

LEMON CREEK JOURNAL

REFLECTING THE VOICE WITHIN

INSIGHTS & IMAGES OF LIFE ON THE LAST FRONTIER

LEMON CREEK CORRECTIONAL CENTER

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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.

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Forward to Volume XXIX



You aren't crazy and you're not alone. There really is a disembodied voice whispering in your ear. We've all heard it, appealing to our higher nature, sometimes to our most base instincts. But what is it and just how far can it be trusted?

This issue of the Lemon Creek Journal offers no definitive answers, but an interesting collection of experiences. Over the years, we've worked very hard to gather a diverse team of writers who represent nearly every rank and work group in the institution. You might call them "The Inner Voice" of Lemon Creek Correctional Center. And like the inner voice within each of us, they may not always tell us what we expect to hear, but they always tell us what we need to hear. Read on as our contributors share accounts of their inner voices and where those voices have led them. We hope you'll recognize yourselves in their stories.



Those Were Wet Rapids

By

Superintendent Bob Cordle

It has been said that at some point in early life most people develop an inner voice. This inner voice is sometimes referred to as internal monologue or self-talk. In simple terms, an inner voice allows one to work through thoughts in great detail without talking out loud. It can be a friend or a critic, a motivator or discourager, a protector or reckless antagonist. It can help process thoughts into workable solutions. It can aid in learning life lessons and help ensure the same mistakes aren't made twice. An inner voice can assist in bettering oneself and exert great influence in building character.

I once heard someone refer to his inner voice as the ultimate silent advisor. Later in life, that same person said that when people are trying to find a solution to a potentially serious problem and there is disagreement, their inner voices should be set free. Meaning that filtering thoughts to avoid hurting other people's feelings should not be a worry. Oh, and by the way, that person was me.

The story I am about to share involves me and one of my good friends. We have known each other for over thirty years and for the most part we think a great deal alike. We share the same sense of humor and have had many laughs together. The outcome of this story, although it wasn't funny at the time, ended up being one of the most joked-about mishaps that we have experienced together, and let me tell you, we have had more than a few. This whole misadventure could have been avoided if our inner voices had been on the same page. Shoot, for that matter, I would have been happy if they had been in the same room. The relatively short but disastrous two minutes of chaos became known to our hunting buddies as the "Those Were Wet Rapids" story.

This tale of two disconnected inner voices took place in the fall of 2017. My friend and I met for our annual hunt, down on the southern end of Prince of Wales Island. We arrived by float plane, four days ahead of the rest of our group, to open our friend's floating lodge in preparation for the two-week hunt. It smelled like fall as we stood on the deck of the lodge and waved to the pilot as he taxied out of the bay to head back to Ketchikan. The day was crisp and beautiful, and I was anxious to help get the lodge operational so that we could set out first thing the next morning to pursue the elusive Sitka Blacktail Deer.



Dock of Floating Lodge, Prince of Wales Island

Located directly behind this water-based accommodation lies a peninsula containing a maze of old abandoned logging roads that go for miles in every direction. Four wheeler access is a necessary means of travel if one wishes to improve the odds of seeing deer. The usual process for transporting our quads from Ketchikan to the peninsula involved a five-hour boat trip on a seiner. Since we flew in early that year, our four wheelers hadn't arrived yet. Our friend who owned the lodge and seiner graciously offered us the use of two of his four wheelers until the group's arrival later that week.

Early the next morning, with daylight breaking, we climbed into a skiff and motored to shore, where the ATV's were parked. One was a brand new Honda Foreman, and the other a well-used Polaris. As we strapped on our gear and dry bags, it began to sprinkle, and dark clouds in the distance advertised a heavy rainstorm just a few minutes away.

The night before, we decided to take one of the roads that led to the top of a mountain and dropped into a sizeable valley on the other side of the peninsula. From there we would split up to hunt, meet back in the same spot a couple hours before dark, and head down the mountain together. We had traveled this route several times the year before and were awed by the scenery and the abundance of wildlife. As we made our way up the road, the wind-driven rainstorm arrived in full fury. It was pouring.

The road was in fairly good condition, but there were a few creeks to cross before reaching the top of the mountain. One was particularly wide and served as the main watershed from the surrounding high ridges. Several tributary creeks flowed directly into it as it tumbled down and emptied into the bay. Even when it was raining, the creek's depth was usually around twelve to eighteen inches, but it could be a bit of a challenge to cross, due to the steep banks on either side. When exiting the creek, leaning forward was a must, to distribute weight over the front of the quad. This helped to prevent one from tipping over backwards. That morning, we successfully crossed without any issues.



One of Many Abandoned Logging Roads In Our Hunting Area

During the seven to eight hour hunt, an overwhelming amount of rain fell. When it was time to head back, I drove toward our meeting point. On the way, I found a good number of small streams coming off the hillside and crossing the road where small streams hadn't been before. I arrived at the meeting spot first, and a short while later my friend showed up. As we visited for a

few minutes before heading back down the mountain, the deluge slowed to a steady drizzle. I took the lead.

During the drive, I began to wonder about the main creek, knowing that it was going to be deeper than it had been that morning. I thought to myself that with so much rainfall, it had to be about six to eight inches higher than normal. Fifteen minutes later, I discovered that my estimate was way off. As I neared a turn in the road that led to the creek I could already hear it roaring. I rounded the bend, stopped the four wheeler, and shut it off. I walked down the steep grade and discovered that the creek had swelled tremendously and was flowing with great speed. I stood at the edge of the raging water, trying to determine if we could make it across and promptly decided that it would be folly to attempt it. A few moments later, I heard the Honda pull up next to the Polaris and shut down. My friend made his way to where I stood and stopped next to me. As we both looked at the rushing water, he asked, "Bud, what are you doing?"

I quietly responded, "This isn't crossable."

After a moment's pause, he said, "I think we can make it."

I was incredulous. "It has to be almost four feet deep in places."

"Yeah," he agreed, "I'd say three to four feet deep sounds about right." And there is where our trouble all started. My inner voice expressed concern that crossing the nearly four foot deep water was not a smart move. His inner voice seemed to be relieved that it was only close to four feet deep and therefore was still doable. I was thinking, How on earth can he be serious about trying this? He was thinking, I don't see why he is so concerned. Because we cared for and respected each other we both tried compromise. I started first.

"Since we obviously can't cross we will need to leave the four wheelers here tonight and walk back. Pointing off to the right I said, "There is our way out." A massive spruce tree that had long since fallen across the creek would allow us to get to the other side. I continued, "We cross the log, hike up to the road, and walk back down to where the skiff is anchored."

I was sure he would definitely see it my way because his way was obviously nonsense. I could tell he was formulating a response before I even finished sharing my idea, and he replied, "The water is high, but not so high that we can't make it across. It will take at least two hours to walk out of here, and then we will have to walk back up here in the morning. There is no need to do that when we can still drive across the creek."

We stood there quietly, neither of us willing to cave to the other. Finally he said, "If it was my quad, I would just cross the creek," as if he wanted me to go first.

I replied, "Well, it's not my four wheeler, and I'm not even considering attempting it." We reverted back to shared silence and stood there looking up and down the creek, as if somehow that would magically change our circumstances. He then turned and headed for the quads. I heard the Honda fire up and slowly work its way down to where I was standing. I looked over and asked, "Are you really going to do this?" He calmly said, "Yeah, I think we got this." My

inner voice clapped back, *What is this 'we' crap? Don't include me in your Kamikaze mission!* He slowly released his grip on the hand brake and eased the front end down until most of the front tires were no longer visible in the murky water. The flow of the creek was so strong that the front of the ATV rhythmically shuddered back and forth.

He began revving up the throttle and I asked, "Would you at least like me to hold onto your weapon?" His rifle was strapped into a pair of V-necked gun mounts on the front rack. With confidence he said, "Nah, it will be okay where it's at." Though I appeared calm on the outside, my inner voice was encouraging me to yank him off the seat and put him into a choke hold until he surrendered to reason. His inner voice was telling him that though the water was deeper than it had been in the morning, there would be no issues. Bob was just a chicken. His decision to cross the creek was imminent, and like it or not, I was now a part of whatever was going to happen next.

