

If I am looking for something I can't find, there is a default setting in my search that tells me that if it is a small item, the best place to look is the junk drawer. I have surveyed many of my friends and family, and most of them will admit to having a junk drawer in the kitchen cupboards. Sometimes, the junk drawer started life as something else but gradually morphed into a place for every little thing that didn't seem to belong anywhere else. In our case, we knew that we would need a junk drawer, so this particular shallow example has never known anything but small and varied items.

And, it really isn't accurate to call it a junk drawer. There may be things there that we should throw away, and some of them will be discarded today as we look to see exactly what is jumbled together there. We do clean it out periodically, and like our desk, it is nice to see, and it's handy to be able to find something, but we know that surely, it won't stay that way very long.

These are some of the items we found in our junk drawer this morning: a measuring tape used to estimate the weight of a horse; a Swedish Mora knife; an epi-pen; a container of cat wormer; a roll of "pipe thread seal tape;" some bungees that belong to the chicken tractor; an electric fence tester; an ear mite treatment kit for dogs; a tool to make holes in leather; a small crescent wrench; a tube of "Kwik-Wood"; a screwdriver; a replacement gasket for a sheep drencher; another Mora knife; a leather strap that attaches to a horse halter; a bottle of Gorilla Glue; a tube for IVing cattle; another small plastic tube; an ear mite treatment for cats; a "toe heater" for boots; a tube of bearing lubricant; a tube of plumbing adhesive; two small choke chains for puppies; a pair of pliers; a wood chisel (3/4"); a glass cutter that I remember from my dad's junk drawer; a roll of fine stainless wire; a packet of hammar wedges; five clothespins; a pair of nippers Runo won in a sheep shearing contest but gave to me; a pair of wire cutters; a roll of waxed linen thread; a Phillips screwdriver; a curved carving knife; a one-inch wood cutting bit; an electric plug adaptor; my red Swiss army knife that lay out in the snow over winter and is ruined; two rolls of black electrical tape; two cockspurs for hand shearing blades; a switch box cover; a fuel filter gasket for the Kubota; a 1/4 inch bit; a leather sheath for a jackknife that has been lost; a cat's eye marble; a tiny Phillips screwdriver that was a gift from the LOSB in 1988; a 3/8" to 13/16" Master Wrench; another crescent wrench; a maple sap spile; a Swedish measuring tape for estimating the weight (in kilos) of calves; a cat collar; a timber crayon; one double A battery; an envelope of split sinkers for fishing line; another double A battery, but a different kind; a tiny crescent wrench; two flat files; a punch to set nails; a tiny pulley; wire to splice belts on the round baler; a tube of rubber cement; another cat collar; a tool to take the bot eggs from horses' legs; a piece for the greenhouse irrigation unit; a light to put on a dog's collar; ammunition for a 308 Winchester; ammunition for a single shot 22; a handful of fence staples; another handful of small brads and nails; some washers; two pole barn nails; a paint can opener; some assorted screws; A Swedish screw-in spur for winter horseshoes; a small pencil; a handful of screws; a tiny screw-in drawer handle; and miscellaneous hardware that was just thrown into the drawer from pockets.

After we ate our dinner and before we allow ourselves to go cross country skiing, the junk drawer—now, temporarily, the treasure drawer—must be reassembled and returned to its place. Runo needed to be a part of this drawer cleaning. I didn't know what everything was or what use it could serve. He was pleasantly surprised at some of his "finds." And, so was I. I wonder how accurately one could assess personality, way of life, and general character of the inhabitants of our country by getting a good look into the junk drawers of the nation.