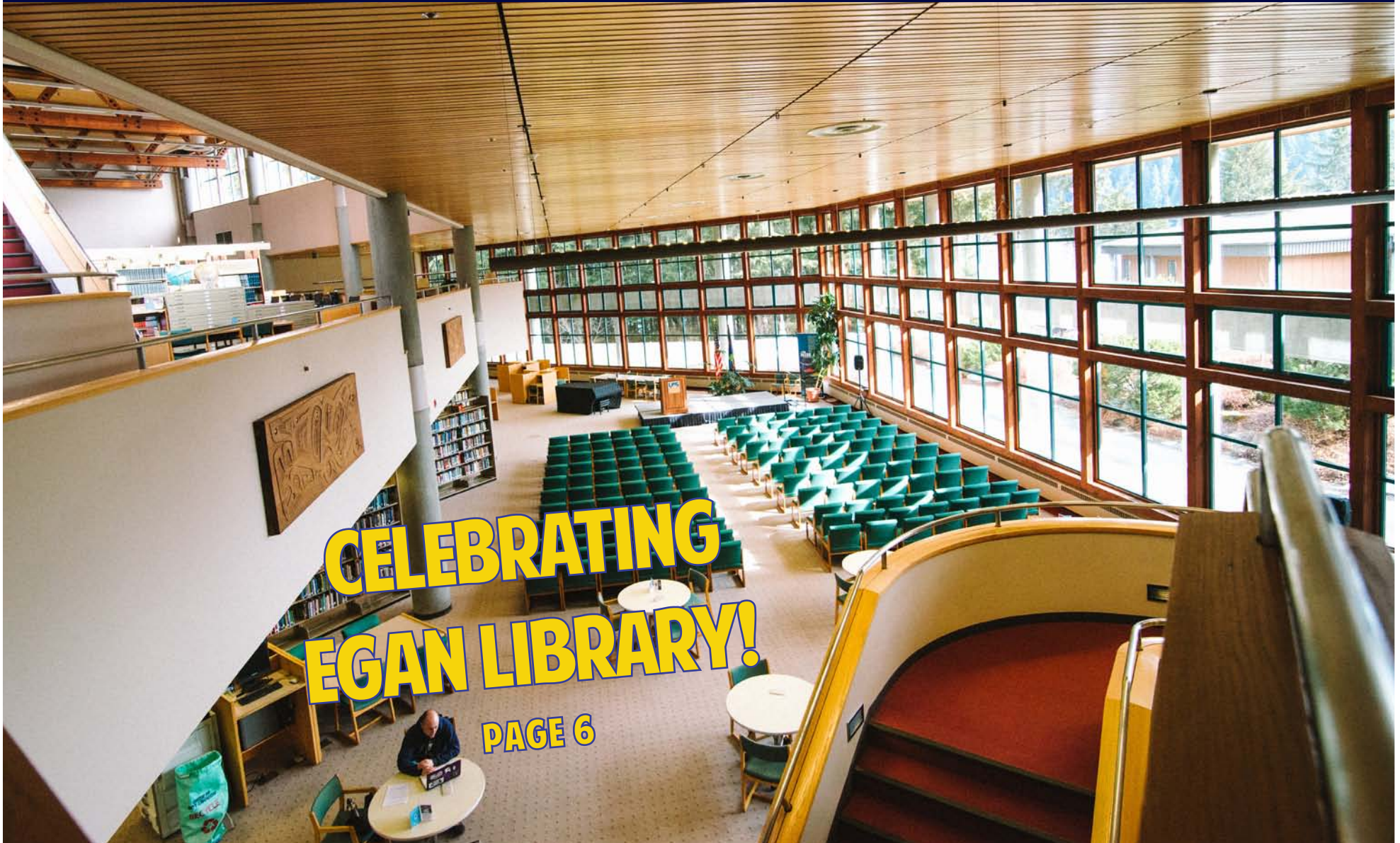


University of Alaska Southeast

WHALE SONG

March 23 - April 5, 2015

The Official Student Newspaper of UAS



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EGAN LIBRARY!**

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ON THE COVER...