Though I didn't have much hope, as he sprung himself and our friend's brand new Honda Foreman into the deep, part of me was inspired. When he gunned the quad into the creek, my inner voice cheered, *Yes! He is moving across! Uh, he is mostly going downstream but... I think, yes I think he... wait!!* Did you know that four wheelers could float? I didn't either. What hope I had was instantly dashed, just like in the eighth grade when Vicki Anderson told me she would never date a redhead. My friend yelled, "I got this!" and panic instantly took hold of me as I watched his initial momentum slow to a crawl, then to a halt. He was now slowly floating downstream and the quad, having little contact with the creek bottom, was beginning to rotate in a clockwise motion. Then suddenly, and I might add, miraculously, I saw the rear end lift itself out of the water. I realized that he had made contact with a very large rock while holding the throttle wide open.

"I got this!" he screamed again, as impact and acceleration moved him closer to the steep bank. Then to my amazement it happened again. One or both of the rear tires caught a grip on another large rock, and momentum once again asserted itself. I was nearly hysterical with relief that he was going to make it to the other side, but my reassurance was short lived. The ATV pressed up against the opposing bank but was still mostly in the water. Worse yet, it was almost completely parallel to the rushing creek. My inner voice shouted, *Moron! He is facing upstream! This situation is ridiculous enough! What, like your friend thinks he needs another challenge?!* It is important to note here that my inner voice was trying to create separation between me and my friend and remove myself entirely from the disastrous situation. Seemingly abandoned by my inner voice, I watched in uncertainty as my friend simultaneously threw his weight up toward the embankment, cranked the handlebars uphill, and goosed the throttle, while hollering his new favorite battle cry, "I got this!" With no choice, my inner voice and I looked on as the irreversible event was set into motion.

Out of the frying pan and... well, you get the picture.

Now, I grew up in cowboy country, and though I rode horses and worked on local ranches, I couldn't call myself a cowboy per se, but several of my friends were and I supported them by attending their rodeo events. I saw many a rider bucked off or thrown from both horses and bulls, but I'd never before seen someone bucked off a four wheeler.

He did his best to turn uphill as he emerged from the creek, but resistance, gravity, and a sharp vertical rise all conspired against him. Though he managed to gain higher ground, he and the quad continued to sidehill, just above the rapid flowing water. He was now headed away from the road and straight for the timber. He managed one last, "I got this!" as the quad bounced over several rocks and humps before the truth finally set him free. Well, actually the ATV set him free when it came to an abrupt stop against a large mound. As the quad began to topple over toward the angry water, my friend whipped his head around in my direction and with saucer eyes yelled, "I don't got this!!" I watched helplessly as both he and the quad almost completely disappeared beneath the murky water. He popped up like a rubber ducky, and gasping for air yelled out, "I lost my rifle!" The four wheeler was now floating upside down, as I leaped off the bank and into the creek. During my descent, my inner voice finally escaped and I yelled out, "*MORON!*"

The initial shock from the freezing water was more than enough to get my attention. Waist deep, the current pushed me several feet downstream before I was able to get my footing. As I fought toward the scene of the crime that I was now an involuntary accomplice to, my friend latched onto the front end and was able to hold it in place. With great effort, I reached the rear end of the quad and took hold. Without saying a word we rolled the buoyant four wheeler over into its upright position.

I held the quad in place, while he somehow managed to work his way around it and climb aboard. His added weight permitted the tires to make some contact with the rocky creek bed. In desperation, he tried starting it, but it wouldn't turn over. He shouted, "I'll try to keep it in place by applying the brake. Can you get to the Polaris and drive it down to the edge of the bank so we can use the winch to pull me out?" As I let go of the rear rack, the quad began to drift once more, in spite of the engaged brake. I quickly grabbed hold again and pressed my body against it to keep it stable. I tried letting go once more, but there wasn't enough direct contact between the tires and the bottom of the creek. As I tried a third time he exclaimed, "Wait, it's still in gear!" From behind the quad, I saw the green neutral light appear on the electronic display, and then it started up.

The ATV was now facing the opposite bank and from that position, it couldn't be driven out on the side we were now on. The only choice was to head back in the same direction he had come from. He engaged the gear and hit the throttle as I tried to stay beside it to help prevent him from going any further downstream. The ATV caught hold of another large rock and moved closer to the shore. I lost my footing for a moment but was able to help guide it toward the bank. The quad then went over another rock, and it moved steadily forward at an angle toward our desired destination. The same rock caught me, and I was forced to let go to stay on my feet. As I regained my footing, I was relieved to see that he had almost reached the bank, then suddenly, up he went, the quad slowly climbing out of the water. Once all four tires were on land he leaned forward and plowed his way back uphill to where I had parked the Polaris. I awkwardly waded against the current to the shore and pulled myself out onto my stomach, laying there for a moment like a drowned rat.

Regaining my footing, I noticed that I was standing in exactly the same spot I originally occupied before the escapade began. I heard the Honda shut off, and soon my friend came down

from the upper road to join me. As we once again stared at the raging water, I said, “Well, we are exactly where we started, and after all that, we are still on the wrong side of the creek.”

“What was I thinking?” he muttered.

“I don’t know, all I can tell you is those were wet rapids,” I replied.

We had to chuckle about that and headed through the brush toward the fallen spruce. We managed to safely cross the log and hiked to the opposing bank to look for his rifle. The creek was too deep and discolored to see a thing. We figured it must have washed downstream. As we walked back up the steep rise to the road, he said sadly, “I loved that rifle.”

I responded, “I loved my idea to leave the four wheelers right where they were and walk back to the skiff dry.” We both laughed in defeat, as we set out on the almost two hour walk back to the skiff. We didn’t get far before we had to sit down and empty our boots. While doing so he said, “I *am* moron.”

Without hesitation I agreed. “Yes, it is true, you are indeed a moron... but I still love ya!” The walk back to the skiff in soggy boots was filled with laughter, as we relived the maddening moments we had just survived. We ended our day in the comfort of the warm lodge with a hot meal.

The next morning, we anchored up the skiff and walked back up the road, arriving at the creek to find the water clear and back down to its normal level. As we looked off the edge of the bank, there beneath the rippled, glassy water lay his rifle. Happy to say it still worked. We crossed the log and made our way back up to the ATV’s. The Honda started right up, and everything worked fine. As we debated going back over the top to hunt again, it began to sprinkle. This time, both of our inner voices were in harmony. Nothing needed to be said as we turned our backs on the creek to hunt somewhere else.

A few days later the rest of the guys showed up. As we unloaded fuel, gear, and groceries from the deck of the boat, we confessed our sins to the owner of the quad and promised him that though we tried to turn his made-for-dry-land Honda into an amphib, it was running fine. He got a chuckle out of our amusing blunder and said, “I wouldn’t expect anything less from you two. We’ll just chalk it up to one of your many episodes of providing cheap entertainment for the group.”

My friend and I both learned valuable lessons from our adventure. Since that fateful day, we have crossed that creek many times. Stopping to say, “Those Were Wet Rapids,” before crossing, became a tradition. One great thing did come from that event, and it was this. No matter if we agree or disagree, we will always have each other’s backs. Though I may not always make correct decisions, I lean hard on my inner voice for guidance, because so many times before, it has served me well as my ultimate silent advisor.



South End, Prince of Wales Island



Gimme Back My Mojo

By

Daryl Webster

How I found my Mojo. Then lost it, and well...

My story begins in 1986 in Tucson, at the Arizona Law Enforcement Training Academy. Thirty-six of us, from law enforcement agencies throughout the state and two active military personnel, reported to ALETA on opening day, bright and shiny in suits and ties. We lined up at folding tables to fill out admission forms, only to be ordered at great volume to finish up and sprint to the opposite end of the academy grounds, where there waited another set of tables and more forms. Then back, and forth, and back again. We invariably failed to reach each station on time, earning punishment push-ups that left us lying spent in the dirt, (in our dress clothes) before sprinting off to the next table and more of the same. This went on for a couple of hours until we staggered to our dorms, with three minutes allotted to change into workout clothes and report to the grinder for PT. The remains of my suit, tie, and shoes went into the nearest dumpster.

