

Dateline: IRAQ
Most internships don't require flak jackets and a military escort, but it did for three journalism students and their professor, who spent three weeks in August embedded with a combat team in Iraq. Follow their adventure at shorttimers.blogspot.com.

Extra+ Credit

Cheep digs

Most people on campus know that office space is at a premium, but who knew one's office could be usurped while away for only a week?

In May, Gary Laursen, a senior research professor with the Institute of Arctic Biology, left his office window ajar while out of town. When he returned, he found his office had been taken over by a family of slate-colored juncos, who had built their nest on top of some books on a shelf. Over the next weeks, the female junco incubated her eggs; after they hatched, both parents brought food through the office window to the rapidly growing chicks.

One morning Laursen found young juncos hopping around on the floor. He showed them the window exit their parents had been using and the fledglings flew out to join the rest of the family. His books appear to have survived unscathed.



Find out more about juncos at www.uaf.edu/aurora/.



AURORA



A Way from Despair

Can learning old skills save young lives?

Peace Corps master's international

Alumnus Dan Jordan

Theatre UAF farewell: Anatoly Antohin



America's Arctic University



Alumnus see pages 23 – 28

Dear editor,

I was amused by the politically correct but patently ridiculous article “Biofuels — Alaska’s new power plants?” in the spring 2009 issue of *Aurora*.

I am a lifelong Alaskan who grew up using every source of heat in his life from anthracite to windburn. We cannot meaningfully grow ourselves out of a near-term dependence on fossil fuel. Old french-fry oil, putting up wind generators (where they will hopefully work), or squeezing fuel out of beans may be green but are hardly worth their contributory effort. Burning barley for fuel — a food resource a starving world will need more with each passing day — or wasting land resources, precious water, fuel and fertilizer, growing corn to convert to alcohol for fuel for cars are ideas that don’t even warrant being termed unproductive.

The word nuclear is a word that freezes most Americans into inaction. Yet nuclear power plants of a size small enough even to meet remote Alaska village needs are ready and waiting. I would wager in twenty years, under a determined program, added nuclear plants could wean us of a majority of our dependence on world oil suppliers, countries which tolerate America only because we keep them rich by buying their product.

Instead of grinding rapeseed, which doesn’t even like to grow in Alaska, how much money, I wonder, is being spent on research into a process for removing the bad stuff from large quantities of coal, turning this almost unlimited source of national and Alaskan fuel into something that would at least rival oil in clean-burning quality? Surely American ingenuity could accomplish that! How about a grant, or even a national competition, leading the way to make this happen, UofA?

Dennis Lattery, '67

P.S. We need to make some big decisions regarding our national energy policy. If we are going to lick this hydrocarbon stranglehold thing we need to concentrate on large-scale energy sources WE have available to work with.

Correction

Class notes, *Aurora* spring 2009 — David Kingsland is principal of Seward Elementary School in Seward.

About the cover



Participants in the Elluam Tunginun research project watch Adeline Edmund cut up salmon at her fish camp in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. The project teaches Alaska Native teens and their families how to protect themselves against suicide and substance abuse using knowledge gleaned from sober and healthy Alaska Natives. Story begins on page 6. Photo courtesy of Gunnar Ebbesson.

Dear editor,

I went thru the issue on the screen without really getting at it. I am in the middle of another effort — the portion of the history of Auburn engineering — when I had it so I will look at *Aurora* more closely later. Initial impression GREAT!! So many things remind me of the wonderful time, people and events from Fairbanks. One on the 50th reminded me of the pope/president meeting when I was selected as protocol chief for the event. (NEVER, NEVER, NEVER ACCEPT SUCH A JOB.) Among other things I had to set the seating for the meal with the president with all the invitees from town. You sure lose friends when you seat them below the salt when someone else gets a better seat. Keep the faith and the job.

Vincent Haneman, dean emeritus, School of Engineering

Editor’s note: President Reagan and Pope John Paul II met in Fairbanks in 1984 while each was on layover. President Reagan gave a speech in the Patty Gym during his stay.

Dear editor,

We received the *Aurora* this week and when I read of the 50th season celebration of the Fairbanks Symphony, I had to share a special memory.

My husband, Rev. Dave Crockett, was the pastor of the University Community Presbyterian Church at College during the '70s. He had been asked to perform a wedding at a lodge in the Brooks Range. The wedding party was to fly into the lodge in a small plane. The morning of the wedding it was about 55 below. He packed all kinds of cold-weather gear and headed out to the airport.

Rather than wait around home and worry, I took our three children to a Fairbanks Symphony children’s concert directed by Gordon Wright. The auditorium was surprisingly full, but then everyone there had to have two seats — one to sit on and one for their coats, hats, mittens and scarves. Gordon came out to direct in a wool plaid shirt and knee-high mukluks. If memory serves, I believe *Carnival of the Animals* was on the program that day. It was a wonderful afternoon, a great diversion, enjoyed and appreciated by all.

My husband returned safe and sound later that afternoon. The small plane had landed safely at the lodge. The pilot told the wedding party, “You’ve got twenty minutes.” A quick wedding, a glass of champagne, and they were off again, and threaded their way through the ice fog on their return to Fairbanks.

Dorothy Tonsseth Crockett

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Look for this icon for information about enhanced content online.

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Photo Manager Todd Paris
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Multimedia Coordinator..... Megan Otts

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America's Arctic University

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Courting crested auklets stand on a rock on St. Lawrence Island. The male auklet is on the left.

UAF photo by Hector Douglas

Size does matter

A study conducted by UAF researchers at Big Koniuji Island in the Shumagin Islands offers evidence that in one breed of northern seabird, the size of males' feather crests may be more than simple ornamentation.

The study, published in the *Journal of Comparative Physiology B*, shows that crest size may be a physical indicator of a male crested auklet's quality as a mate.

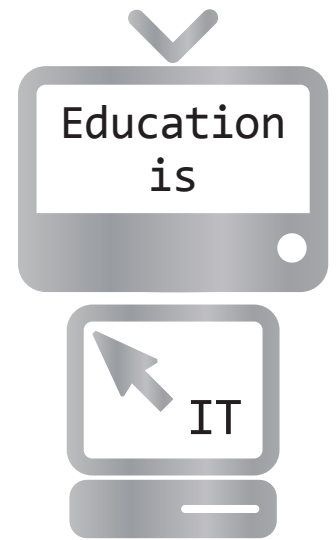
Scientists have long noted that female auklets prefer males with larger crests. But until recently, they did not know why. Low levels of stress hormones in males with larger crests indicate that they cope better with the stresses of reproduction, such as finding food, competing with thousands of other birds for mates and nest sites, and helping rear chicks.

"Females will divorce shorter-crested mates for the opportunity to mate with longer-crested males. Our study suggests that longer-crested males could contribute more to reproductive success because they have

greater capacity to meet the social and physiological costs," said Hector Douglas, assistant professor of biology at the Kuskokwim Campus in Bethel.

Douglas and collaborator Alexander Kitaysky, an associate professor at the UAF Institute of Arctic Biology, say their results fit into a larger hypothesis about animal societies.

"There appears to be a social hierarchy at the colony which is correlated with the size of the male ornament and this, in turn, is related to the levels of stress hormones," Douglas said. "The cost of attaining and maintaining dominant status is reflected in the animals' physiology and this has a distinct pattern in the society."



Distance diminishes when instructors and internship supervisors use technology to bring them closer to UAF students and interns in rural Alaska. For example, education interns in rural communities can use a video camera so faculty can watch them in the classroom from anywhere in the world via the Internet. Faculty supervise interns as they teach; because they have control over the classroom video camera, they can zoom in on what interns have written on the blackboard, follow them around the room and gauge the reactions of the interns' young charges. Later, supervisors and interns can meet via videoconference to discuss the day's work. These capabilities can be used anywhere there is Internet access but one of the greatest benefits will be to expand teacher training in rural Alaska, a challenge in a vast state where many villages can't be reached by road.

ICEBREAKER cometh

The National Science Foundation will use American Recovery and Reinvestment Act stimulus funds for construction of the Alaska Region Research Vessel, a 242-foot, ice-capable ship, to support scientific research in high-latitude waters. The vessel will be owned by NSF and operated by UAF's School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences on behalf of the entire ocean sciences community, through the University-National Oceanographic Laboratory System. As the first vessel in the U.S. academic research fleet capable of breaking ice up to 2.5 feet thick, the new ship will open up the ice-choked waters of the Alaska region to scientists from all over the world. The Alaska Region Research Vessel was developed as a replacement for the R/V *Alpha Helix*, a 133-foot research vessel that was built in 1966 and retired and sold in 2007. The new vessel should be ready for use in 2014.



Artist's rendering of the research vessel by The Glosten Associates

~~Interim~~ Chancellor Rogers, President Hamilton ^(Ret.)

University of Alaska President Mark Hamilton announced in May that Brian Rogers will serve as permanent chancellor at UAF. Rogers was appointed interim chancellor in April 2008.

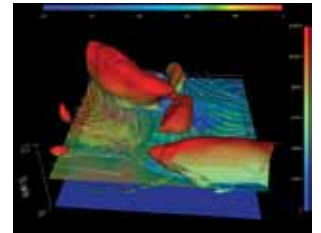
"I cannot justify an expensive, lengthy national search involving multiple candidates that would, I'm convinced, lead me to the person I have on the job right now," Hamilton said.