The Egan Library is celebrating its 25th anniversary this Friday from 5-7 p.m. Everyone is invited and encouraged to join in the festivities! To learn more about this building and all it continues to offer UAS students and the Juneau community, turn to page 6!

(Photograph by Darin Donohue)

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-Jonas Lamb



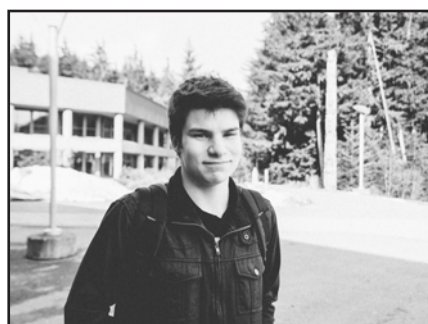
"The fantastic space that the library offers everyone to do what they'd like. From hanging out to completing work."

-Denver Enoch



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-Tazia Wagner



"It's a great place to be able to get my studies done."

-Shelby Carroll



"The group study rooms are my favorite things the library offers us as students."

-Esther Bower

— UAS in Brief —

Authors Jeff Chang and Andy Hall Visiting University of Alaska Southeast this Week

Ground-breaking, award winning author Jeff Chang will speak on the UAS Auke Lake campus Monday, Mar. 23 at 7:30 p.m. in the Egan Lecture Hall. The presentation is part of the University of Alaska Bartlett Lecture series. Mr. Chang's illustrated (via comic strips and contemporary art) lecture will focus on his latest book *Who We Be: The Colorization of America* (2014). For more information, contact Tara Olson, UAS Student Activities Coordinator, at (907) 796-6325 or tara.olson@uas.alaska.edu.

Lifelong Alaskan and author Andy Hall will make a presentation Friday, Mar. 27 at 7 p.m. in the Egan Library. Mr. Hall is the author of *Denali's Howl, The Deadliest Climbing Disaster on America's Wildest Peak*, (2014) a non-fiction account of the tragic 1967 Wilcox Expedition. His presentation is part of the Sound and Motion series and the 25th Anniversary celebration of the Egan Library. Alaska Airlines and Aspen Hotels sponsor his visit. For more information, contact Katie Bausler at (907) 796-6530.

-UAS Soundings



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— “Game Over”: A New “The End” —

BY ALEXA CHERRY

For the UAS Whalesong

I think we can all agree that video games are not taken seriously. Certainly they are appreciated in the gaming industry, and definitely by those who enjoy playing video games in their spare time. But a lot of people still think that video games are just that: games. Something you play in your downtime, like *Solitaire* or *Pong* or *Temple Run*. And those games do still exist—but there are also other games, like *The Last of Us* and *Dragon Age*, that are less about the playing of the game and more about the story they tell. And I, for one, am tired of excitedly telling people about my experiences with these games and how amazing their stories are and how much fun I had with them, only to be brushed off because it’s “just a game.”

I think it’s very important to recognize that the world around us is changing, and therefore the things that make up that world and the purpose of those things is changing as well. Gutenberg’s printing press became the standard home printer, which is becoming the 3D printer. We moved from walking places to riding horses, to driving cars and planes. Books became plays, which became movies. *Pong* became *Wii Sports*, which is becoming virtual reality (thanks, Oculus Rift). My point is, we tell stories every other way, so why aren’t video games recognized as a universally valid method of storytelling? And almost more importantly, why aren’t more large gaming companies taking advantage of their available technologies and skill sets to tell these stories?

The root of this argument takes place in my frustration with the game *Destiny*. In this game, you wake up on an alien planet to a small, diamond-shaped robot telling you that it raised you from the dead and you need to follow it to safety. Questions arise immediately: why were you dead in the first place? How long have you been dead? Why, and more importantly how, did this tiny robot bring you back to life? These questions are never answered. Instead, more continue to pop up. You’re being pursued by ravening alien monstrosities, which the tiny robot (identified only as a Ghost) insists you shoot because if you don’t kill them, they’ll kill you. The game never really explains what these aliens are or where they came from, much like it never explains why your little robot friend is simultaneously a robot but also able to phase in and out of conscious existence and through solid matter.