Thus began four unforgettable months of law enforcement training, delivered in a most miserable and degrading manner, all designed to transform young grass grazers into meat eaters. A third of our class vanished along the way,

either washed out with injuries or too discouraged to continue. Among the latter group was our US Army MP attendee, who packed his bag and left in Week One. Our Marine Corps classmate treated the whole thing like just another day at the office, only with better chow than he was used to.

I only survived by focusing on the next hour, the next water break, the next meal, and the end of each day, when I was free to visit the smoke hole for a few precious, unmolested moments beneath the desert stars. During those endless months, my classmates and I performed countless push-ups, sit-ups, and leg lifts under the pitiless glare of academy staff, and ran the soles off our shoes, up and down Tucson's hills, singing out as staff trainers called cadence:

“Tribal Policemen big and bad... They get even but they don't get mad!”

“Deputies carry .45s ... Deputies plan on staying alive!”

“Highway Patrolmen they got (*unmentionable*). Work all alone on traffic calls!”

“Sound off... One two!”

“Sound off... Three four!”

“Sound off... One, two, three, four, one,
two... THREE FOUR!”

After a final “Hell Week,” filled with pressurized, do-or-die scenarios and individual combat, I stood for graduation and my father pinned on my badge. Who would have imagined I’d still be in the criminal justice business 40 years later? After a couple of days off, I reported for duty as a rookie Mohave County Deputy Sheriff. I was assigned to a one man shift in a sunblasted corner of the Mohave Valley, just outside the town of Bullhead City. My beat was a 500 square mile expanse of wasteland, empty save for a scattering of what could best be described as *desert ghettos*.... and the town of “Oatman,” a remote, biker/hippy settlement tucked into the Black Mountains. If disaster were to strike, it would likely find me all by my lonesome, until a State Trooper or Tribal Police Officer reached me from many miles away.

I underwent field training, if three short weeks riding with a bored FTO counts, before my lieutenant handed me the keys to my very own Ram Charger, with a hearty slap on the back and a look that said, “See you at the funeral, kid.” I was young, out of my depth, and too naive to realize that while ALETA did its best to reincarnate me as a carnivore, I would not survive as one unless I managed to adapt. I was soon to learn that invaluable lesson without understanding how to apply it. Understanding would come much later. After a few days out on my own, the lieutenant decided that MCSO needed to make an appearance in Oatman, just to remind the locals that law, in some form, still existed. He had the good sense to call in one of my academy classmates to accompany me, and away the two of us went.

Picture Main Street Oatman at the time, a single potholed road, with dirt tracks branching off into



Mohave County Sheriff's Office 1986, Pre-Mojo

the rugged hillsides and mesas, leading to an assortment of shacks, trailers, and abandoned mines. The street was flanked by understocked tourist shops and a bar or two, most with false fronts, boardwalks, and hitching rails, like a Hollywood Western backlot. Founded as a bustling mining settlement in the early 1900’s, the miners soon departed, leaving behind a ghost town and a handful of donkeys. The hardy, and presumably bullet-proof critters ran wild and multiplied, roaming the reinhabited settlement, begging handouts from tourists who lost their way and wandered through. How anyone made a living there, other than cooking meth was a mystery.

The burg was hopping when we arrived in mid-evening, chopped Harleys parked everywhere, their owners hugging the shade in packs. All sported MC colors, holstered handguns, and sheath knives (open carry being common in rural Arizona at the time). My partner and I walked the boards, feeling outnumbered and trying not to show it. As we passed a group of bikers, standing with backs turned to us, one of them muttered, “I smell pork.” That would have

brought me full stop, had my partner not given me a discreet shove to keep me moving. A short distance away, I turned on him indignantly, “We can’t let them talk to us that way!” As a recently discharged Marine embassy guard, he had a better sense of how to pick his battles. “Keep walking,” was all he said.

Having shown the flag, we left town and stopped at a high pullout, gazing down at Oatman as night settled in. Big Harley motors rumbled and their headlights raced back and forth below us, accentuated by shouts, raucous laughter, and occasional gunshots. Just another Friday night in Hell. Over smokes, my buddy shared with me some wisdom about wounded dignity. Courage and the rule of law are important, he explained, but hurt feelings are a poor excuse for getting stomped to death by barbarians and dumped into a mineshaft. That ugly truth, spoken by someone I liked and respected, hit hard. The cigarette quivered ever so slightly between my fingers.



Oatman, Arizona today, at the very spot where the biker smelled pork



Only the bikes have changed

That evening was the first, and one of the few times I had the luxury of working with a partner as an Arizona law enforcement officer. I’m not complaining. When I accepted Mohave County SO’s job offer, I implicitly agreed to live with the realities that came with it. Reality boiled down to a cash-strapped county with very little money to fund law enforcement. Little money equaled few deputies, so I worked each shift alone, with minimal input from supervisors or experienced co-workers. Thank God we handle this better in Alaska DOC.

Even experience will fail us unless we are taught by role models who help us to develop our natural strengths, cure our shortcomings, and mature as professionals.

Academy training provides inexperienced officers with necessary and basic knowledge. But it can’t possibly prepare us to deal with the schedules, duties, risks, and challenges that must be experienced before they can be mastered. Even experience will ultimately fail us, unless we are taught and mentored by senior officers and supervisors, all of them role models who help us to develop our natural strengths, cure our shortcomings, and mature as professionals. The importance of daily interaction with colleagues who perform their jobs better than we do, cannot

be overemphasized. Without that institutional influence, inexperienced rookies are left to develop themselves, based on the attributes they bring to the job. Those with aggressive tendencies will likely develop into over-aggressive officers. Those with passive tendencies will be forever timid.

In my case, I was physically and mentally capable, but I grew up in the company of reasonable people, where no one meant me any harm and where significant disagreements could be talked through. I had no life experience to prepare me to deal with the degree of confrontation and hostility that is an ever-present risk in Policing and Corrections. So, I became self-taught, guided by what I knew, which was precious little. In the months that followed the Oatman incident, I taught myself to rely almost exclusively on diplomacy to keep a lid on things without resorting to force. During the time I served with the Sheriff's Office, my strategy somehow worked. But it was sheer luck. What I didn't yet grasp was that eventually diplomacy would fail, and when it did, the failure was apt to be spectacular. Lucky for me, I left that job in one piece, signed on with a large and well-funded police department halfway across the country, and took my diplomatic disposition with me.

For a while, the new policing job went pretty well, or so it seemed to me. The inevitable crash occurred on a domestic disturbance call at a rent-subsidized apartment complex. A young couple had been arguing, and one decided that the other needed to leave. That didn't sit well with the one doing the leaving, who also happened to be a Crip. I managed to entice him out of the apartment and into the parking lot, but when I asked him to take his car and go, he wasn't buying it. I reasoned with him. He told me to pound sand. I suggested that if he left long enough for things to calm down, he might be able to reconcile with his girlfriend. He told

me where I could insert that idea. I couldn't just leave him there, but the diplomatic carrot wasn't working because I wasn't mentally prepared to back it up with a stick and he knew it. The situation cratered when he stripped off his belt.

For those of you who are new to the neighborhood, a belt with a stout buckle is a go-to option in gangland, when you don't have a gun handy but need to bust somebody up in a hurry. Things were fixing to get ugly. But unbeknownst to me, a more experienced member of my squad overheard the call and without my noticing (poor situational awareness on my part) he parked nearby to look after the rookie without interfering. Shortly after the banger's belt came off, my 6 foot 5 guardian angel appeared from nowhere and grabbed the unbelted banger by the jaw. With one hand, he lifted him a good two feet off the sidewalk and planted him against a wall. Gravity came calling and the banger's sagging pants drooped to his ankles.

"Drop the belt," he said, and the belt fell.

"Are we gonna fight?" he asked. The banger managed a whispered, "No, sir."

And presto! The cuffs were applied and away to jail they went.

Soft words are essential, but only when the speaker is willing and able to employ other tools that are appropriate to the task.

If life's best lessons are punctuated by emotion, then this was a whopper. Pure humiliation. I failed miserably to control a dangerous call and another officer had to bail me out. What a bitter pill! How had my Oatman diplomacy gone so terribly wrong in such a short time? I obsessed

for days, until it dawned on me that no single tool fills a toolbox. Soft words are essential, but they only work when the speaker is willing and able to employ other tools that are appropriate for the task. With that realization and the example of my oversized squadmate, my Mojo fuse was lit.