Hamilton said he made the decision after consulting with the UA Board of Regents and meeting with students, community members, elected officials, business leaders, staff and faculty members, and alumni.

A month later, Hamilton announced that he himself would retire from his position leading the 16-campus system. He has been president since August 1998. A specific departure date isn't set yet.

"Quite simply, I want to spend more time with my family," said Hamilton. "And I want to spend more time in this Alaska that I love so much. Maybe I'll get in some extra fishing time or an extended moose hunt."

@ Read about UAF's new supercomputer, Pingo, in *Challenges* online at www.arsc.edu/challenges/2009/.



CAMPUS BRIEFS

PROFESSOR EMERITUS MICHAEL KRAUSS was named a Linguistics Society of America Fellow for his distinguished contributions to the field. Krauss, funded by a \$1.2 million grant from the National Science Foundation, is leading a team of veteran linguists who are documenting endangered languages in and near Alaska.

THE UAF MECHANICAL ENGINEERING TEAM TOOK SECOND PLACE in the zero emissions class of the 2009 Society of Automobile Engineers Clean Snowmobile Challenge for their battery-powered snowmachine. The five-member team also won the Hawke Safety and the Rookie of the Challenge awards.

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA PRESS PUBLISHED ITS FIRST BOOK OF POETRY, *The Rising and the Rain*, by Alaska writer laureate John Straley, '08. Straley, known for his Alaska mystery novels, is a criminal defense investigator for the Alaska Public Defender Agency in Sitka.


FOLLOW BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION PROFESSOR WAYNE MARR ON TWITTER @WayneMarr, noted as one of the top 12 financial pundits to tweet by *The Wall Street Journal's* SmartMoney.com.

NEW FACULTY PROFILE

Offer(ing) welcome

David B. Offer is the C.W. Snedden Chair in Journalism for 2009 – 2010. He is teaching Journalism in Perspective during the fall semester and will teach a special topics course in news literacy in the spring. After retiring as executive editor of the *Kennebec Journal* and the *Morning Sentinel* in Maine, he continues to write weekly columns in both newspapers. Offer was the national chairman of the Society for Professional Journalists' ethics committee, and in 2001 he received a Payne Award for Ethics in Journalism from the University of Oregon in recognition of his resignation from *Stars and Stripes* in response to censorship at the newspaper.

Offer drove a long way to live in Fairbanks for a year. Before his 4,700-mile journey to Fairbanks, he wrote, "Why do my wife and I want to come to Alaska? I joke with friends that we want to come because Maine winters are not cold enough or long enough." He'll soon find out if that's true.

 Read an Offer column at <http://kennebecjournal.maine.com/view/columns/6167075.html>.



School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences research assistant Tara Fritzingler studies crab sperm and eggs in a lab at the Lena Point Fisheries Building, north of Juneau. The new building was dedicated in April after construction was completed in October 2008.



Found in translation

Elnuq, the story of an Eskimo girl's childhood in the Alaska wilderness, is the only full-length work of creative writing in the Yup'ik language. First published in 1990 by the Alaska Native Language Center at UAF, it was translated into English in 2008 by the author, Anna Jacobson, and her husband, Stephen.

"*Elnuq Ellangellra*"

Maaten-gguq ellanguq mat'umun nunakegtaarmun tanqircetqapiarluni camek-llu-gguq cali nalluami yuucini-llu nalluamiu murilkessiyagpek'nani. Unagguz-wa ca caniani aqumgauralria irriurluku ellii.

This beginning to *Elnuq* roughly translates as:

"*Elnuq Becomes Aware*"


It was at that time, it is said, that she became aware of the bright beautiful world. Because she didn't know anything yet and didn't even know that she was a human being, she did not observe very much. But, there was a certain something that was sitting beside her, watching her.




PHILANTHROPY

Nurses inspire scholarship fund

In 1973, two tons of freight fell on Fairbanks post office employee Esther Louise Lagen. The accident resulted in long-term disabilities that necessitated the frequent aid of health care workers. Those health care workers were Lagen's inspiration — when she died recently she left \$385,000 for a nursing scholarship for Fairbanks nursing and nurse aide students at the Tanana Valley Campus.

 Support this and other scholarships at www.uaf.edu/giving/.

 Comment on any of these stories at www.uaf.edu/aurora/.



A better barley

A barley variety developed by researchers at UAF could provide a high-nutrient, high-yield crop for Alaska farmers this fall.

Sunshine barley, released by UAF's Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station in time for spring planting, is hull-less barley, meaning it requires little or no processing to remove the hull, which is attached so loosely to the seed that it easily falls off during harvesting.

This early-maturing, non-waxy barley is specifically adapted to northern environments. Sunshine barley yields nearly 2,500 pounds per acre.

Following the field trials, the UAF Cooperative Extension Service did kitchen tests on 12 barley varieties. A CES nutrition expert determined that Sunshine is a marketable product, easy to mill, has a nutty flavor and an abundance of nutrients.

"We want to show growers the possibilities of Sunshine barley," said research assistant Bob Van Veldhuizen, who has worked many years on the project. "In Alaska, you almost have to create the product yourself as we don't have industries to do it."

He foresees some demand for the grain from health food enthusiasts. Barley flour is low in gluten, a plus for people with certain allergies.

Hockey reaps awards, readies for new season

Dallas Ferguson, the 2008 – 2009 CCHA Coach of the Year, isn't resting on his laurels. "The CCHA is a very competitive conference from top to bottom and to be successful you need to put together great performances every weekend. Our program is excited for the challenges ahead of us and to build off of where we finished last season." The team will be without its star goaltender: Chad Johnson, 2009 CCHA Player of the Year and finalist for the Hobey Baker Award, graduated in May. The Nanooks finished fourth in the CCHA, their best postseason finish since 2005.

Alumnus to coach women's basketball

Dave Thompson, '96, replaced Darryl Smith as the Alaska Nanooks' women's basketball coach in June. Assistant coach Christian Hood remains with the team. Thompson was head basketball coach at Hutchison High School in Fairbanks for five years prior to his new post. He took the boys team from a 0-22 record in their inaugural season to a 24-5 record and the 2009 Alaska 3A State Boys Basketball Championship, Fairbanks' first state basketball title since 1997.

For other Nanook sports schedules and news, visit <http://alaskananooks.com>.



2009 – 2010 hockey schedule

September

26 Blue/Gold exhibition

October

3 SAIT exhibition

9 – 10 at Kendall Classic

tournament, Anchorage

16 – 17 Brice Alaska Goal Rush
tournament

30 – 31 vs. Ferris State

November

6 – 7 vs. Notre Dame

13 – 14 at Bowling Green

20 – 21 at Lake Superior State

27 – 28 vs. Northern Michigan

December

(away games in italics)