You are then taken to a location called the Tower, where a faceless man voiced by a moderately popular British actor informs you that a mysterious entity called the Darkness came and hecked everything up, and it’s probably coming back soon so it’s up to you to do something about it. You are sent on a series of increasingly confusing missions, where the main point seems to be for you to shoot things—lots of things—while your Ghost acts irritatingly superior and hacks things. Everything. I think mine hacked a rock once, but that could have been a game glitch.



Video games are an incredible way to tell a story, because they involve the player in the telling of the story.

(“Xbox” by Chapendra. Photograph available via Flickr’s Creative Commons. Printed in black and white.)

Now, to be fair, I haven’t finished *Destiny* yet, so there could be major story reveals that explain everything closer to the end of the game. But my point is that so far, I have done the story missions only because they are an easy way to level up. I do not understand what I am doing, why I am doing it, or even who I’m fighting. Who are the Fallen? Where did they come from? *Destiny* seems to take all of my questions, stamp them in red ink with “SPACE,” and then carry on like that answers everything.

A friend of mine who has logged over 80 hours on *Destiny* attempted to explain to me that the main purpose of the game was not to tell a brilliant, mind-blowing story. Instead, their goal was to create a game with new, fresh gameplay that would bring players back over and over again. And that’s fine—but with all of the modern advances in technology, there’s really no excuse for them to have great gameplay, amazing graphics, and a story this crappy. Video games don’t have to have a story, but if you’re going to bother to put one in, you at least have to answer the questions you bring up within it. When I play *Destiny*, I feel like I’m reading a mystery novel where the detective finds very obvious clues, asks the obvious questions, and then decides to just go off and do something else instead of following through with the investigation.

Not all video games have to have a story, and even the ones that do don’t have to have much of one. I don’t really understand what Bowser is, but I’ll still fight him

in *New Super Mario Bros*. There is literally no dialogue in *Journey*, but I make my way to the mountain anyway. However, these games have less to answer for. Games that cost \$60 for major consoles need to answer the questions they bring up. Frankly, when *Call of Duty: Black Ops* does a better job of explaining what’s going on than a futuristic game that comes out 4 years later, I think we have a problem.

My point is that while video games don’t need a story, they are an incredible way to tell a story while also involving the player in that story. You read books, you watch movies, but in both you are a passive recipient of information. In a video game, it’s up to you to get Buff McSleeveless up the mountain and past the enemies to rescue the princess. You have to dodge the boulders, land the plane safely, and navigate to the next cut scene location. You have to choose the right dialogue that will result in your partner not getting shot by the maniac pointing a gun at you both. It’s that level of involvement that leaves you feeling relieved and proud when you finish a game—because everything turned out okay at the end (or it does, most of the time), and you were instrumental in making that happen. That’s why games that have a story but tell it badly are such a shame. Spending 10 hours running around confused, but compelled to continue because of plot, are just not the same as running around with conviction and a purpose, compelled to continue because your adopted daughter is being held captive by a gang of cannibals.

— Fall In: Scheduling Next Semester —

BY ALEXA CHERRY

For the UAS Whalesong

I know, I know, it's not even summer break yet! Who wants to even start thinking about the Fall 2015 semester? Not me, and probably not you. But the fact remains that 90 percent of college is about planning ahead, and the academic administration has several ways in which it makes you do so whether you want to or not. One of these ways is by putting out the class schedule for next semester, which is available online today!

Now, not to pressure you or anything, but here's the down-low on class schedules: register for the classes you want to take as soon as possible. A lot of students will wait until the last minute to register, and if you do that there's no way you will get into those highly desirable classes. Consider the size of your average classroom at UAS, and also consider the fact that a major selling point of this school is the fairly small student-to-professor ratio. What this means is that each class can only have a certain amount of students in it. If you do wait a while and aren't able to get into the class you want, you can always get on the waiting list. If you are at the top and someone in the course drops, you'll be shunted into the classroom right away. But overall, it's better not to do that, especially if it's a class you need for your degree. Another thing about UAS is that certain classes are only offered during certain semesters, so if you need to take British Literature I, sign up right away because British Literature II is the only Brit. Lit. class that will be on the schedule for the following semester.