Successful officers in both Corrections and Policing learn to exercise *Command Presence*. The term refers to a blend of self-confidence, poise, competence, and decisiveness to which most people instinctively defer. It is the manifestation of a confident persona. An officer with Command Presence seldom has to say, “I’m in charge.” People sense it, and that recognition neatly divides everyone’s roles into The One Who Is In Charge and everybody else who is not. That is where Mojo comes in, providing a near-mystical belief in oneself, confidence in one’s proven skills and decision-making ability, and assurance that whatever the crisis, it can and will be overcome. Mojo authenticates Command Presence. It is a quality that must be learned, earned, and put to use until it becomes second nature, because it can’t be faked. How do you know your Mojo is alive and well?

- When you follow orders like a good troop, but nearly always prefer your own judgment to that of others.
- When you are firmly convinced that whatever mess you find yourself in, even if you caused it, you’ll find a way out.
- When you believe, all evidence to the contrary, that you own whatever space you occupy.
- When you possess the humility to understand that you can’t always be the smartest, strongest, or toughest person in

the room, but that’s ok because you can’t remember the last time you visited that room.

Just to be clear, whether on the street or within prison walls, Mojo is essential for an officer to thrive. It doesn’t merely influence you; it becomes a part of who you are. So you must keep it in perspective. Mojo isn’t infallible and it doesn’t make you bulletproof. It can and will backfire if not used intelligently. At the extreme, when confidence supplants expertise and common sense, and an officer begins to over-rely on the stick and under-rely on the carrot, a poorly-stocked toolbox becomes a trap.

Fast forward a few years after my humiliating rescue. By then, I had solid experience under my belt. I had been in all manner of confrontations and had become more confident of my ability to escalate and de-escalate on demand. To be honest, I was perhaps a little too confident and too quick to employ force. My Mojo was unrestrained. The next chapter of my story opens on an evening shift and another call. I had a ride-along with me, a young lady I was dating. She’d been badgering me to see

When confidence supplants expertise and common sense, and an officer begins to over-rely on the stick and under-rely on the carrot, an empty toolbox becomes a trap.

firsthand what I did for a living, and I was obliging her when I caught a fight call at an “entertainment center.”

The place was a cavernous dump, occupying an old building that had once been a strip club. Those old enough to drink frequented the establishment's bar. Those too young to be served, brought their own beer and guzzled it out in the parking lot. And all of them could mingle in the pool room. I was close by when the call went out and was first to arrive in a parking lot full of cars with noisy people milling about, beer bottles and reefers in hand. I told my ride-along to wait in the car with the doors locked, no matter what might happen, and left her there to go look for a fight.

I was greeted with catcalls and a few sarcastic greetings, "Good evening, officer!" But true to my Mojo, I walked through the lot like I owned it and the partyers parted like the Red Sea. At the door of the club, a small voice warned that I should maybe just peek inside and wait for backup, but Mojo ignored it. I entered and made my way to the pool room, where a low-grade fight was brewing amid a crowd of spectators, many of them toting pool cues. Good sense at last prevailed and I called for additional officers and waited until they arrived before breaking up the fight.

When I returned to my car, 20 minutes later, my ride-along had melted down in her seat until only her eyes cleared the dashboard. She heard the fight call dispatched, watched me wade through a crowd of orks in the parking lot and enter the club alone, watched additional officers arrive in a hurry and rush inside, then saw them emerge with men in handcuffs. She was badly shaken by the experience. But clueless goof that I was, I clean missed the point that she cared about my wellbeing and feared that someone was going to harm me (if not that night, then some other). I was even a little offended that she didn't share my certainty that Mojo made me invincible. Instead of comforting her, I made light of her concern and doomed our relationship in the process. Good for her, bad for me.

No doubt, Mojo powered me through the episode. Had my confidence faltered, someone in the crowd might have sensed vulnerability

Mojo isn't infallible and it doesn't make you bulletproof. It can and will backfire if not used intelligently.

and pummeled me into goo. Heck, any two of them could have probably pummeled me *and* my confidence just on principle, but for one reason or another, they simply chose not to. Fools truly do rush in where angels fear to tread, and unrestrained Mojo doth makes fools of us all.



Tulsa Police Department circa 1992, Full-on Mojo

Which brings me finally to an incident some years later, having managed my growing Mojo sufficiently to be promoted to sergeant. It is the most influential rank an officer can earn, and anyone wearing three stripes will back me up on that. As a patrol sergeant, once my nightly paperwork was done, I was entirely my own man, free to roam where I pleased within the 20 square miles or so that made up our squad area, looking for trouble to get into. Patrol sergeants were rarely assigned calls, so I just showed up

whenever something interesting happened or when an officer called for a supervisor. On this night, two of my rookie officers were dispatched to a loud noise disturbance call. Pretty routine until something went off the rails and one of them called for a sergeant. By the time I rolled up, two additional officers, both of them young, had already arrived, and I was surprised to find the four of them standing in the cluttered yard of a ratty house, being harangued by a very drunk and obnoxious man, who paced back and forth on a high front porch that ran the width of the structure. From this vantage, he shouted at his audience at the top of his lungs. The officers appeared indecisive. Neighbors began to take notice.

The lead officer was relieved to see me. “He’s keeping the whole neighborhood awake, Sarge. We’ve told him to go sleep it off, but he swears that if he goes inside, he’s coming back out with a gun.” That struck a sour note. No sergeant worth his stripes appreciates his officers being abused, much less shot at. Perhaps I should have been more sympathetic to my troops, but because of my checkered past, I had learned to be impatient with indecision.

“You can’t stay here all night,” I replied. “Calls are holding and I need you guys back in service. And don’t stand around like a bunch of targets, waiting for him to fetch a gun. He’s drunk, he’s causing a disturbance, and he’s making threats. What more do you need?”

They were clearly unsure how to approach without their target squirting into the house and provoking gunfire. I circled wide and mounted the porch, getting between him and the door. “I’m warning you...!” he began, but whatever he meant to warn me about was lost when I snatched him by the collar and belt and launched him off the porch. He landed face down in the dirt and lay stunned. The rookies were as shocked as he was. Then, seeing me making

impatient, “Get on with it” hand gestures, they handcuffed him and led him away.

It may not have been the most elegant solution to the problem, but I’m a great believer that an imperfect solution that *works*, is worth any number of elaborate options that aren’t tried. I managed to defuse the situation without anyone being unduly harmed and served up an object lesson for youngsters who were still in the process of growing into their roles. I’m pretty sure the experience made an impression. This tactic would likely never be appropriate in a Correctional setting, but the lessons I sought to clarify were simple and readily applicable to Correctional officers:

- When it is time to talk, Talk.
- When talking fails and there’s nothing to be done, Leave.
- When leaving isn’t an option, Do Something.

But it was also, and maybe most importantly, about Mojo, and helping my officers discover their own.

Please don’t misunderstand. Mojo is not about being heavy-handed or undiplomatic. A great deal of unnecessary officer behavior, both physical and verbal, springs not from over-confidence, but from *lack* of confidence, the product of uncertainty or fear. This mindset conspires to convince us that we’ve run out of less violent options. To be sure, when force is called for, it should be applied reasonably and

The proper role of Mojo is to reduce much of the uncertainty that encourages people to be unnecessarily forceful or weakly diplomatic.

promptly. Diplomacy should be exercised from a position of strength. The proper role of Mojo is to reduce much of the uncertainty that encourages people to be unnecessarily forceful or weakly diplomatic. But don't take your Mojo for granted. It doesn't bestow immortality. It can't even sustain itself without constant care and feeding. Just as a millennium of wind and rain can reduce a mountain to a mound, life has a way of wearing us down. Age and adversity take their toll. Mojo begins to wane.

That's where I found myself not long ago, wondering where the brassy officer I used to see in the mirror got off to. My family suffered a crushing loss a few months back and for a while I just went through the motions. I took care of my remaining loved ones, but in a distracted way. I performed my work without passion. I caught myself standing with shoulders slumped, walking the halls at work with a tentative stride. I hadn't even been to the gym in nearly three months. The ticking clock was draining my spirit while I huddled in a sorrowful fog.

