



DOING HARD TIME

Five justice students went to jail last November — for three and a half hours. Seniors Jessika Shumate, Laegan Bole, Carrie Lofts, Andrew Sheeler and Javan Halpin portrayed new inmates at Fairbanks Correctional Center. They donned the colorful jumpsuit of a felon to appear in an instructional video produced by UAF journalism students.

New inmates at FCC are shown a video that explains everything from how to receive mail to the proper procedure for having visitors. Mike Daku, a justice assistant professor, learned that FCC officials wanted to update their video, and an opportunity was born. Daku approached Rob Prince, a journalism assistant professor specializing in documentary filmmaking, about a collaborative effort.

Outside FCC, Daku and the five justice students met with Prince and

three journalism students: Sarah Richards, Dana Davis and Karen Adams. Also along for the ride as photographers were Cheryl Hatch, Snedden Chair for the Journalism Department, and Jeremia Schrock, a reporter and photographer for the UAF *Sun Star*. Once inside, they were under the watchful eye of the FCC guards, who warned them not to mingle with the inmates.

Life on the inside posed a few complications for the UAF crew. The journalism students doing the filming had to be careful not to record actual inmates on camera. Everyone had to endure the stares and calls of the FCC residents, for

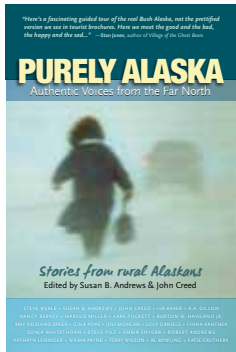
whom the students were the evening's entertainment.

The venture into FCC was a rare glimpse into the world of corrections from a side the students hoped they'd never have to see again.

Story by Andrew Sheeler, senior journalism student and editor-in-chief of the Sun Star student newspaper. Photos by Jeremia Schrock/Sun Star.



Purely Alaska illustrates cultural journalism



Purely Alaska: Authentic Voices from the Far North is a follow-up to the award-winning bestseller *Authentic Alaska: Voices of Its Native Writers*.

Both books were edited by Chukchi Campus professors John Creed and Susan Andrews. The latest offering includes 32 stories from 23 Native and non-Native writers who live in various remote communities in the Alaska Bush.

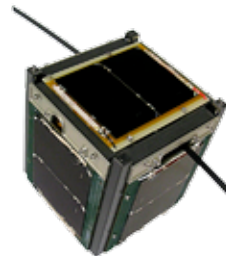
The first piece in the volume, by Steve Werle, tells the harrowing tale of the late Aana Nellie Woods, who in the 1930s helped drive a herd of

reindeer along the treacherous shores of the Arctic Ocean to northern Canada. Nellie gave birth twice while on the drive. She and her husband had to bury a newborn on the tundra. Nellie herself almost died from a raging fever while giving birth to a second child. She went on to live a long life, raise many children and become a beloved elder in the Northwest Arctic village of Noatak before passing away in the early 1990s.

Creed and Andrews head up the Chukchi News and Information Service, a cultural journalism project that has spawned these two books as well as hundreds of rural University of Alaska student publications since its founding in 1988. The project has captured several state and national honors, including a Robert F. Kennedy Journalism Award.

Students to design NASA payload

UAF is one of 12 universities selected to participate in NASA's CubeSat Launch Initiative. Engineering and science students will design an auxiliary payload for one of the launch vehicles already planned for next year. UAF's participation is sponsored by the Alaska Space Grant Program. CubeSats are a class of research spacecraft called picosatellites. They are approximately four inches square, have a volume of about one quart and weigh no more than 2.2 pounds.



Montana State University's E1P Flight CubeSat

Read more about the CubeSat initiative at spacegrant.alaska.edu/highered/CubeSat.

LIVE action: Alternative spring break — not just any vacation

Forget sizzling beaches and frosty beer. Students who want to do something tangible with their time off each spring can join the LIVE Program — Leadership, Involvement, Volunteer Experience — which sponsors an

alternative, service-oriented spring break trip. During last year's trip to Arctic Village, Alaska, UAF students worked with the local K – 12 school to encourage further education after high school. This year's trip to Moab, Utah,

was spent with Plateau Restoration, a nonprofit that works to protect and restore native habitats of the Colorado Plateau through research, education and revegetation.

CAMPUS BRIEFS

THE OCEAN ACIDIFICATION RESEARCH CENTER

has been established to study the effects of seawater's increasing acidity due to absorption of carbon dioxide. The center is led by Jeremy Mathis, an assistant professor of chemical oceanography and an ocean acidification expert.

