME WORLD, DIFFERENT DAY

*Seen through the eyes of Steve Pilny*

## SAME WORLD, DIFFERENT DAY



"WOW...THAT IS ONE REALLY MAD BEAVER!"

## SAME WORLD, DIFFERENT DAY



"FOUND YER SOCKS!"

# 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/](http://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. Irizarry at (907)465-6288 or Sgt. Headings at (907)465-6205. We are looking forward to talking to you.