Did my Mojo desert me or did I desert it?

It finally occurred to me that I wasn't done with life yet. People, my family and my professional team, needed me. I needed them. I wanted my Mojo back. So, it was back to basics, jumpstarting the process of recapturing my swagger and ownership of my space. I stopped sleeping in and returned to the gym. When I caught myself slumping, I threw back my shoulders and held my head high. Wherever I walked, I strode with a purpose. I reengaged with the important things, giving untainted attention to my family and energy to my profession. And lately? Darned if I don't feel something beginning to stir inside of me.

Hello Mojo. It's been a while.



Congratulations!



*Lemon Creek Educational Coordinator and resident scholar
Paul McCarthy has been named the Alaska Adult
Education Association's*

2026 Adult Education Teacher of the Year



Moving Forward at Lemon Creek Correctional Center

by

Lt. Bo Pierce

As I step into the role of Lieutenant at Lemon Creek Correctional Center, I want to begin by thanking you. The work done here every day is not easy, and I recognize the effort, professionalism, and teamwork it takes to keep this facility operating safely. I appreciate the way Staff here look out for one another and step up to help when needed, including trading shifts and covering for each other when situations arise. That kind of teamwork is one of the strengths of the Staff at this facility.

Moving forward, there are a few areas where I believe we can make improvements that will benefit all of us and help make LCCC an even stronger and safer workplace.

Accuracy and Completion of Paperwork

First, I want to emphasize the importance of completing paperwork fully and accurately. Documentation is a critical part of what we do. I think all of us should have heard the old saying that “If you didn’t write it down it didn’t happen.” Reports and logs help track facility activity, support end-of-month reporting, and ensure that we are meeting policy requirements. Accurate reporting also helps Administration justify staffing levels, resources, and expenses when needed. Incomplete or inaccurate documentation can create challenges down the line.

Having worked in almost all of the positions available to correctional officers here at LCCC, I am aware of the fact that our paperwork finds it’s way to a

lot of other people and is used by them to make important decisions. Everything from inmate D-boards, End of Month reports, grievances, SIR's, weekly SS reports, and just about every other form we fill out are seen by the upper Administration and can be subpoenaed into court. Because of that, we need to ensure the information we provide is accurate, complete, and professional. Taking the extra time to make sure reports are thorough and correct protects not only the facility, but also the Staff doing the work, and ensures we are meeting the standards required by policy.

Consistency Between Shifts

Another area of focus will be consistency across shifts. We often hear from inmates that certain shifts allow things that others do not. We also understand that information coming from inmates is not always accurate. However, there are times when inconsistencies do occur.

Maintaining consistency in how policies and procedures are applied is essential. When everyone is operating from the same expectations, it reduces confusion, strengthens our professionalism, and most importantly helps keep Staff safe. Consistency also builds trust between shifts. When an officer works overtime on a different shift, he should not have to deal with the added stress of wondering whether that shift handles things differently than their own. Consistency allows officers to step into any post on any shift and know what is expected and how things are run.

Communication

Improving communication is another priority. Please check e-mails regularly and respond to phone calls and messages in a timely manner. Because we have four different shifts and we don't get to see each other all the time, e-mail is our main form of communication. It is very important for staff to be able to get into their e-mail to keep up to date on what is going on in the facility. Clear, two-way communication is essential not only for the officers and the SS, but for the Administration, so we can all be on the same page. This keeps us aware of what is going on in the facility and allows us to address issues quickly.

Moving Forward Together

Again, I want to thank each of you for the work you do every day. I appreciate the dedication and teamwork I see among the staff here at LCCC. By focusing on these areas—accurate documentation, consistency between shifts, and strong communication—I believe we can continue to improve operations and make Lemon Creek Correctional Center an even better place to work.

Thank you for your continued hard work and professionalism.

LEMON CREEK CORRECTIONAL CENTER

Employee of the Quarter – Maintenance Supervisor Jake Scanlon



Jake Scanlon is an outstanding employee who is appreciated by everyone at the facility. He is consistently reliable and throughout this winter has seemingly lived at the facility, not only handling tough maintenance issues but plowing the record-breaking snow we have received. Jake is a master of all trades, who has proved he can fix just about anything with the right tools, a generous supply of baling wire, and duct tape.

As Lemon Creek's Maintenance Supervisor, Jake knows his staff's capabilities and has helped his team become the best maintenance unit this Department could ask for. He is not just the "Maintenance Guy." Jake has a great sense of humor and livens up even the most tedious meetings. His unfortunate support of the Denver Broncos is far outweighed by his mastery of all things Maintenance and his legendary hunting skills. We are grateful to have him onboard at Lemon Creek and to announce his designation as Employee of the Quarter.

Will She Stay Or Will She Go?

By

Cherie Wolfe, Food Services Supervisor

When Mr. Webster asked me to write this, the first voice I heard was my doctor's; "Simplify life, make lifestyle changes." to manage stress. But my inner voice was instantly challenged by this request, and I couldn't say no. I love a challenge and I love to stay busy.

So, let's talk a little about Cherie

"Why did she move to Alaska?"

"Why doesn't she move back to Pennsylvania?"

"Will she stay or will she go?"

I was born and raised in Washington PA, about 35 miles South of Pittsburgh. My whole family, and my lifelong friends are there. Up until December 2025, my family owned Popcorn Willy for 30 years, also located in Washington PA.

So why did I move to Alaska?

I didn't leave Pennsylvania because I don't love my family, I left because I love myself.

My strength overrode my fear of coming here. I left to follow a dream. It was hard, but I can handle hard things. Once again, I love a challenge.

Alaska has been a dream of mine for about 30 years. Three years ago, I proved it wasn't just a dream.



I pictured myself living in a cabin with a large pond on my property, deep enough for my pet moose

I pictured myself living in a cabin with a large pond on my property, deep enough for my pet moose, whom I'd already decided to name "Mega", to swim in. Come to find out after I made the move, there are no moose here in Juneau. So, I live in an apartment, with no land to call my own, but it's okay.



The Popcorn shop was good to our family for many years, we raised our kids there, we had customers that were like family, we were a staple in the community

The Popcorn shop was good to our family for many years, we raised our kids there, we had customers that were like family, we were a staple in the community, we spent more time at the shop than we did at our house. It was truly my happy place. Then COVID hit and changed everything. We couldn't pay ourselves for a long period of time, our credit card bills were climbing, and if it continued, we would've lost our house. My daughter worked in the shop full time, and we made sure she got paid, but that's all we could afford. This forced us to get jobs outside of the shop.

This is when I found work in the DOC in Pennsylvania. I loved it! I worked the 11:00-7:00 shift. This meant, I went to the popcorn shop in the morning to help my daughter for about 2 hours, drove 45 minutes to work, worked an 8-hour shift, drove back 45 minutes, and many nights, went straight to the shop to help fill popcorn orders, clean, or prep for tomorrow's breakfast and lunch.

I did this for two years and perhaps was feeling a bit burned out. I can't imagine why.

My daughter and her husband wanted to run the shop, and with my burnout and needing change, I decided on a whim to look into that dream of mine. I took a random Sunday off both jobs and looked for a job in Alaska. The first and only job that sparked my interest was the Corrections Food Service Supervisor job at Lemon Creek Correctional Center, so I applied for it. It felt good, but I didn't think too much into it. I had a good job in the DOC in PA, and I had the popcorn shop, so there were no worries if I didn't get the job.

Needless to say, I interviewed and I was offered the job.

I went back and forth in my head with several doubts:

“Do I accept and relocate?”

“Do I graciously decline and give up the dream?”

“What if I regret it?”

“What if something happens?”

Those were just a few of the questions that rattled in my head.

I asked LCCC if I could have a couple months to prepare the popcorn shop for my daughter and her husband to take over, and they gave it to me!



**And so, the decision
was made to follow
the dream.**

And so, the decision was made to follow the dream.

I see life as a puzzle, it's about our decisions and the choices we make, the choices others make, events that are out of our control and what we do with it. All of these shape the direction our lives take.

You all know what decision was made, because here I am.

I knew if I didn't do it now, I would probably never do it. Truth be told, I didn't intend on staying this long, and I had told my family that I'd probably be back in a year. It's been three.