4 – 5 at Western Michigan

11 – 12 vs. Nebraska-Omaha

January

8 – 9 at Nebraska-Omaha

15 – 16 at Michigan

22 – 23 vs. Miami

29 – 30 at Northern Michigan

February

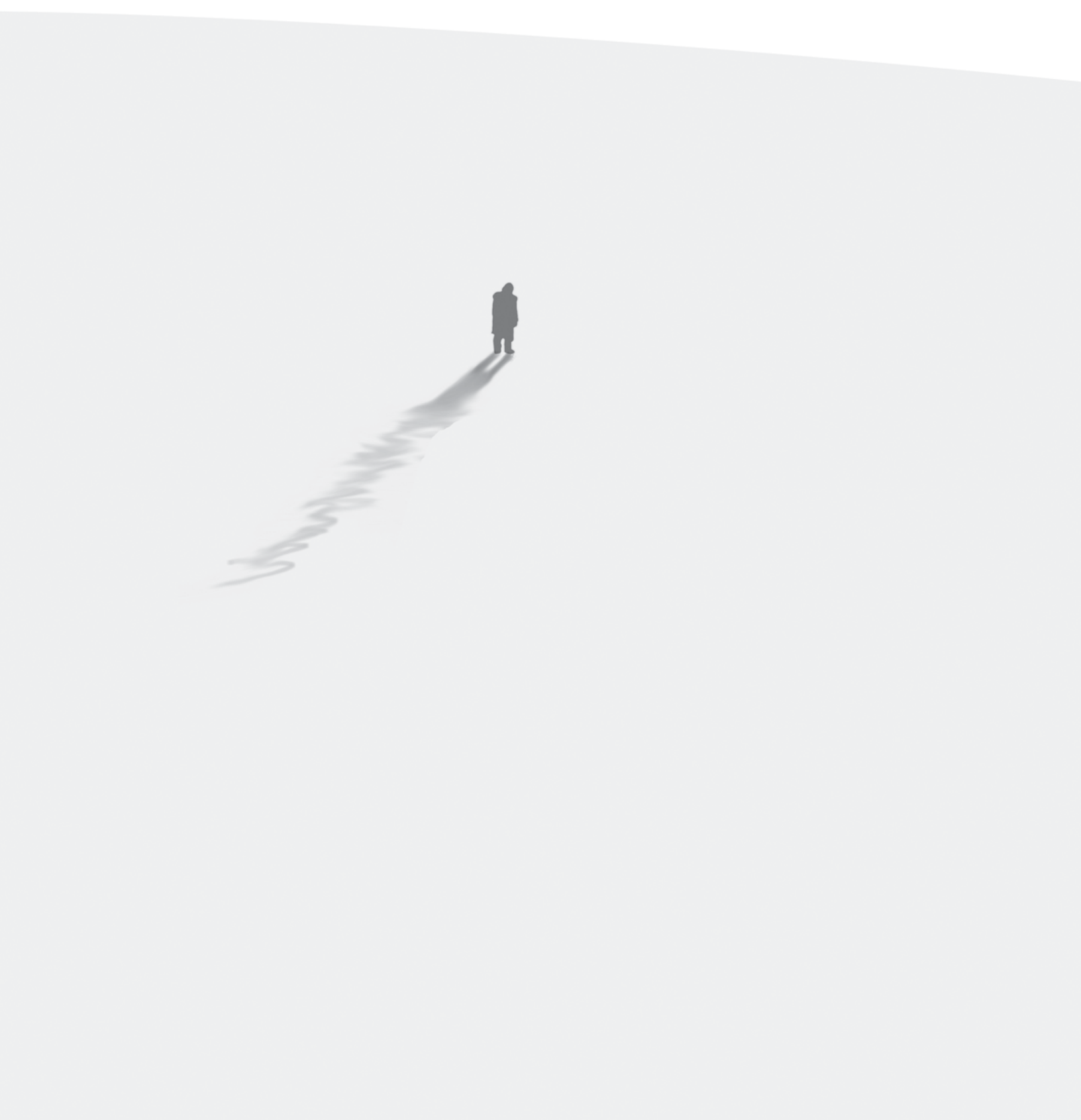
5 – 6 vs. Michigan State

12 – 13 at Ohio State

19 – 20 vs. Lake Superior State

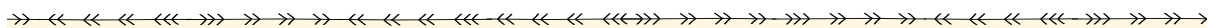
26 at UAA (Governor's Cup)

27 vs. UAA (Governor's Cup)



A Way From Despair

Decoding the past for a brighter future



By Diana Campbell

The people of Alakanuk knew a spirit of suicide and alcohol and drug abuse walked about freely, scenting the air with its rancid nature. It had just claimed two more victims; unsatisfied, it was looking for more. Sheltered inside the small Yukon River community’s tribal hall, elders, youth and parents huddled together in a circle. Some hunched down, faces void of tears, tense bodies pressed against unyielding metal chairs.

Others let tears quietly slide down their cheeks.

The two recent deaths were the newest heartaches in a long line of many.

The group knew too well the spirit’s easy reach into their community. They’ve carried many to the cemetery, dug many graves. Some knew intimately how alcohol or drugs seemed to dull the pain but deceitfully brought more tragedy and sorrow. From time to time, outsiders had come to the village to help deal with the spirit’s long reign, but nothing they brought seemed to last. But in spite of disappointments and heartbreak, the people gathered this day because they still believed things could change. This time the solutions and answers would come from their community, from themselves.



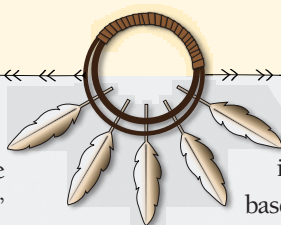
“We had to do something,” recalled Josephine Edmund, mother of three, who sat in the circle that winter day. “We had to help our children.”

The gathering that day was part of the Center for Alaska Native Health Research’s Elluam Tungiinun program, funded by the National Institutes of Health.

This research project is testing to see if the values that Alaska Natives have said helped keep them sober and alive could be taught to Alaska Native young people, their families and their communities.

Alakanuk was one of the first Alaska Native communities to sign up to be in the research program and the only one that agreed to go public about their involvement.

“Elluam Tungiinun means ‘toward wellness’ in Yup’ik, a name Alakanuk chose for themselves,” said Jim Allen, who is the project co-principal investigator and a UAF



psychology professor. “The community insisted the focus be positive and strength-based. They had ownership. They designed the cultural activities. They planned it. They ran it.”

The community Allen describes was not the one Sheila Toomey found in 1987, when as a reporter working for the *Anchorage Daily News* she went to Alakanuk to write a story about eight suicides that happened in less than a year and a half.

“In a community of 550, eight suicides is the equivalent of more than 3,000 in Anchorage,” Toomey wrote. “In a community of 550, every name on the roll of the dead is someone you know ...”

Toomey’s story was part of ADN’s “People in Peril,” a series about how Western influence devastated Alaska Native culture, leaving its people in the turmoil of alcoholism, brokenness and suicide.

“We had to help our children.”

UAF alumni featured in this story: Paula Ayunerak, '97; Josephine Edmund, '03

People Awakening Protective Factors



Individual protective factors

Self-efficacy: The belief in yourself as someone who can solve your own problems.

Communal-mastery: A sense that you can solve your own problems by working together with other people in your life.

Wanting to be a role model: It is a choice to live a good way as an example to others, because a person sees that their actions can influence others' behavior. Becoming a role model for sobriety is particularly important.

Ellangneq: *Ellangneq* is an important Yup'ik word, best understood as awareness, as in being aware of the consequences of your own actions and how they affect family and community.

Giving: A desire to give to others and contribute is protective when it becomes a sense of responsibility to family and community.



Family protective factors

Affection/praise: Protective families recognize a child's accomplishments in specific ways in every culture. Yup'ik families show pleasure in a child's actions in many ways, and give praise.

Being treated as special: A protective parent or caregiver tells a child they are a valuable, worthwhile member of the family or community, and therefore have a reason to be alive.

Clear limits and expectations: Protective families clearly and consistently define acceptable behavior for the child.

Family models of sobriety: Family members model sobriety and are an encouragement to others to be sober.



Community protective factors

Safe places: Protective communities have safe places for youth to go, free from substance abuse and violence.

Opportunities: Protective communities provide opportunities for youth to do positive things.

Role models: Protective communities have community role models outside the youth's family. They model appropriate behavior, live a good, clean and sober life, and share what they know with others.

Limits on alcohol use: Protective communities enforce local alcohol laws and youth curfew laws.

Source: The Center for Alaska Native Health Research



"When I think about it, I think we were a lost people," Josephine Edmund said. "I got a sense that people didn't know what to do."

Toomey's series won the Pulitzer Prize for Public Service, but Alaska Natives were left wondering, "Is there anything good among us?"

Many approached CANHR's director, Gerald Mohatt, a longtime rural Alaska teacher and UAF psychology professor and administrator, with their concerns.

"What about the sober people?" they said. "Many of us don't drink or have learned to recover."

Those stories weren't being told, Mohatt noted at the time, especially among alcohol abuse researchers.

"I felt shocked that the field was so insensitive to the perspectives of tribal people who had suffered so much from alcohol abuse," he said. What seemed to be lacking, he said, was the understanding that the data was made up of people's lives, not impersonal facts, and that conclusions drawn from the data sets almost inevitably turn into conclusions about the very people and communities making up the data set.

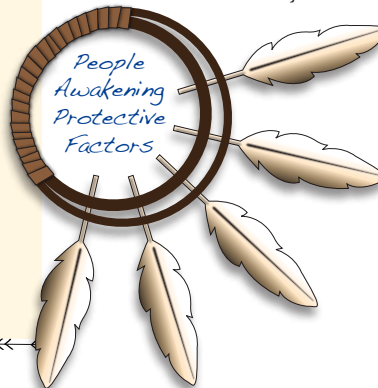
With the blessing of Alaska Native leaders, Mohatt, Allen, UAF professor Kelly Hazel, along with Alaska Native partners and a staff of Alaska Native and non-Natives, sought those stories, calling the project "People Awakening." With funding from the National Institutes of Health's National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities, the group gathered 101 life histories of sober Alaska Natives. The project took four years to complete.

The group found the stories had apparent themes, which Mohatt calls protective factors.

In 2006 Mohatt and Allen, under CANHR's banner, took the People Awakening research further with pilot projects in Alakanuk and another Southwestern Alaska community. This time they wanted to see if protective factors could be taught.

Using a principle called community-based participatory research, the communities were given control of the program as long as they included the protective factors. Out of 36 prevention activities, Alakanuk developed 20 of them, which are featured in Qungasvik, a prevention manual CANHR is testing.

But that first winter of study, the ravaging spirit took two more lives. The community had no choice but to face it.





The community's elders and university research staff realized something had to be done to help the hurting survivors. So they met and came up with a plan.

Muskoxen circle their young to protect them, said an elder man. "We should do this for our young," he suggested. The group agreed.

One elder remembered an old Yup'ik story about how the ancestors dealt with the spirit of death that would not leave their community.

The spirit was very evil and became stronger and bolder every time a death happened, he explained. It almost seemed like it was arrogant and needed to be brought down.

The ancient people gathered and made a plan. They would shame the spirit into leaving by using a ritual. They would gather in a circle and stomp and grind their feet like they were rubbing out the spirit. And they would laugh as loud as they could while stomping.

The people did this for so long that the bold spirit felt weak and shamed for what it did. It left and did not return, the elder said.

We should do this with our people, he said. The research staff agreed and asked him to lead the ritual for the upcoming group meeting.

By taking control the community came to regard the program as their own and not something UAF is doing, said Ray Oney, the tribal administrator for the Native Village of Alakanuk.

"The elders saw a change in the youth," he said. "We all really want to give the kids an identity of being Yup'ik, who they are, where they came from, how they utilized the land and the history of the Yup'it."

Shelby Edmund, Josephine's husband, saw a change in their family. He had worried about his children, because he knew the devastation a family could suffer. His two brothers had committed suicide, part of Alakanuk's 1986 epidemic.