It's also worth being on top of this ball because there are some classes that are practically never offered, and if you're really interested in it then you definitely want to grab a spot. A couple semesters ago there was a class on zombies, and since everyone knew it would be popular, it filled up almost as soon as class registration was allowed. You should also consider your degree program and if you absolutely need a class in order to graduate—for example, since UAS is such a big school for marine biology, science

classes fill up pretty fast. GERs in general are good to be on top of as well; since everybody needs them to graduate, everyone will sign up for them.

Looking at all of the classes available can be a little overwhelming, but don't worry. If you have less than 30 credits, it's mandatory that you meet with an advisor and go over your schedule. They are here to help figure out the most effective schedule for you that won't be too overwhelming and will still help you work toward your degree. Of course, you want to be prepared when you go into your advisor meeting, so it's a good idea to sit down beforehand and pick out the different classes you need to take so that your advisor has something to work from.

If you're torn between different classes (for example, you want to take both but they meet at the same time on the same day), I recommend sitting down and making mock schedules. I'll pick one or two classes that I absolutely have to take, regardless of whether I want to or not; then, keeping those firmly in place, I'll mix and match other classes around on the schedule and see what works best for me. For instance, I like to have a day or two free during the week, or maybe a 3-day weekend, but not if the cost of that extra day off is having class from 9 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays. If that works for you, fantastic! But for me, and I'm sure some other people, I would prefer to have just one class every day instead of five classes two or three days a week. I find that it gives the illusion of having free time while also keeping you balanced. If you have nothing to do on Wednesday and Thursday, you might spend them sleeping or goofing off, whereas if you have to go down to campus at least once during each of those days, you're more likely to be up at a reasonable time and get something done.

So there you have it! Start thinking about your schedule for next semester. Get out your markers and printer paper, and create a color-coded system. Look up cool planners and nifty alarm clocks online. By this point you should have a fairly good idea of what works well for you, so there's absolutely no reason you can't set up a Fall 2015 schedule you will be able to kick butt at. You might even impress your advisor with being on top of it all! Just be sure to tell them I sent you.

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— 25 Years of the Egan Library —

BY DANIEL PISCOYA

For the UAS Whalesong

As a student of the University of Alaska Southeast, it is pretty much impossible not to spend time at the Egan Library. As a visitor, it is almost impossible not to admire it. But, as a historian, it is certainly impossible not to see its necessity to our university campus. As far back as anyone can remember, and as far back as any book will tell, libraries have been the center of any serious community of learning. From the fabled library at Alexandria—a wonder of the world, in its day—to the local public library we may have spent time in as a child, libraries have been important repositories of knowledge and an essential way to keep art and culture alive today. For the past 25 years, the Egan Library has been these things par excellence.

Walking into the Egan Library today, the first thing that is noticeable about the library is the highly integrated presence of Alaska Native art in the building. According to the Northwest Coast Native Art Guide, “a total of \$72,114 in art commissions was awarded” and planned out long before the building was finished. In the entrance, there are four Tlingit masks showcased on the back of the circulation desk. Further on are two Tlingit house posts, which depict several scenes and characters from Tlingit stories. House posts are extremely important in Tlingit culture, and serve as the real and conceptual foundation for a clan house. The posts are representatives from both of Tlingit society’s clans—‘moieties’—Raven and Eagle. Further on, there are several pieces of exquisite panel art hung off the balconies of the third floor. There is also a showcase of ceremonial Tlingit dress and basketry. On the first floor is a bear skeleton cleaned and assembled by a former student. The conspicuous presence of wood in the ceiling paneling and the struts both gives the library a warm atmosphere, and makes the carved art especially seem at home.