I left my family and friends once before in 1991, before I was married with children, to work on a Hawaiian cruise ship for three years.

I left my family and friends once before in 1991, before I was married with children, to work on a Hawaiian cruise ship for three years.

It was harder to stay in touch with family back then, there were no cell phones, so we had to write letters back and forth or make an occasional phone call from the pay phone on the pier. I missed my family, but it was a great experience that fell in line with my career pursuit. It all worked out.

My plan was to treat Alaska DOC the same as the cruise ship job, just do it for a little while for the experience and move back home. It would be easy, right? Technology would make it easier to connect with the family; I wouldn't have to rely on snail mail or pay phones.

My first couple of months here in Juneau were by far the most challenging. I knew no one, I had to find somewhere to live, and I started a brand-new job in a brand-new place.

One week after I came here, I found out that my dad had to undergo open heart surgery. Thankfully he made it through without any complications. Just over one month later, my daughter had her baby. I got a plane ticket and went home at that point; I needed to be with my family.

So, at what point, will I decide to move back to Pennsylvania?



As many of you know, every time I take time off from work, I go to Pennsylvania. It is and will always be home. I guess I make it obvious, because every time I tell Mr. Cordle I'm going to Pennsylvania, he asks "Are you coming back?" Joking, but not joking.

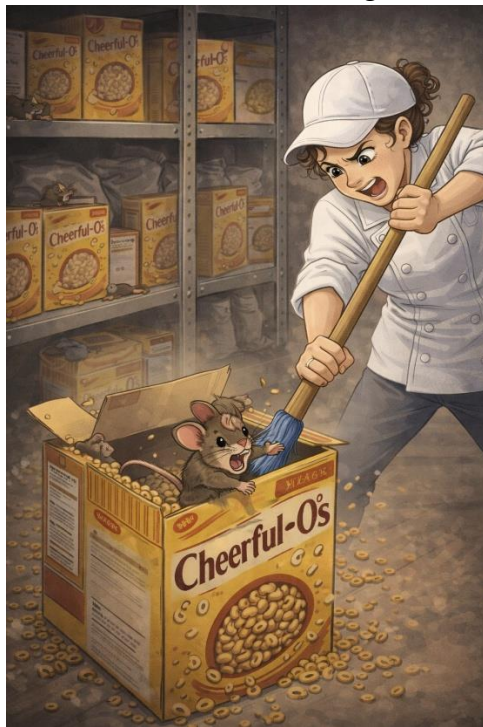
For the first year and a half, I was torn between two places. I missed my family and all things Pennsylvania terribly, (except for the extremely hot and humid summers), at the same time loving this job, the LCCC community, and Juneau!

In my free time I regularly FaceTime, call, or message family, tell them my stories and listen to theirs, or I am outside hiking, enjoying the beaches, nature, and wildlife. I love both worlds.

My job here gives me the challenge my inner self craves daily.

One of my favorite stories to tell is about a mouse. Of all the obvious challenges the DOC brings, this one was one of most unique and a first in my food service career. I'll start at the beginning...

Mr. Cordle hit me with this challenge shortly after I started working here: come hard winter, mice may need us but we don't need them. Zero Tolerance. At that point I hadn't seen any mice running around, so I didn't understand the magnitude of his concern. But I took it to heart.



I quickly looked around, saw the broom, grabbed it, and started to jab the broom into the box to try to kill the mouse.

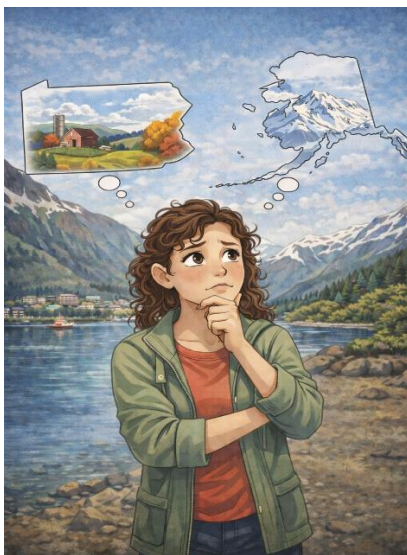
There was a lot of inventory in the basement food storage area that would have to be disposed of if mice ever got into it. One day, I went down to the basement to go through 70 cases of cereal cups, sure to be a mouse favorite. I had to open each case to make sure none of the product was compromised. I got to the bottom of one of the cases before catching a mouse red handed. It saw me and jumped! The box stood slightly taller than the mouse's vertical leap, so it was trying to jump out of the box but wasn't succeeding. I realized I needed to end this stand-off, but how? I quickly looked around, saw a broom, grabbed it, and started jabbing it into the box to try to kill the mouse. After about thirteen jabs and some hard contact, it laid on its side, and I watched it take its last breath. I'll admit it was a little traumatizing. I think I gave the poor thing a heart attack. But it was a win for me and a loss for the Cheerios thief.

That was the beginning of my memories (and exterminator skills) here at LCCC. I've learned to deal with mice without using poison and only had to beat one to death. Between snap traps, sticky traps, the purchase of many plastic totes for the food, (and one broom,) we banished the mice.

But let's get back to the real reason I haven't gone to Pennsylvania and stayed there..

Moving here, once again, follows a long-time dream of mine, and the job gives me the daily challenges my inner self craves.

At one point, the thought of moving back home got stronger, because my daughter and her growing family couldn't keep running the popcorn shop, so I ran it from here from 2024 through 2025. It was working, but it was too much, so the decision was made to sell the business at the end of December 2025, which was a very tough call and challenging in so many ways, but it has been good for me. Just like my doctor ordered; "Simplify life, make lifestyle changes." Even though I immediately enrolled in online classes, (as I said, I love a challenge, and I love to stay busy.)



I have built a life here, but I still belong in Pennsylvania.

Will she stay or will she go?

The truth is, I often feel the grief of proximity, but I don't regret the move. I like my life here, but I always have thoughts about home. I have built a life here, but I still belong in Pennsylvania. It's hard to be so far away sometimes, but at this point, I would regret leaving my life here.

If I were unhappy in Alaska, I would feel urgency to move back to Pennsylvania. Living in Alaska feels internally peaceful while spending quality time in Pennsylvania feels natural.

My Alaska voice says:

"This is my growth, my independence, my alignment, my passion."

My Pennsylvania voice says:

"These are my roots, my people, my history, my foundation."

For a long time, it felt like conflict, but now it feels like expansion. I'm no longer choosing between two worlds. I'm living in one while loving the other.

It doesn't mean I will never move back.

It doesn't mean I won't evolve again.

It means that right now, I'm exactly where I'm supposed to be.



Cherie Wolfe grew up in the rolling hills of Pennsylvania, where she spent 30 years running a gourmet popcorn shop that expanded to serve breakfast and lunch, soups, salads, and baked goods. She served for two years supervising 50-60 inmate kitchen workers at Pennsylvania's State Correctional Institution – Fayette, before coming to Lemon Creek Correctional Center as Food Services Supervisor. Cherie believes that home cooking should be healthy and adventurous. "Sure, I'm all about salads and nutrient-packed meals," she says, "But I believe in balance. Life's too short not to sneak in that extra cookie or indulge in a bowl of pasta now and then. After all, a cookie in hand makes everything better, don't you think?"

Lemon Creek Correctional Center Wants YOU!



Lemon Creek Correctional Center in Juneau, Alaska employs Correctional Officers, Food Service & Maintenance Specialists, Nurses, and

Administrative & Clerical Staff. Check out [Governmentjobs.com/careers/Alaska/](https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/Alaska/) for job opportunities DOC's Juneau facility.

Benefits:

- Correctional Officer hourly pay starts at \$30.77
- Annual scheduled pay increases
- Employee health insurance
- Work schedules maximize time off
- A supportive & team-oriented work environment

For information, contact Sergeant Green at (907)465-6202. We look forward to working with you.



The Man in the Arena

By

David Cheney, COII

“It is not the critic who counts not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles or where the doer of deeds could have done better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly, who errs and comes up short again and again, because there is no effort without error or shortcoming, but who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, who spends himself in a worthy cause; who, at the best, knows, in the end, the triumph of high achievement, and who, at the worst, if he fails, at least he fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who knew neither victory nor defeat.”