Elluam Tunginun seemed to help his family heal, he said. Before Elluam Tunginun he and his wife were worried about Freddie Edmund, their teenaged son. Neither knew exactly how to help him.

That changed when they attended the program's parenting sessions, where they were given ideas about how to set boundaries and how to listen to their children.

"I have a relationship with my son now," Shelby Edmund said. "My wife, too."

The program saved Freddie Edmund's life in a different way. One spring day he fell through spring ice into freezing water. He panicked but then remembered the ice-safety lesson he heard from the community's elders as part of Elluam Tunginun.

“Muskoxen circle their young to protect them from harm,” said an elder man. “We should do this for our young.”



Photo of Shawn Chikigak by Gunnar Ebbesson

Qungasvik:

A prevention instruction book

The *Qungasvik* (pronounced CUHN-ahs-vik) represents a new approach to a manual for intervention and prevention of suicide and substance abuse. Villagers from Alakanuk developed 20 of the 36 chapters themselves. Another Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta community developed the rest. This is not the way it's usually done, but is exactly what Elluam Tungiinun's researchers intended.

Encouraging the community to decide for themselves how they could best teach the protective factors that people said either helped them avoid substance abuse or achieve sobriety is how community-based participatory research is supposed to work, said Gerald Mohatt, CANHR's director and one of Elluam Tungiinun's researchers.

Alakanuk chose to create lessons about ice fishing, ice safety, seal hunting and other traditional activities as ways to teach the People Awakening Protective Factors (see sidebar on page 8).

For instance, telling young people how to observe ice conditions also teaches them the Yup'ik concept of *ellangneq*, or how to be aware of things in order to be safe.

But teaching about ice safety demonstrates a deeper lesson about alcohol abuse. Like bad ice, alcohol can fool you into a false sense of safety but in the end hurt you, the elders told the students. You have to educate yourself about alcohol abuse and plan how you will make good decisions, they explained.

Most intervention manuals include a program to help people teach strategies to prevent alcohol and drug abuse. Based on what the community wanted, the *Qungasvik* evolved into a toolbox (*qungasvik* is Yup'ik for toolbox). It allows users to pick the intervention activities that will work best for them. However, a requirement of the program is that *all* the protective factors must be taught, Mohatt said.

The manual will now be tested in three other Yukon-Kuskokwim communities as part of a five-year program funded by the National Institutes of Health. The program will be rigorously reviewed to ensure its effectiveness.

"People have to respect this," said Lawrence Edmund of Alakanuk, speaking of the *Qungasvik*. "It's like a seed that has been planted."



Traditional Yup'ik activities teach life lessons along with practical skills.

"I started to get calm and I spread my arms out," Freddie Edmund, 16, remembered. "I got out. I remembered what the elders said."

Paula Ayunerak, an Alakanuk elder, said the program encouraged communication during its activities, whether they were out ice fishing or berry picking. Part of the research project's strength was to let Alakanuk focus on Yup'ik culture to teach the protective factors.

"This was different," she said. "People actually doing a Yup'ik way of living are more successful in living soberly than others. It made a big difference."

Now Mohatt and Allen want to see if Alakanuk's success can be taken to other communities. The National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities has awarded the project another \$2.9 million to continue testing the prevention theories in Alakanuk and the other Southwestern Alaska community and expand the program, using the *Qungasvik*, into three Alaska Native communities in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta.

Alakanuk will still be a part of it. In fact, the community insisted that Oney hire someone to continue with the program outside of UAF's involvement.



Back in the tribal hall, the elder man rose from the group to speak.

“Muskoxen circle their young to protect them from harm,” he said.

He had the youth stand in a tight group.

“Elders, find a youth and say something nice about him or her.”

The elders surrounded the knot of young people. The adults praised them one by one.

“You always help your mother,” said one. “You are going to be a good hunter,” another said.

The youth were surprised to hear the praise because they didn’t realize so much was known about them. The elders had always seemed to be strangers to them.

When they were done, an elder man told the youth to stand in the center of the room while the adults held hands in a circle around them. The elder began to pray.

“Lord, bring healing, strength and power so we can overcome the hardships we face,” he said. “Now everyone, pray for the same thing as hard as you can.”

Murmurs of petitions turned into earnest crescendos.

“When I count to three, everybody stomp, stomp, stomp!” he said. “One, two, THREE!”

The echo of snow boots and tennis shoes reverberated across the wood floor.

“Now laugh hysterically, as loud as you can, as if you are laughing at someone,” he said.

And they did.

The spirit of suicide and abuse heard the prayers, stomping and laughing, became ashamed and left the small community.

The acts bound the group together and they began to feel healing and strength to help others.

“We can talk about it now,” said Josephine Edmund. “We have to.”



Diana Campbell, '91, '93, is the communications specialist at UAF's Center for Alaska Native Health Research. She was the first in her family to receive a university degree since her grandfather, John Fredson, the first Athabaskan to earn a college diploma, graduated in 1930 from Sewanee. Debbie Alstrom, Art Chikigak and Gunnar Ebbesson, '99, '02, contributed to this story. Photos courtesy of CANHR.



Read more about CANHR's research and the People Awakening project at www.uaf.edu/aurora/.

“Lord, bring healing, strength and power so we can overcome the hardships we face,” he said. “Now everyone, pray for the same thing as hard as you can.”



Photo of Mary Augustine by Gunnar Ebbesson



Tony Gasbarro's work with villagers in La Montaña, El Salvador, included helping them develop sustainable forestry practices.

Mastering the Peace Corps

The toughest job you'll ever love.

By LJ Evans

Tony Gasbarro is a double-dipper. He got so much satisfaction out of being a Peace Corps volunteer, he decided to do it again.

“My first Peace Corps experience was positive, but the second time, with 35 years behind me, my assignment fit me like a glove,” Gasbarro said.

His first stint was in the Dominican Republic as a forestry advisor in 1962 – 1964, right after graduating from college. He went on to a lengthy career and ended up with the Cooperative Extension Service in Fairbanks as associate professor of forestry extension. When he retired in 1996 after 23 years at UAF, he signed up for Peace Corps service again.

His second tour of duty was in La Montaña, a village high in the mountains of El Salvador. Gasbarro worked with villagers to put a forest management plan into action and harvest trees to generate income without destroying the forest. He also assisted in the local school and helped community members encourage tourism in the area.

That was just the start

Gasbarro's Peace Corps service officially ended in 1998, but that's when his unofficial service began. He goes back to El Salvador twice a year to help with development and humanitarian projects and to visit the people of La Montaña. He worked

“My first Peace Corps experience was positive, but the second time, with 35 years behind me, my assignment fit me like a glove.”



Photos by Erin Kelly.

UAF alumni featured in this story: Larry Duffy, '72, '77; Tony Gasbarro, '79; Erin Kelly, '09

The master's international program adds a lot of value, both



Erin Kelly (back row, center) poses with young friends at her despedida (going-away party) in El Salvador. Photo courtesy of Erin Kelly.

within Denver-based nonprofit Project Salvador to help develop a scholarship program to enable needy rural Salvadoran youth to realize their dreams of an education. Gasbarro has also helped coordinate several visits of educators to deliver workshops in English-instruction skills for Salvadoran high school teachers.

In 2002, Gasbarro and fellow returned Peace Corps volunteer Kristy Long, a foods specialist with Cooperative Extension, helped bring a Peace Corps master's international program to UAF. PCMI programs allow students to earn a master's degree at universities throughout the U.S. in conjunction with 27 months of Peace Corps service.

"The Peace Corps service adds a step above the degree," said Long, who served in Tonga from 1973 – 1975. "It's the opportunity to apply their academic training to a real-life situation."

After two years of planning, two programs were launched at UAF — Peace Corps service is added as an option to already existing master's degrees in natural resources in the School of Natural Resources and Agricultural Sciences and rural development in the College of Rural and Community Development.

Students typically spend one year on course work, then go overseas for two years of Peace Corps service, ending with another semester on campus. The student gains an advanced degree plus two years of substantive international experience, Gasbarro said.

He now serves as the coordinator for the UAF program, an official but unpaid position. He is a liaison between the university and the Peace Corps, deals with the students' needs and generally keeps things moving along.

Eric Goldman, Peace Corps' national manager for the master's programs, said the Peace Corps started collaborating with universities to develop graduate programs in 1987.

"We needed to cultivate volunteers who brought enhanced levels of education and skill to their assignments, particularly in targeted or scarce areas of expertise," Goldman said.

“The Peace Corps service adds a step above the degree. It’s the opportunity to apply their academic training to a real-life situation.”

Ninety-eight master's international programs are offered at 62 universities; as of April 2009, 230 master's students are serving overseas, with about the same number completing courses, Goldman said.

"Tony is a dedicated soul. He's very committed to this program, the Peace Corps and his students, and he's a wonderful person to work with," Goldman said.

UAF's PCMI students

Erin Kelly, the first UAF student to finish the program, received her master's degree in natural resources management last spring. (See sidebar on page 15.) Three other UAF students are completing their Peace Corps service: Jessica Mayer in Macedonia and Lōki Tobin in Azerbaijan, both CRCD; and Matthew Helt in Paraguay, SNRAS. Gasbarro expects five students to enter the program this fall.

A unique aspect of the CRCD program is that all the courses are available online, so Fairbanks residency isn't required.