Not to be outdone by the beauty of the native art, the architecture of the building is an art unto itself. In 1991, just a year after it opened, the library was awarded an Honor Award for Excellence in Architecture from the American Institute of Architects. The three-tier building designed jointly by architectural firms BOOR/A and Jensen Douglas was designed with an emphasis on natural lighting and large windows that grant extensive views of the lake, campus and rainforest that surround it. Sitting and studying in the Egan Library both reminds you that you are in Alaska, and provides a comfortable bit of necessary separation from the elements at the same time.

When it comes down to it, however, the true pride of the library is not its art or architecture, but rather its resources. The three-floor library has an abundance and variety of resources available for student use. The first floor is where the greater part of the books are located—everything from business to literature—but it is also home to the Learning Center and the Writing Center, where students can get excellent help with homework and essays. Media services are also found on the first floor. The second floor hosts an extensive collection of periodicals, DVDs, reference works, and news sources. It also has temporary computers for free academic printing, long-term computers for free student use, and a computer used for accessing the library catalogue. The third floor is home to a collection of juvenile fiction and scientific works. The most helpful feature of any floor is the library staff. Whatever you have come to the library for, if you need help, you can always look for it at the reference desk.

All of these aspects of the Egan Library leave plenty to celebrate, which is why the library invites the campus and community to toast the Egan Library’s 25th anniversary this Friday, Mar. 27, from 5-7 p.m.. There will be hors d’oeuvres, music by John Unzicker, and memories. The invited speakers include Senator Dennis Egan; Tony Yorba, from Jenson Yorba Lott Architects; Chancellor Pugh; and Kathy Ruddy, the president of UASAA/ Friends of the Egan Library. The benefits of membership in UASAA/ Friends of the Egan Library include reserved seating at Evening at Egan events, invitation to the exclusive UAS Community Author’s Reception, exclusive annual workshops, and the ability to review books withdrawn from the collection prior to their donation to the Friends of the Library bookstore, and much more—all of which are excellent ways to get involved with the great community of the Egan library which we are celebrating on Friday.

Following the celebration, there will be the Sound and Motion event at 7 p.m., featuring Andy Hall and his book, *Denali’s Howl*, about twelve young men’s attempt to climb Denali in 1967. Students are both encouraged and expected to attend both. If I do not show up, I will have made a terrible mistake—but not as grievous as yours, I fear.



For the past 25 years, Egan Library has offered UAS students and the Juneau community a fantastic space to gather in the pursuit of knowledge.

(Photographs by Darin Donohue)

March 23 - April 5, 2015

— Healing through Words —

BY JASMINE MATTSON-WOLFF, Kóot Xheech

For the UAS Whalesong

Did you know that the 13th Annual Oratory Competition is happening this Saturday, Mar. 28? It's a chance for you to stand up to a dedicated audience and give a talk based around what healing means to you! The oratory competition is an amazing opportunity for students to stand up and talk about a specific issue, topic, choice, aspect of education, etc. for 5-15 minutes. The theme for this year is healing; in and of itself that topic is just so amazing because it can be individualized for everyone. Maybe your idea of healing centers on how certain animal or plant cells uniquely heal themselves, or you want to present on how learning a language or another subject has fostered healing in your life. Maybe it's about a speech or poem that really hits home when you are down or it's about a program that helps others. It could be anything!

There are four different categories in the competition: oratory, dramatic declamation, storytelling, and native language. Oratory is a speech from memory or limited notes demonstrating mastery in the art of public speaking using reasoning, elocution, and evidence to support the opinion. Topics may include, but are not limited to: subsistence, sovereignty, urban/

rural conflicts, multilingualism, religious freedom, education, or traditional values. Dramatic declamation is the recitation of an indigenous speech or persuasive document. Presentation material may be edited but should accurately convey the author's intent. Storytelling is the recitation of one or more indigenous stories. Each story should be published, recorded, or transcribed with permission from the author, clan, elder, or tribe when appropriate. If you plan on sharing more than one story, include transition between literary works to show their thematic relationships. Interpretation of two or more characters, appropriate costuming, limited props and dramatic movement may be incorporated. The native language category consists of presentations from memory or limited notes, delivered in an indigenous language. Speeches may be composed specifically for this category in the subject of your choosing or may be shared with one of the other categories. A significant portion of the speech must be in the native language, leaving time for translation.