—Theodore Roosevelt

I grew up as an Army brat. My father, Jon Cheney, is the oldest of 7 brothers. I am the second oldest grandson, and was very close to my grandfather, Lyle Cheney. My grandfather was talented, crazy strong, and a fierce man in everything he did. And he never did anything small. My grandfather’s influence on me was particularly powerful because I am only 8 years younger than my youngest uncle, so whatever my uncles did, I did too. My father and grandfather taught me to believe in hard work and the pride of standing for something meaningful. I have a lot of impactful memories and experiences that have guided me to where I am today, many of them associated with my grandfather. Whenever I have experienced a life-altering moment, chances are it started with him.

When I was young, my family was very big into Scouting. My grandfather had very strict beliefs and expectations that we all inherited, including those related to Scouting. He had a plaque on the wall with all the family’s Eagle Scouts on it. Long before I became a Scout, I remember being shown my name on that plaque, with the date of earning my Eagle waiting to be filled in. So, I was predestined to become an Eagle Scout and to pursue that style of life.

The organization of Scouting began in 1907, founded by British Lt. General Robert S.S. Baden-Powell, who envisioned a program that would prepare young boys to eventually serve in the military. He created the first scout manual from a military manual used to train cavalry scouts. My church adopted Scouting early on because it was such a good program for developing men who understood service to others and how to survive and be successful. It has been a vital part of my upbringing and my character. All in all, it helped forge the path that I needed to tread to get the adult result that I was looking for.

I encountered many things on that path that I was determined to accomplish. I remember many scout camp experiences, particularly one at Camp Crooked Creek, that took place when I was very young and we were living in Fort Knox, Kentucky. A tornadic storm hit the camp and I still vividly remember it. We were in raised, A-frame tents installed on pallets. The rain and lightning were intense. I hovered near the tent pole and watched the doors flap, as we all took a soaking from wind-blown rain. Outside, all was pitch darkness, wind, thunder and lightning. The noise was so loud, we had to yell to be heard. Somehow, we all made it to the bath houses and sheltered there until the tornado warning was lifted. Believe it or not, I look back on that as a very fond memory. I'm not sure what that says about me, but I've lived through other great storms and tornadoes, and they still fascinate me. The memory of huddling together for safety in that bath house instilled in me the determination to do what it takes to make sure that everyone I care about and even those I don't personally know, are safe.

Because my grandfather and father were both Scoutmasters I was able to experience many things at a younger age than other Scouts. I went on my first 50-mile hike on the Pacific Northwest Trail before I was old enough to even be a Boy Scout. I remember how hard it was. I had these great ideas about everything I needed to bring. I packed my backpack and I was ready. Of course, being very young, I quickly learned that what I thought I needed and what was truly necessary were two majorly different things. My father and grandfather never let me or my brothers suffer too much though. After the first 20 minutes or so of hiking, they both helped by taking a lot of items out of our packs, reducing the weight to something we could actually carry. That first night we made pancakes because it was the heaviest pack item among us and we could go through it quickly. We ate so many pancakes that I became a waffle kid and didn't care as much for pancakes after that.

I got my first lesson using a compass and reading maps. Also, I got to see and feel firsthand the beauty and peace that came with working hard and focusing on the hike, as everyone around me took one silent step at a time. Oh, the things you see when you are in that state of mind! It's crazy how you can be so tired but at the same time so aware of everything around you. I can still close my eyes and hear the patter of raindrops hitting the leaves and I still find peace in nature and respect for the discipline and joy that both come from experiencing the outdoors. I developed a passion for hiking, for the rainforest, and for teamwork that will always be a part of me. I remember another camp, where to earn a merit badge I had to go out into the wilderness on my own and survive for one night. I was so scared and nervous, though looking back on it, I never left the boundaries of the campground. It was one more step on the path to understanding things that would speak to my inner self and create the person I am.

For me, Scouting was always a way to relate to people. I moved a lot growing up, never living anywhere for very long, but Scouts were the same everywhere I went. I had a big move when I left middle school. I left everything in Washington when we relocated to Las Vegas. One of the things that my dad did for me, and I see now that it was meant to help us, was to move my brother and me down early so that we could go on another 50-mile hike in a new state, with a troop we didn't know. It wasn't my rainforest. We arrived in Cedar city, a small town in southern Utah, and met and hiked with an entirely new group. Without that experience, it would have been hard for me to stay the same person that I had become. I was extremely bitter and angry about starting high school away from my friends and the life I had in Washington. Yet, the habits and struggles of Scouting were familiar, and with the knowledge I had and was able to share, making friends on that hike came easy. Of course, some of the things I shared and that helped me make new friends might not have been the greatest; like how to make explosives out of military M.R.E meal heaters, or games with pocketknives and fire that no sane 14-year-old should know. Yet great friendships were formed.

One boy, who remains a friend to this day, broke his collarbone four days into the hike, and I helped carry some of his things until we reached a spot where he could get picked up. That 50 mile hike turned into a 70 miler, because after my friend got picked up and we continued on, we discovered that the maps our guide was using were over 50 years old and no longer accurate. We found ourselves at a really cool, 3 story cabin, where the owner took pity on us and let us ride in his horse trailer back to where we were supposed to end up. I would become an adult in that Scout Troop, with all my remaining learning, training, and camping. This was where I began developing leadership skills, where I would start training others, and where I would accept leadership positions. I eventually became the Senior Patrol Leader for my troop. I was certified to train Scouts to earn merit badges and accomplished that many times as well.

For those unfamiliar with Scouting, there are different levels of accomplishment in a Scout's career. The highest honor is to earn the Eagle. Of course, becoming an Eagle Scout was even more important to me. One of the long traditions established by my grandfather was that we were not allowed to get our driver's licenses until we were Eagle Scouts. As a teenager, I thought that was kind of unfair, considering that I could drive at 16 and still have until 18 to complete my Eagle requirements. I understand now how smart that rule was, because once a teenager can drive and do things that come with driving, like dating and parties, Scouting can lose some of its appeal. This contributes to the fact that 94-96% of scouts never earn the rank of Eagle. Deep down, I knew it was something I would finish.

I earned my Eagle when I was 16. It's crazy that after so many years of Scouting, something as basic as the Eagle Board of Review shaped my life and eventually gave me reasons to set certain goals for myself that I wasn't even thinking about at 16. One of the things explained at the Board of Review was that if a Scout was arrested, for any reason, he could lose his Eagle. I never planned on getting arrested. Yet so many of my life choices since earning my



“On my honor I will do my best to do my duty to God and my country to obey the Scout Law; to help others at all times; to keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight.”

Eagle have been made only after asking myself, “Is it worth it?” Why would I ever disgrace what I have worked so hard to earn? Would this choice honor my family name or shame it? With my Eagle came an award card to always remind me of who I am and the hard choices I have made. I carry it with me every day.

So, I got my Eagle and my driver's license, and for the next few years, I embraced teen life. I confess that I strayed a bit in an effort to be carefree. But thankfully, that was only a small portion of my life. I chose to get back on track when I turned 21, by serving a mission for my church for two years. There was no better way I know to do a lot of self-development and to rediscover who I wanted to be. As a missionary, I was only allowed access to my old life, "my friends and family" through letters and two phone calls a year. This was something that we agreed on when we chose to serve, so we could focus on our mission and on our development and to service in our Lord's name. While on my mission, I stepped back into

many leadership roles that gave me a chance to learn how to better serve and be part of something bigger, by helping others serve as well.

After my mission, I was drawn to the fitness industry, where I became a personal trainer and then the general manager of a gym up north. The fitness business was very satisfying, and I might have stayed with it longer, but with little warning, the world changed for me and my family. My wife was diagnosed with progressive multiple sclerosis. I needed family health insurance that my fitness employer couldn't provide. So, I left and tried my hand at retail.

I never wanted to work in retail. My first goal was to get into loss prevention, but that just didn't pay enough. In the meantime, I discovered that I was actually good at retail and moved up fast. Then Covid hit, and to my good fortune, retail was considered essential, so I didn't lose work like so many other people did. I kept at it, moving up in the business world, but never really feeling satisfied. Ultimately, I hoped that loss prevention would provide experience that might translate into a criminal justice career. Within a year, I had moved up significantly and it grew harder to see myself leaving retail to start all over with another career. In 2020 I was offered a position in management that required moving my family to Juneau. I spoke with my wife, and we decided to give it a try. To Juneau we came, and right there, my inner voice and life choices changed my life.