"At first some of the Peace Corps staff told me 'That just can't work!'" Gasbarro said. "But with the support of Eric Goldman in fact it *has* worked, and Jessica Mayer has proved that it can." Mayer came to Fairbanks to complete the courses, but she could have completed the degree from anywhere, Gasbarro said.

for the student and the university.

What does UAF get out of it?

The master's international program adds a lot of value, both for the student and the university, Gasbarro said.

"When we proposed this program there was some resistance because people said we are Alaska, an arctic university — why would we want to expend time, energy and funds on the rest of the world? But we owe it to our students to give them the opportunity to gain a global perspective," Gasbarro says.

His view is shared by UAF's administration.

"The ability to see and be involved in the global community is important for our students," said Larry Duffy, dean of the Graduate School. "Even more important, the experience shows them how their Alaska and arctic research skills can have relevance to the rest of the world."

UAF is also working toward offering graduate fellowships through the Fellows/USA Peace Corps program, Duffy said. The fellowships offer financial assistance to returned Peace Corps volunteers who want to pursue graduate studies. In return, students serve an internship in a community in need of help.

Bringing it all back home

"When I heard Erin report on her experiences I knew it was all worth it," Long said. "She saw the real-life impact her knowledge could have on people's lives."

Gasbarro sees an even more profound transformation.

"Erin is a changed person," Gasbarro said. "She has an empathy for people in the Third World that's very hard to get any other way."

The experience will also have a profound effect on her professional life, he said.

"A high-level official in a state resource management agency recently told me, 'All other things being equal, I would hire a returned Peace Corps volunteer at the drop of a hat, because I know that person knows how to cope with adversity, how to deal with different cultures and won't get discouraged,'" Gasbarro said.

Kelly herself knows she has only begun to understand the transformation she's undergone the last few years. "Tony said he didn't identify his real passion in life until his second Peace Corps service, after he'd retired. I feel really grateful that I've done it so young. My life will definitely take a different direction than it would have otherwise."



LJ Evans is a writer and editor for UAF Marketing and Communications. She served in the Peace Corps in the Philippines from 2001 – 2003.



View a map showing Peace Corps volunteers affiliated with UAF, submit your own information or comment at www.uaf.edu/aurora/.

Erin's Story

as told to LJ Evans

It had been in the back of my mind to join the Peace Corps ever since a returned volunteer talked to our class in high school. I majored in environmental science in college, but really wasn't sure if I could handle Peace Corps. I did a couple years of AmeriCorps and loved it, so I thought I could take it to the next level.



Gasbarro and Kelly at Commencement 2009.

I probably found out about the Peace Corps master's international programs on the Peace Corps website. When I found the UAF program, which was just starting up, I thought it might be neat to help shape the program. The response I got was great. I heard back from Steve Sparrow, Pete Fix and Susan Todd, and then Tony.

Tony has been such a big support. I don't know what I'd do without that guy. He understands because he's been there. More than anything else he's there to listen, about the challenges of being a volunteer and also to advise about the academic program.

He came to visit my site in El Salvador several times. Once we hiked through my park for a whole day, and another time I visited his old site at La Montañona. Ten years later, people are still running up to him with big smiles on their faces, it's like he never left. He always comes back with piles of pictures from the last visit. They live in such a remote place, they have nothing, certainly no cameras, so this is a really special gift.

“The Peace Corps opened my eyes to so many things I had never considered before.”

For my master's project I assessed the potential for ecotourism development in El Imposible National Park. Allowing me to live in the community for a year and a half before I even started my research was a fabulous opportunity. The relationships I had already established in the community meant I knew the key people and they already knew and trusted me.

My project gave me access to people in government agencies that just being a Peace Corps volunteer would never have given me. I have a whole new understanding of international development that I wouldn't have had otherwise.

Survive, then thrive

“I do try to keep a good attitude about things.”





By Matias Saari

that Dan Jordan is president of the Fairbanks Optimists Club is only fitting. The fourth-year rifle coach at UAF doesn't let anything get him down. "I do try to keep a good attitude about things," Jordan said from his Patty Center office. "The club itself is just always upbeat and all about helping the youth and the shooting programs and things like that."

Jordan does more than just attempt to stay positive — he tackles challenges with patience, determination and vigor.

Considering that he is in a wheelchair in one of the harshest environments in the country, there is no shortage of challenges.

He's become an expert at wheeling around Fairbanks, even through the mud when the spring snow finally melts or through the slush during the first storms of the fall.

The 30-year-old also rides four-wheelers and snowmachines, and paddles canoes and kayaks, usually bringing his wheelchair along for safety.

"I pull my chair up and strap it on the back and away I go," Jordan said.

He has outfitted his wheelchair with heavy-duty mountain bike tires and inner tubes. For extra stability in rough, woody terrain, Jordan built a third wheel to attach in front of the others.

"I do just about everything I want. I can't think of anything that has ever stuck me," said Jordan, an avid hunter and fisherman. "Sometimes it may take a little time to figure it out, but I always figure something out."

Jordan, who is fixing up a house in Fairbanks he bought last year off Farmers Loop Road near the backside of Creamer's Field, also loves to operate heavy machinery such as bulldozers, excavators, loaders and Bobcats. Those activities must be curtailed or eliminated, however, because they forced a surgery last December that kept him horizontal for six weeks. Jordan accepted that as a side effect of being paralyzed from the waist down.

"I probably won't be doing too much of that anymore," Jordan said. "When you don't have much muscle and fat around your bones, that punishment doesn't go well."

Jordan has plenty of upper-body strength, but his strongest attribute is his mind

Jordan's outlook on life was put to its greatest test in May 1999 after he nearly died in a rock-climbing accident 40 miles north of Fairbanks. Two months earlier, the All-America rifle shooter from Colorado had helped the Nanooks win their first of six consecutive national championships.

UAF alumni featured in this story: Amber Darland, '02; Dan Jordan, '01

Jordan spent three days clinging to life after the 60-foot fall. Less than three months later he was back in Fairbanks learning to live independently in a wheelchair. He went moose hunting that autumn and continued studies in natural resources management without missing a day of school.

Jordan looks back upon the accident without negativity

"I never had a depression phase, never think about it, have never doubted why it happened," he said. "I never look at it as a

"I always dreamed about coming back to Fairbanks and living here," Jordan said. "So I called them up the next day and said, 'Sorry, I can't do it.'"

He hadn't yet lined up employment in Fairbanks when the UAF rifle job opened up after Glenn Dubis retired.

Jordan was hired and led the Nanooks to national championships in his first three years, including the 2007 title before a national record-setting crowd at the Patty Center. The streak was snapped last March.

"In a way, it's good for the sport for other teams to win," said Jordan. "I would love to win it every year, but I don't know that it's totally reasonable to expect that."

Jordan has affected more than just his student-athletes

"Dan's positive influence helps co-workers realize what's important in life, set higher standards for themselves and set higher standards for their programs," UAF athletic director Forrest Karr wrote in an e-mail. "Dan's positive attitude helps make the university and the greater Fairbanks community better places to work and live."

Nearly 10 years earlier, Amber Darland, also then a UAF rifle shooter, witnessed Jordan's accident and rushed for help. They became best friends, but it took seven years before they were a committed couple. That occurred in 2006 after Darland moved into the vacant half of a duplex that Jordan had purchased.

"Pretty soon it was no longer a duplex. It was a house. We knocked down a wall," Darland said. The couple was married in June in Fairbanks.

Darland said Jordan is both honest and open-minded

"The thing I admire most about him is his integrity. He's always honest, whether it be in competition or just in his life. He's never afraid to tell you what he thinks," Darland said. "He's also a very fair and objective person."

Like everyone, Jordan has his bad days and times of frustration.

Jordan cites the one or two times each winter when he has trouble getting around in freezing temperatures or deep snow.

"This is stupid. I'm in a frickin' wheelchair. Why do I live in Fairbanks, Alaska? I could live anywhere else," Jordan said he asks himself. "That always kind of makes me laugh, but it doesn't last for long. Maybe five minutes, then it wears off."

All Jordan needs to do is think about Darland, UAF rifle and his beloved surroundings.

"I've got my dream job and my dream place to live with my dream woman," he said.



Matias Saari is a freelance writer and sports reporter at the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner.



Find more stories about Jordan or comment at www.uaf.edu/aurora/.

“There are a lot of things that I’ve been able to do since I got hurt that I never would have done beforehand.”

negative thing. There are a lot of things that I've been able to do since I got hurt that I never would have done beforehand."

Coaching a dynasty is one. After graduating from UAF in 2001, Jordan moved to Colorado Springs, Colo., to train for the 2004 Paralympic Games in Athens, Greece, where he earned a silver medal. (After a four-year shooting hiatus, Jordan recently began training for the 2012 Paralympics.)

In 2005, Jordan was set to take a job at a shooting range in Minnesota, but changed his mind.



Анатолий Антохин

Antohin's daring imagination takes final bow at UAF

By Michael Welsh

After 20 years of writing, directing and teaching, Anatoly Antohin retired from Theatre UAF in spring 2009. His final production, *Caligari: Alaska*, was an adaptation of the 1920 silent German film, *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*.

Antohin received a master of fine arts degree from the Institute of Cinematography in Moscow, USSR, in 1975. In 1981 he came to the U.S. as a visiting professor to teach at the University of Connecticut.

