Day in the Life at Englewood

I found that when you live near the communal restroom shower area on a sixty man tier here at FCI Englewood you really don't need an alarm clock any longer. I live on a tier with 60 other men who choose work, rather than just laying around all day.

At Unicor Prison Industries here at Englewood where we make leather gloves for the military, work starts at seven, but the flushing, the coughing, and blowing of noses begins around 5:15 am. I choose to lay in my rack until about 5:50 am. I get up and use the bathroom, wash my hands and face I proceed to make a cup of coffee and lay around the tv room waiting for the C.O. (Correction Officer) to call the morning meal (chow). Chow is called weekdays between 6am and 6:15 am.
where they line us up and run us through the cafeteria for brown bag containing a piece of cake, an apple, and some bran flake cereal. Finish with breakfast and get dressed in our khaki uniforms for the day. 7:00 am everyone has somewhere to be, I make my way to education for my 1st semester of college classes where an instructor from Arapahoe Community College comes to the prison to teach. In fact it's through that class that I am writing this essay. The semester has been a rewarding challenge that have definitely helped the last 10 weeks go by fast.

Class ends at 10:00 am and it's time for me to report to Uunicor for work. The compound opens and I walk from education to the gates of Uunicor, most days I'm
Stuck waiting at the gate until 10:30 am for someone to come open the gate. At 10:30 Union workers make their way from the jobsite to

the cafeteria for lunch. The food here is generally pretty good and they give us plenty of food. The menu rotates on a five week

schedule. Lunch is over at about 11:00 am and I head to work. I head in the front door and

go through the metal detectors, pick up my tools (scissors and rotary cutter) from the tool room. Proceed

down there to my leather grading room. It is my job to inspect each hide before it is allowed to

go on the production floor. I inspect each hide for holes, cuts, scrapes, and blemishes. Basically

anything that I don’t want to show up on the final product I mark with a marker.
Marker so they don't cut it and use it. So I spend the next few hours of my day inspecting leather hides for blemishes and preparing the next day's work. Sometimes I will finish a little bit early and I will have a chance to sit down at a machine and sew some pairs of gloves. Work ends at 3:00 pm and we are all recalled back to the housing units.

I arrive back at the unit about 3:05 pm. I make sure my chair is set up in the TV room and proceed to my room where I go and get my shower gear together and take a quiet shower and relax before count. 4pm is a mandatory standing count prior to the walls where we are locked in our tiers until the staff ensures that everyone is present and accounted for.
Count clears around 4:30 pm and the gate to our tier opens and you are able to go to the computer to check your email, make phone calls, and generally hang out until they start passing out the mail.

Around 5 pm they start calling the unit in order to chow for dinner. The order we are called in is determined by a judgment of how clean the unit is when the weekly walk-thru is conducted. Chow ends around 6 pm and this time of day is more hanging out and relaxing, watching TV or go outside and walk track or one of the many other things to do that eat up our time here in prison. (playing sports, wellness or hobbies, craft, lift weights, play music) The recreation department has a lot of different items to help keep us
busy.

They recall us from the yard at around 7:30, back to the unit for the rest of the night. Time to relax for the rest of the day and find a TV show or a book to just get ready for the next day. I usually hang out and watch TV. At 9:00 pm we have another mandatory standing count that clears around 9:30 and the CO. lets us back out of our tier until lights out at 11:30 weekdays. What I've learned most about prison is that it's not as bad as TV movies make it look, but the alienation and loneliness I've felt perhaps are the greatest punishment. Now I am starting to see some light at the end of the tunnel roughly 4 years in on.

A few years back, and I wonder how my life would have been different had I not come to prison.