Find more information about OARC at www.sfos.uaf.edu/oarc/.

THE ARCTIC REGION

SUPERCOMPUTING CENTER will downsize when its Department of Defense contract ends in May. To support ongoing academic research that requires high-performance computing, ARSC will reorganize into a program of 10 core staff members.

Illustration by SmithGroup.



GROUNDBREAKING FOR THE NEW LIFE SCIENCES FACILITY

was March 30. Alaska voters in 2010 overwhelmingly approved passage of

a statewide general obligation bond that included \$88 million for the building.



Illustration by Kelsey Gobroski, Sun Star.

ZOMBIE PHYSIOLOGY — for real?

In lecture, Associate Professor Mike Harris' voice slices through the classroom, confident. Sporting a red floral shirt, he weaves together old concepts and new topics. He hardly pauses, until a techno jingle reverberates into the air.

"Cookies!" Harris says, dancing with slow-motion swings of his arms and hips until the student silences her phone. "Let this be a warning: I will do the cookie dance, and you will bring cookies, if this happens again. Now, where was I?"

Filling any gaps between words with expressive flicks of his hands, Harris conjures both ordinary and fantastic examples when teaching more than 40 animal physiology students.

"It's cool how he can relate fantasy stuff to real-world things," says Ben Gray, a 27-year-old fisheries science major.

Later in the semester, Harris unleashes the zombies.

Harris first used zombies four years ago in neurobiology when explaining fine-coarse motor control. He returned to the undead for animal physiology when he couldn't figure out how to make the class relatable. Examples often engage a class, but what else would appeal to Harris's academically diverse students? Ecology doesn't have much common ground with medicine, so he brought back his teenage passion for zombies.


Harris isn't the only one to use the undead as examples. In 2009, researchers from Carleton University and the University of Ottawa taught how math can simulate humanity's survival in a zombie apocalypse.

"I don't believe in the supernatural, but I'm perfectly willing to admit that scientists don't understand all that is natural," Harris says.

Zombies are "human physiology taken to an extreme," Harris says. He argues that zombies are like reptilian humans. Reptiles, like zombies, do not have the luxuries of brain function outside their brainstems. Like platypuses, the egg-laying mammals, the undead are the exception — and the exception fascinates Harris. Zombies make scientists like Harris question the basis of metabolism, of humanity and of life itself.

"Zombies are like humans, but inhuman — and the differences are what make them fascinating," he says.

Excerpted with permission from a story published in UAF's student newspaper, the Sun Star, by Kelsey Gobroski, UAF student and Sun Star contributor.

 Read the complete story at uafsunstar.com/?p=1774.

Lucy's Dance teaches Yup'ik traditions

The University of Alaska Press will publish *Lucy's Dance*, a new children's book written by Deb Vanasse and illustrated by Nancy Slagle, in May. It is a story about the return of traditional dancing in one Yup'ik village and how a little girl helps set things in motion for her grandfather to demonstrate old-style dancing. The story refers to Yup'ik traditions such as storytelling through dancing, drumming, singing, gift giving and the use of dance fans. Readers learn the meaning of Yup'ik words such as *uppa*, *akutaq* and *kuspaq*. The role of the dance stick is central to the story.



There will be a simultaneous release of a Yup'ik edition of the book. True to its cultural context, the book was reviewed by Theresa John, an associate professor with the Department of Alaska Native Studies and Rural Development, and her sister Agatha John-Shields, an assistant professor of education at UAA.



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

Come out and play

(back cover photo answer)

A disc golf course was installed on the Fairbanks campus last year. Frisbee enthusiasts (and regular folks) can play through 18 holes scattered across campus. At each location the bright yellow cage captures your frisbee — unless, of course, you miss.



Download a map and rules of the course at www.uaf.edu/campusmap/.

PHILANTHROPY

Usibelli Coal mines minds

The Usibelli Coal Mine donated \$165,000 to two scholarships. The Usibelli Mining Scholarship is a four-year scholarship for College of Engineering and Mines students studying mining or geological engineering; the new Usibelli Coal Mine Diesel/Heavy Equipment Certificate Scholarship supports students in the UAF Community and Technical College's diesel and heavy equipment certificate program.

Did you know?

... a construction company clearing land for the Bunnell Building in the mid-50s hauled off the university cornerstone with other construction debris. (Oops!) It was soon returned and was rededicated in 1962 in the spot where it sits today.