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“I’ll never forget the advice Anatoly gave me the first time we worked together. ... He helped me to channel the massive physical strength and power of ... the miniature schnauzer. As absurd as it was, it taught me a valuable lesson: in theater, everything counts, and nothing is inconceivable.”

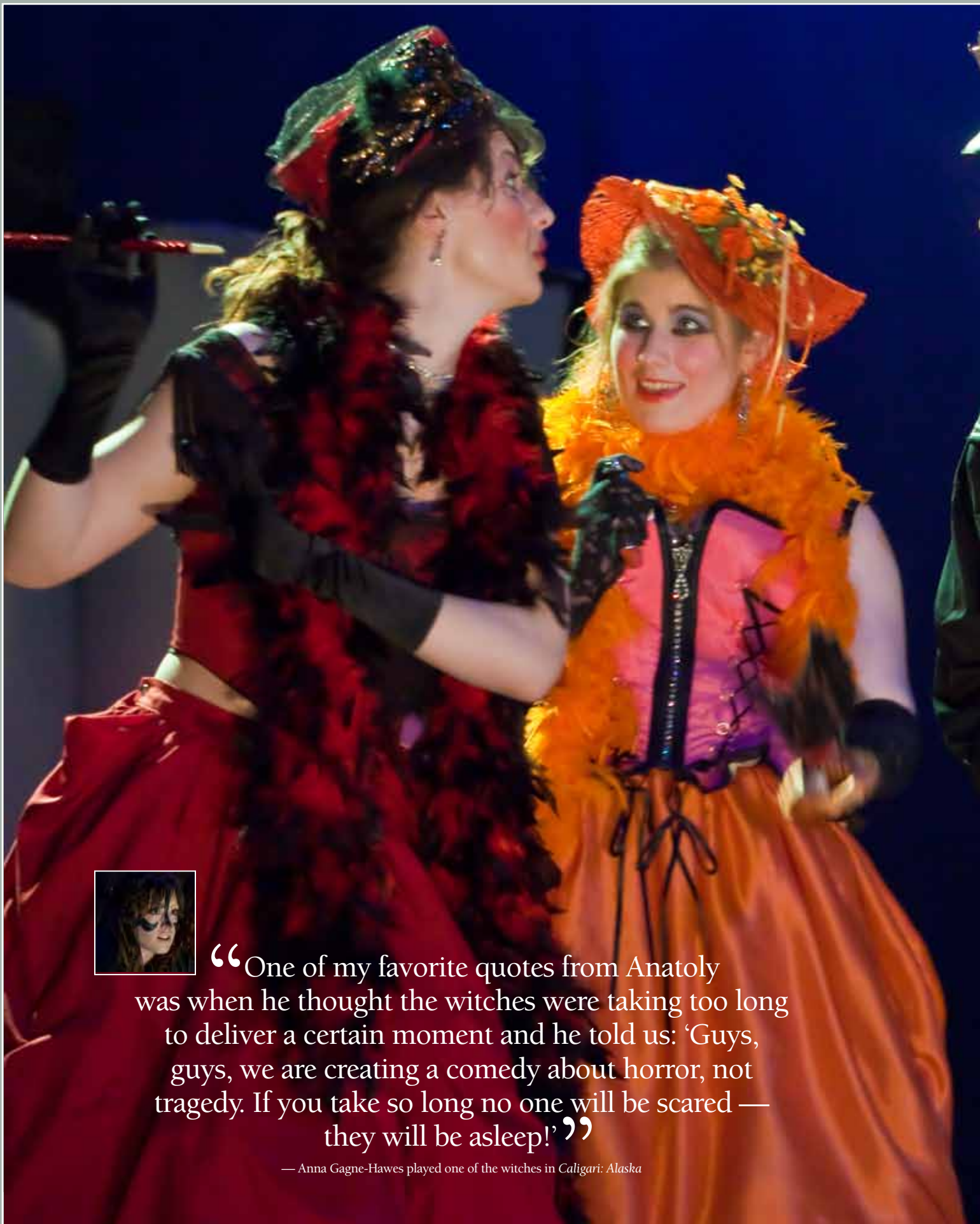
— Joe Alloway, '07, '08, theatre major



“It was the first main stage production I’ve been in, so I didn’t have a lot of expectations, but I’d heard things about Anatoly — he’s a genius, brilliant, mad scientist, crazy, and I really wanted to be in it because it was going to be his last.”

— Tricia Bates played *Caligari*'s mother and one of the prostitutes

Anatoly Antohin



“One of my favorite quotes from Anatoly was when he thought the witches were taking too long to deliver a certain moment and he told us: ‘Guys, guys, we are creating a comedy about horror, not tragedy. If you take so long no one will be scared — they will be asleep!’”

— Anna Gagne-Hawes played one of the witches in *Caligari: Alaska*



Continued from page 19

He followed that with stints at New York University, Norwich University and Hollins College in Virginia.

In 1989 Antohin began a two-decade run at UAF. During his tenure at UAF, he guided the production of dozens of stage plays, more than a few of which he also wrote. A consistent hallmark of Antohin's work has been his daring imagination and ability to inspire. "Anatoly always pushed us," says a grinning former student, "to joyfully risk looking like a fool before the world's eyes."

Antohin's theory about theater often linked the performer's art with a personal spiritual quest. "Of all the performing arts, theater may be our last link to what we used to get from church, our last refuge from the universal alienation that seems total and final. In the theater, there is the chance to have a shared public experience that moves us inside," he said.

Although retiring from UAF, Antohin will not be taking it easy. The next stage in his adventure will be in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, where his wife, Esther, was born. He will take on a new project: establishing the Ethiopia American Theatre, where he is already planning a production of Chekov's *Farces*.



Michael Welsh is a graduate student in the College of Liberal Arts.



Watch interviews with the cast and crew at www.uaf.edu/aurora/.



До свидания, Анатолий



“I have worked with this ‘mad genius’ for 16 years, on many different productions, and Anatoly’s interpretations of scripts and directorial concepts have helped me grow as a designer ... his warm charm and charismatic presence will be sorely missed.”

—Kade Mendelowitz, Theatre Department chair, professor and lighting designer




and the show goes on ...



Goodbye, Anatoly

A nest of Nanooks



Story and photos by Andrea Swingley

Ask around at any private business or government agency dealing with wildlife in Alaska and you're likely to find more than a few UAF alumni working there. But there's something a bit different and special about a successful, community-based nonprofit founded and operated by a bunch of Nanooks.

Inspired by a bird observatory he'd seen Outside, **Tom Pogson, '90**, decided to start his own. Shortly after completing his master's degree at UAF, Pogson began capturing and banding birds around Interior Alaska. His graduate research had involved sandhill cranes in western Alaska, where he met biologist **John Wright, '79**, in Dillingham, where Wright worked for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. After Wright took a position with ADF&G in Fairbanks, he and Pogson discussed establishing the Creamer's Field Migration Station, a permanent bird banding station, at Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge in Fairbanks. The station ran on a limited basis in 1991, and, in 1992, the Alaska Bird Observatory formally fledged.

ABO had close ties with UAF from the beginning. Dan Gibson, ornithology research associate and former bird collections manager at the University of Alaska Museum of the North, and alumni **Bob Ritchie, '76**, and **Brian Cooper, '84**, were instrumental in the



Dave Shaw, '06; Susan Sharbaugh, '97; and Anne Ruggles, '91, at the Alaska Bird Observatory's Center for Research and Education in Fairbanks, are just a few of the Nanooks who have used their education and expertise to further the goals of the ABO.

initial development of ABO. Pogson relied on then UAF biology professor **Ed Murphy, '76**, for assistance with data analysis. Those early connections created lasting associations: both Gibson and Murphy, now a professor emeritus, are current members of ABO's scientific advisory committee, and Ritchie only recently retired from the board of directors.

Over the next few years, ABO thrived and added staff, education programs and research projects. In 1994, Pogson hired **Anna-Marie (Barber) Benson, '00**, to run the banding station. Benson became the first to use data from the migration station for graduate research at UAF.

ABO has pursued its mission to advance the appreciation, understanding and conservation of birds and their habitats through research and education for more than 17 years. Staff and volunteers may have migrated through the years, but ABO's nest is still full of Nanooks.

: UAF is a good place to study tropical birds — really

Now a research biologist at ABO, **Dave Shaw, '06**, arrived in the Interior in 1998 to run the inaugural season of a fall migration station at Camp Denali in Denali National Park and Preserve. After that experience, he was hooked. To earn his master's degree in wildlife biology from UAF, Shaw examined bird migration and species loss near Veracruz, Mexico. "UAF is a good place to study tropical birds because of Kevin Winker and the UA Museum of the North," says Shaw. Winker, the museum's curator of ornithology and a professor with the Institute of Arctic Biology, has studied tropical avifauna for the past 20 years, including conducting his own graduate research at the same site as Shaw.

: Tell them a story

Stories are part of the reason **Susan Sharbaugh, '97**, was drawn to ABO after completing her Ph.D. at UAF. Sharbaugh wanted to study a small bird in a really

Continued on page 28

You Told Us!

In our spring issue, we asked, “If your degree major differs greatly from your current career, what path did you take to get there?” Here are a few of your stories. It’s not too late to send us yours and get a cool UAF poster. Send stories to aurora@uaf.edu.

Pam Buckway '70, '73, Whitehorse, Yukon, Canada



It doesn't get any more convoluted than this!