While working retail in Juneau and frankly hating it, one of my employees told me that he was applying for a job in Corrections. I was intrigued. I had never been exposed to Corrections or even given it much thought. After a really bad day at work and a lot of research, I applied, got a job at Lemon Creek Correctional Center, and here we are, where my inner voice has led me. I am finally in a branch of service that suits my soul. A career with opportunities to advance and learn and become the best version of myself that I can be. I'll give credit where credit is due; I am soaking it all in, loving what I do and what I am becoming, as I continue to train and evolve, providing better service to my profession, myself, my family, and my Savior. I'm reminded of a quote by Marianne Williamson:

“Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, 'Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?' Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.”

I believe that my inner voice has been the guidance of my Lord and Savior. All the decisions that my grandfather, and father and I have made to get me to my present state, have all been made with our understanding and faith in the Savior and the promptings given to us by the Holy Ghost in our efforts to live the way we believe to be right. I have a great family. I love my wife and kids with all I've got. I am grateful every day to be where my thoughts, my goals and my inner voice have brought me. I've done everything in my power to be the Man in the Arena, and I wouldn't change a thing.



*David Cheney, Correctional Officer II
Lemon Creek Correctional Center*



In-Service Training

SSgt. Gary Locke

LCCC Training Sergeant

As most of you know I will be assuming the role of Training Sergeant at Lemon Creek Correctional Center. I am excited to take on this responsibility and to have a change of pace after 12 years here at Lemon Creek. I enjoyed working as a floor officer, spent many years as a Max Officer, and served as an FTO, Booking Officer and Shift Supervisor. In this issue of the Lemon Creek Journal, we are introducing mandatory training modules, the first being Smoke/Fire Emergency Procedures 802.01. The importance of this module cannot be overemphasized.

Should a significant fire occur at the institution, do you know what to do, and where your equipment is? How quickly could you evacuate a particular area of the institution? Waiting until an incident occurs is the worst possible moment to realize that you don't. We are going to discuss these major topics: A Team response calls, PPE, fire extinguisher types and uses, I-EVAC Hoods, primary, secondary and alternative evacuation routes, and fire drills.

A Team Response Calls

Good communication is key to responding to any emergency, beginning with its first announcement over the radio system. When you make the decision to initiate an A Team response, stay calm and give clear and detailed information about not only what is happening, but also about what you need. Paint the best picture you can for responding staff, so they can respond with the right equipment and the right mindset to deal with the situation at hand.

Personal Protective Equipment

When responding to emergency calls, protecting yourself first is of utmost importance. You always want to be the 1st responder not the 2nd victim. As a responder you are relying on good information from the initiating call for assistance. This will assist you in deciding what PPE to

have and use. If the call is for a medical emergency, you need gloves, an AED, CPR mask, and first aid kit. For a fight you would want a higher number of responding staff, hand cuffs, a Taser and gloves. For fires you would want a higher number of responding staff, fire extinguishers and possibly I-EVAC Hoods. When responding to emergencies always consider that this may be a set up by the inmates, so remember to respond with the proper mindset.

I-EVAC Hoods

Each post has a designated spot for appropriate Fire extinguishers and I-EVAC Hoods. I-Evac instructions follow:

- Open and unfold.
- Stretch to your head size.
- Pull over your head and cover your mouth and nose.
- Grab straps and tighten snugly; and
- Be sure the hood touches the neck.

Fire Extinguishers

There are many types of fire extinguishers used for different types of fires. It is essential that you use the correct type of extinguisher for the fire you are suppressing.

Class A extinguishers are used for wood and paper.

Class B extinguishers are used for flammable liquids.

Class C extinguishers are used for electrical fires.

Class K extinguishers are used for animal fats and cooking oils.

Most of our extinguishers are Class A B C multipurpose extinguishers and can be used on these three classes of fires. However, we do have specialty extinguishers, such as CO2 and Halotron extinguishers, which are better suited for certain situations.

There are different ways each of these extinguishers put out fires. If you do not use the proper extinguisher, you could cause the fire to grow larger, or the fire will not go out. You could also cause unneeded damage to equipment. A good example of this is the CO2 extinguisher, located in the server room in the front lobby. You could use the all-purpose A B C extinguisher located in the lobby, but the dry powder would damage the expensive equipment in the server room. However, if you use the CO2 extinguisher located in the server room, it would remove the oxygen from the fire and extinguish the fire without damaging the equipment.

Another great example of the importance of using the right extinguisher would be in the Kitchen. If there was a fire in the deep fryer, you would want to use the Class K extinguisher designed for grease fires, which lays down a blanket of soap media that sits on top of the fuel and smothers the fire, whereas an all-purpose extinguisher could hit the hot grease and spread it. The Kitchen has two Class K extinguishers, one next to the door of the steward's office and one on the far wall near the toaster.

How To Use a Fire Extinguisher

The PASS method provides a simple, four-step technique – Pull, Aim, Squeeze, Sweep – to help you effectively and safely use a fire extinguisher.

Step 1 – **P**ull the pin at the top of the fire extinguisher. This pin locks the handle and prevents accidental discharge. Pulling it allows you to operate the extinguisher.

Step 2 – **A**im the nozzle or hose at the base of the fire, not at the flames. Targeting the base of the fire is essential, because extinguishing the source of the flames is most effective for stopping the fire.

Step 3 – **S**queeze the handle or lever slowly and evenly to release the extinguishing agent. Maintain a firm grip and control the flow to ensure proper coverage.

Step 4 – **S**weep the nozzle from side to side at the base of the fire, covering the area until the fire is completely out. Continue this motion until you are sure the fire has been extinguished. Move carefully toward the fire if necessary but always keep a safe distance and stand with a clear exit behind you in case the fire spreads.

Fire extinguishers are staged throughout the facility and marked with red signs stating, “Fire extinguisher.” Please take time and memorize where the fire extinguishers are located for each Post you work.

Emergency Evacuation Diagrams

Primary evacuation routes are identified by a Red line.

Secondary evacuation routes are identified by a Green line.

Alternative routes are identified by a Blue line.

Emergency evacuation diagrams are posted as follows:

- On Post 3, across from the Officers Bubble.
- Inside the gym past the slider, just before turning to the left.
- Post 5 landing between the Officer Cubby and Substance Abuse.

- In the basement, at the bottom of the stairwell.
- And soon, in the Post 4 hallway.

Make sure you know the evacuation routes for each Post. In the event your primary evacuation route is compromised, you **MUST** be familiar with alternate routes and be able to use them without delay.

MAX, FMU, PUN-SEG, J-SEG

Each of these Special housing units has lock boxes with cuffs, belly chains and leg irons to secure all inmates housed in these units during evacuations. In a real emergency, Post 4 will be difficult for one officer to manage alone. Special considerations will be necessary to assist with this inmate evacuation.

During a full evacuation, inmates should be relocated to the large yard. The track has marked areas for each living unit to stand in so that a count can be conducted.

Mental awareness during emergencies is a learned skill you must play the what-if game when on post. Studies have shown that the more times you work through a situation in your head, the more prepared for the real situation you will be. Always think of other ways you might be able to evacuate an area.

Fire Drills

Each shift is required to complete fire drills quarterly and at least one of the drills should address the evacuation of a living unit. The entire facility should conduct one full evacuation fire drill yearly to the large yard.

I want to thank all of you for what you do, for participating in drills and training and bringing up new and fresh ideas. It's always a good idea to think outside the box, so long as we follow policy and procedures.

Mandatory Training:

The following Training Module is MANDATORY and should be completed and submitted no later than April 30. Thank you and stay safe, SSgt. Locke

Read Policy 802.01, then access a computer, enter G-Drive, select the "Everyone" folder, then select "Training Folder," where you will find the Smoke/Fire Emergency Test. Print the test and answer all test questions. Place your name and completion date on the test and put it in the Training box in Booking. Upon completion, you will earn one hour of mandated annual training.