I was a UAF graduate first as an associate in electronics technology, and then received my B.A. in speech with broadcast option. I spent 23 years as an announcer/operator with the Canadian Broadcasting Corp.'s Northern Service in Whitehorse, Yukon — using technical skills and broadcasting skills I learned at UAF. After that, I sold real estate for a couple of years, and was a politician for a few years (Minister of Highways, Minister of Community Services, Minister of Justice, etc.) in the Yukon government.

When my political party was unelected, I did administrative work at my church, and by chance was asked to do vacation relief in a couple of positions at the local hospital — executive assistant and administrative assistant in the medical imaging department. That led to my current position as hospital claims assessor in the Yukon government's Department of Health and Social Services. I deal with all the other Canadian jurisdictions, and talk frequently with hospitals in Alaska. I love it! The medical knowledge and financial knowledge required have nothing whatsoever to do with electronics or broadcasting, but all my studies are a good base for my current career. I plan to retire in this position — probably when I'm 75 because of the recession! I truly enjoy my work ALL day EVERY day. I finally got my amateur radio

President's column

By Gail Phillips, '67

The UAF Alumni Association is pleased to take this opportunity to congratulate Chancellor Rogers. We feel that he did an excellent job as interim chancellor and are pleased that President Hamilton made his position permanent.

We would also like to express our congratulations to all of the 2009 graduates. The graduation ceremony was a heartwarming event. It is particularly rewarding to see the satisfaction and pride that family members have for their graduates. One of the guest speakers was Vic Fischer. Mr. Fischer was a member of the Constitutional Convention that gathered at the university, as Alaskans, to write a constitution for our new state. It was appropriate that as we are celebrating our 50th anniversary of statehood this year, Vic Fischer was able to address the graduating class in person and share some of the highlights of pre-statehood days.

In June, Summer Sessions featured an evening with Grace Schaible, a longtime advocate and supporter of the university. She is a UAF graduate and a community leader with many years of involvement in Alaska and the university. Folks who were lucky enough to be able to attend the evening discussion with Grace were truly fortunate.

The alumni association is planning an outreach trip to the Portland area later this year. Be sure to check the alumni webpage for dates and more information. We look forward to meeting with many of our West Coast alumni during this trip.

Thanks for supporting your UAF Alumni Association.

license after 35+ years of thinking about it, and my voice appears in public service announcements on the local radio stations from time to time, so I haven't forgotten my educational roots!

2009 – 2010 UAF Alumni Association Board of Directors

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www.uaf.edu/alumni/



Michael Paul Combellick, '79, '82, Scottsdale, Ariz.

I received a B.S. in chemistry at UAF in 1979 and earned a private pilot's license. I worked for the Federal Aviation Administration as an air traffic specialist at the Fairbanks and Gulkana flight service stations. I returned to UAF and earned a B.S. in petroleum engineering in 1982, graduating in the first class of petroleum engineers. Oil prices collapsed at about the time I graduated, and I never found a job in the oil industry. Since shortly after leaving UAF, I have worked as a computer programmer on the Microsoft platform. Although I have used my engineering degree in my work as a computer programmer, I have never worked directly in the oil industry. I currently live in Arizona and work as a programmer for OSIsoft of San Leandro, Calif., working on the PI System. The UAF power plant uses the PI software to help monitor electricity production. This software is also used by Alyeska Pipeline Service Company to monitor the pipeline and by Tesoro at their Kenai refinery. One computer simulation course that I took my senior year at UAF with my teammates Gerry Foster and Brad Berg sparked my interest in computer programming. Though my academic achievements were modest, my UAF engineering education has been very helpful in my career. I frequently vacation in Alaska. I recently earned a commercial pilot's license and will soon return to Alaska to pursue a flying career.

Carilyn Ellis, '05, Portland, Ore.

I wouldn't say my story is weird or convoluted. Quite the contrary. It's very status quo — except for the ending. I know of few undergrad psychology majors who actually stayed with psychology in their post graduation employment.

My first job outside of college was in the financial sector, a position won by my experience as a student assistant in the office of Student and Enrollment Services (thanks!). I stayed with that job and climbed the corporate ladder for 3 years only to bang my head on the ceiling of disbelief at how atrocious corporate America really is. At 26, I was working 12-hour days on salary and coming in weekends to draft retirement plans for IRS deadlines. I put in my notice, took a couple of weeks off to play (took a trip to Alaska of all places) and stepped down to a flexible hour, union job with my local community college as a student accounts rep. I winced at the pay cut but reveled at having time once again (of course I couldn't afford to do anything with it anymore).

I decided to go with the plan A that I had tossed to the wayside at the initial temptation of 50k-plus salaries and working in the hustle and bustle of downtown. I vamped up my volunteering, took the GRE and applied like crazy to grad programs in psychology. I just got accepted to George Fox University's doctorate in psychology program. I will begin fall 2009.



To make a long, albeit pretty straightforward story short, I did a full circle from my undergrad. I graduated and worked in a sector that had nothing to do with my degree just long enough to decide that my degree was my passion in the first place. It's back to school and psych for me! Do I regret any of it? Absolutely not. Would I return to corporate America? Not if you put a gun to my head.

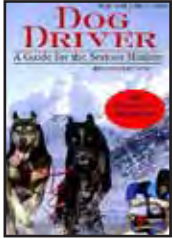


1970s

Dorothy Jones, '77, was honored as a distinguished alumna by the Longview (Texas) Independent School District in May 2009.

1980s

Julie Collins, '81, and **Miki Collins, '81** — “As 1981 graduates of UAF, we wanted to let you know that a major revision of our book *Dog Driver: A*



Guide for the Serious Musher, has just been published by Alpine Publications of Colorado. This in-depth guide has been long overdue for updating, and it includes all the latest on breeds, training, racing, diet and other aspects of running sled dogs ... we also are continuing to write

stories on bush life for the *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner* as we have done for the last 27 years.”

1990s

Phil “Aarnaquq” Charette, '90, had his artwork featured in *Harvard Magazine*. Read the article at <http://harvardmagazine.com/2009/05/mnemonic-masks/> and see more of his work at www.yupikmask.com.

Warner Lew, '91, has been making his own biodiesel from pollock oil since 2004.



Wesley C. Klemm, '93 — “I graduated from the UAF class of 1993 with an A.A.S. degree in aviation technology. Pete Pinney was my English professor. I was a bush pilot in Alaska for 26 years and had accumulated 25,000 flying hours. I worked for Air North in 1973, for 10 years; Audi Air as chief pilot; Northern Air Cargo as flight engineer and co-pilot; Frontier Flying Service as a seven-year senior line captain; and finished my career at Warbelow’s Air as a medical evacuation pilot. I am now writing an autobiography entitled *Diary of a Bush Pilot*. Upon my graduation, Pete Pinney had told me to seriously consider to continue writing in some capacity. This inspiration gave me the confidence to write a book that I had spent a 26-year flying career researching.”



Matthew McHarg, '93, co-authored a piece with UAF professor of geophysics Hans Nielsen entitled “High time-resolution sprite imaging: observations and implications.” The article appeared in the December 2008 *The Journal of*

Physics D: Applied Physics and was highlighted in the January/February 2009 edition of *Europhysics News*, which goes to 20,000 physicists in Europe.

Bharath Sriraman, '95, was promoted to full professor of mathematics at the University of Montana and featured as an outstanding faculty member in the UM President’s Report “Standing Out.” Check it out at <http://www.umt.edu/relations/report/2008/BharathSriraman.html>.



Mark Lindberg, '96, was the top Fairbanks finisher and third Alaska finisher in the 113th Boston Marathon on April 21. He completed the 26.2-mile course in 2:46:1, which put him in eighth place out of nearly 4,000 runners in his age division, and 288th of the more than 13,500 male finishers. Less than two weeks later, Lindberg ran another sub-3 hour race and placed fifth in his age division in the 2009 Pittsburgh Marathon. Lindberg’s wife, **Maggie MacCluskie, '97**, ran the half-marathon in Pittsburgh (2:19:48).



T. Scott Rupp, '98, is researching the environmental effects of wildfire. He supervised a controlled burn of 250 acres in the Tanana Valley State Forest southwest of Fairbanks in summer 2009.



Gillette News-Record photo by Nathan Payne

Christopher Lubken, '99, '03, was featured in <http://gillettenewsrecord.com> for his efforts to start a steel drum band at Campbell County High School, Wyo., where he is a band teacher.

2000s



Photo © Paul McCarthy

Dallas Ferguson, '02, received the Central Collegiate Hockey Association Coach of the Year award in his first year as head coach for the Alaska Nanooks. For news about the upcoming hockey season, see page 5.

Glenda Smith, '02, is participating in the AmazonClicks project, where writers from around the world are attempting to write a novel in one year. The team includes 18 writers from across the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, the Philippines, Spain, Turkey, and the U.K. Follow their progress at www.AmazonClicks.com/portal/.

Laren Zager, '05, '06, became the police chief of the City of Fairbanks in June.

Terin (Walton-Rantz) Porter, '06 — “Benjamin Howard Porter and Terin Aurora Rae Walton-Rantz met in August of 1998, just before my sophomore year and his senior year of high school at West Valley, and then began dating in November of 1998. We are very lucky because, although we are high school sweethearts, we had about a year and a half where we were on and off and learned many valuable but painful life lessons. Although this time was really hard for both of us, I guess it was necessary, because it made us realize that we truly are meant to be and can withstand any challenge life brings us. We got back together for good in October 2002 and have had a wonderful ride of learning ourselves, building our relationship, and realizing our dreams. In August 2008, we bought our amazing Fairbanks home and 10 acres, which we plan to live in for many, many years. We thought for years that we’d go to Vegas to get married by Elvis, but then eloped on March 3, 2009, in the living room of our home in a beautiful, slightly spontaneous and tiny ceremony. Ben is a proud

journeyman power lineman through IBEW Local 1547, and currently works for Norcon in Fairbanks. I love my job as the new student orientation/Wood Center special programs coordinator at UAF. We love to boat and

camp, watch movies at home, and spend time with our friends and family. We hope to add children to our immediate family of two Blue Heeler pups in the next couple of years, and will

have our home base in Fairbanks, Alaska, forever. We love this town and our state, and are excited to raise kids in such a trustworthy community and natural playground. Eventually, we will 'retire' and either work for ourselves with a small company or just enjoy life and travel beyond our careers."



John Wagner, '07, won the Alaska Press Club's first-place awards in the best news photo category for his photo "Dumped Truck" and the best online coverage of a single topic for coverage with Stefan Milkowski of "Alaska's Changing Climate" in the *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*.

Chad Johnson, '09, was selected as the Central Collegiate Hockey Association Top Goalie and



Photo © Paul McCarthy

Player of the Year in his senior year as the Alaska Nanooks' goaltender. The Pittsburgh Penguins' draft pick, eventually traded to the New York Rangers, also participated

in the Frozen Four Skills Challenge, a first for an Alaska Nanook player, and was a top 10 finalist for the Hobey Baker Award.

Matriculates

Amanda Byrd — "I don't want to toot my own horn, but maybe in the next issue you can mention that one of my polar bear pics was chosen to be made into a Canada stamp. The image on the stamp was taken in July 2004 from the *Louis S. St. Laurent* in Bellot Strait, Nunavut, just outside of Resolute Bay. The bear was in the water, in a channel that the ship made to get to Resolute to pick up scientists. On our way back out, the bear was hanging out in our channel. We watched for a few minutes before we had to make a new channel, under Canadian and international laws for protection of marine mammals. Bellot Strait is well known for its abundant sea mammals. Lots of narwhals, polar

bears and seals live in this area. Further out on our research trip we encountered many areas of low sea ice. Canada Post, and the Canadian Government, saw this image as a good representation of global warming affecting polar bears in the Canadian Arctic. They are using the image on the stamp as part of a 30-country global warming awareness program."



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Louis L. Renner, professor emeritus — "You may have seen my autobiography, *A Kindly Providence*, published last year by Ignatius Press."

In memoriam

Robert G. Berrington, '67, June 19, Reno, Nev.

Donald J. Cook, '47, '54, professor emeritus, June 3, Fairbanks

Frank Davis Jr., '79, culinary arts program coordinator, June 14, Fairbanks

Susan J. Herman, professor and director of the UAF Northern Leadership Center, June 24, Fairbanks

Linda C. Hewitt, '84, May 20, Anchorage

Elizabeth "Pat" Hjellen, Matric., May 20, Wasilla

La Shina Jones, '96, Facilities Services staff, May 15, Fairbanks

David F. Modrow, '04, June 1, Fairbanks

Robert C. Nauheim, '83, July 10, Anchorage

Patricia (Fenwick) Nolan, Matric., May 7, Anchorage

David Rasley, '66, May 8, Fairbanks

Shauna Schullo, former Center for Distance Education staff, May 7, Cross Plains, Wisc.

Kirstin D. Stoltz, Matric., July 13, Fairbanks

Emma Warwick, '38, May 31, Fairbanks

Robert A. Wheeler, Cooperative Extension Service professor, June 29, Fairbanks



Got job changes, family changes, awards to brag about, or do you want to become a member of your alumni association? Visit www.uaf.edu/alumni/ to stay connected. Tell us your good news and we will publish it in the next issue of *Aurora* or the *Alumnus* newsletter. Send photos too!

Take me out to the ballgame



UAF alumni enjoy the nice weather and the game at an alumni association-sponsored Alaska Goldpanners baseball game. From left to right: board members **Derek Miller, '03**, and **Randy Pitney, '72**; Chancellor Rogers' wife, **Sherry Modrow, '72, '85**; and **Joe Hayes, '97**, association executive director.



Tania Clucas, '95, '08, clowns around with the Nanook mascot while welcoming UAF alumni to the game. UAF photos by Andrea Swingley

Nest of Nanooks continued from page 23

cold place to learn how a small animal could stay active all winter in an environment that pushes it to its physiological limit. Black-capped chickadees were the perfect study subject: Are they built differently from chickadees elsewhere, which helps them survive the Interior's harsh winters? Do they do something different? (The short answer is that black-capped chickadees in Alaska aren't different from other chickadees; they simply do things to an extreme.)

"I think it's all storytelling," Sharbaugh says. "You don't lecture at people; you tell them a really cool story. Everybody likes stories."

"People are pretty much put off by or afraid of science," says Sharbaugh. "But it's not that scary. And it's really, really cool."

Never a dull moment

Hard science and public education often mix and mingle at bird observatories, requiring the people who work there to be flexible in their roles. As ABO's senior scientist, Sharbaugh has her hands full with research projects, grant proposals and reports, and education and outreach.

Executive director **Anne Ruggles, '91**, handles everything from day-to-day management of the organization to planning and implementing long-term goals and objectives. Ruggles attributes some of her multitasking skills to her time at UAF. "Because UAF is a small school, I could ask anybody about anything. A small school makes individual contact easier. It's the same at a small nonprofit; you have to ask and do everything."

Right in Fairbanks' backyard

Philip Martin, '83, is a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologist and president of ABO's board of directors. He is also an integral part of a new venture for ABO, the Creamer's Community Climate



Observatory, which will expand ABO's mission to incorporate a more holistic look at climate change at Creamer's Refuge.

"If you think about what conservation issues birds face in Interior Alaska," says Martin, "climate change has to be right at the top. Climate change is hitting faster and in more fundamental ways here than in other parts of the country."

The project will measure environmental change at Creamer's Refuge and connect that with changes in bird biology. For example, how are birds affected by changes in when tree leaves bud or insects hatch, if at all? To study these questions, ABO will work with climate change researchers and permafrost specialists at UAF. ABO will also invite the general public to learn about the research, help collect data and discover more about their own environment.

"This will be a way for us to track changes right in people's backyards, right in the backyard of this community," Martin adds.



Andrea Swingley, Matric., is a graphic designer for UAF Marketing and Communications. She was the education coordinator for ABO from 1998 – 2004.



Share your stories and learn more about ABO at www.uaf.edu/aurora/.

UAF alumni currently with ABO

Anna-Marie Benson, '00, research associate
 Wendy Ehnert, '95, education committee
 Chris Harwood, Matric., scientific advisory committee
 Mary Liston, '82, education committee
 Philip Martin, '83, president, board of directors
 Carol McIntyre, '95, board of directors; scientific advisory committee
 Ed Murphy, '76, scientific advisory committee
 Debbie Nigro, '90, scientific advisory committee
 Kristen Rozell, '04, seasonal field biologist
 Anne Ruggles, '91, executive director
 Susan Sharbaugh, '97, senior scientist
 David Shaw, '06, research biologist
 Ted Swem, Matric., scientific advisory committee
 Tim Walker, Matric., seasonal field biologist
 Jeff Walters, '99, secretary, board of directors; education committee
 John Wright, '79, board of directors

UAF faculty and staff (current or former) currently with ABO

Kelly Auer, treasurer, board of directors; chair, finance committee
 Dan Gibson, scientific advisory committee
 Abby Powell, board of directors; scientific advisory committee
 Kevin Winker, scientific advisory committee
 Trish Wurtz, board of directors



Events fall/winter 2009 – 2010

athletics

OCT. 10

Women's volleyball vs. UAA

OCT. 16 – 17

Brice Alaska Goal Rush men's hockey tournament

NOV. 4

Women's volleyball at UAA

NOV. 26 – 28

Mt. McKinley Bank North Star Invitational women's basketball tournament

DEC. 5 – 6

Ski Nordic Cup at UAA

FEB. 3

Women's basketball vs. UAA

FEB. 6

Men's basketball vs. UAA

FEB. 24

Men's basketball at UAA

FEB. 26 – 27

Governor's Cup (two-game men's hockey home-and-home series) in Anchorage/Fairbanks



arts

see below for Theatre UAF

NOV. 15

Choir of the North concert

NOV. 20

Wind Symphony concert

DEC. 3

Northern Lights String Orchestra concert

special events

SEPT. 15

Convocation

SEPT. 24 – 26

Alumni Reunion Weekend and Starvation Gulch

OCT. 17 – 25

KUAC FM Fall Fundraiser



exhibitions

Through JAN. 20

UA Museum of the North special exhibit — "Ascension: Exploring the Art of Denali"



For more events, visit
www.uaf.edu/events/

Theatre UAF

Fall Schedule

How I Learned to Drive

Oct. 16 – 17, 23 – 25

Directed by Carrie Baker.

Written by American playwright Paula Vogel — recipient of the 1998 Pulitzer Prize for Drama.

Winter Shorts featuring

Zoo Story

and

A Midsummer Night's Dream

Nov. 13 – 14, 20 – 22

For more information, visit
www.uaf.edu/theatre/