Participants are welcome to speak in up to two categories. In order for the categories to stay open there needs to be at least four participants competing in each category. Tuition waivers will be awarded to the winners and you could also be fulfilling a graduation requirement depending on your major. Many degrees require some form of a public

presentation or speech to complete the program. This oratory competition could knock that out of the way for you! If you think about it, when you are choosing a topic that you're passionate about and putting it together in a solid presentation, 5-15 minutes all of a sudden seems like the shortest amount of time to discuss everything you'd like to! This is a chance to pass on a message to the community of Juneau and UAS that you feel strongly about, while building your communication skills and organizing your own thoughts to flesh out what is really important to you.

Are you interested in being a part of the Oratory Competition? You can find registration forms and more details on the rules in the Native and Rural Student Center in the lower level of Mourant. Don't wait until the last minute, take the opportunity to have your voice heard and register today! The absolute last day to register is this Friday, Mar. 27 by 5 p.m. I would strongly encourage you to register as soon as possible, because if there isn't enough interest in the event it might be cancelled!

I hope to see you registering and planning your speech this week. If you decide not to compete, I hope to see you at the competition as an audience member on Saturday at the REC!

— Literary Traditions: Utopia —

BY DANIEL PISCOYA

For the UAS Whalesong

Utopia is a loaded word. In our 21st century, it has acquired layers of meaning that are rich and deep, but occur to us all at once. When we think of a utopia, we think of a perfect society, cities made of metal and glass that sparkle in the setting sun. It means flying cars and no crime or dirt. This, in modern stories, often takes a downturn into a dystopia—utopia's darker, twisted relative characterized by only the appearance of cleanliness or justice and a reality of crime and injustice. Lately, utopian hopes become dystopian nightmares and conjure up characters like Katniss Everdeen and Tris Prior to “fight the power” and show us the dangers of totalitarian government. Utopia is, for us, inseparable from Big Brother, or the World Controllers, or riot squads.

But it did not always carry these connotations. The word “utopia” itself was coined from Greek in the 16th century by an English lawyer-turned-writer named Thomas More. It comes from either the combination of ‘ou - topia’ or ‘eu - topia’, which mean ‘no-place’ or ‘happy place’. So the meaning of our modern phrase ‘dystopia,’ that is, a failed or selectively applied paradise, is already present in ‘utopia.’ Utopia, as a phrase, is ambiguous—it makes you smile, while, at the same time, setting your teeth on edge.

March 23 - April 5, 2015

More's *Utopia*, as a text, reveals this. It is a story about a fictional nation in what was known as the New World, or the Americas. Utopia was founded and named after its Philosopher-King, Utopus. In order to set up his nation from his peninsula, Utopus' first act as king was to commission the digging of a 15-mile-wide channel between the country and the mainland. The island of Utopia was governed by a democracy, and marked by extreme organization. The laws of the land were intentionally simple, so everyone would understand them, and unlike many of our modern dystopias, was not very totalitarian. Everyone was made to work, but this was meant to solve the problem of unemployment, and, with everybody working, the primarily agricultural work was not characterized by long shifts. There was only a subtle difference between the average worker and their administrators, since both dining and housing were communal things and changed every few years. Furthermore, clothing was strictly plain and unadorned, so as not to differentiate between people. More than this, personal possessions were not allowed. If anyone needed anything, they would request it from public storehouses. Criminals were sold into slavery, but this slavery was not even near the severity of the slavery we normally think of. Slavery was typically a temporary thing, and criminals were let off for good behavior regularly. Divorce, which was a hot topic in More's time (he was executed by Henry VIII), was legal in Utopia, but not encouraged. Privacy, however, was not considered a right,

and private spaces were banned. The most interesting characteristic of Utopia, however, is that it works.

The ambiguity of More's book is brought out when you consider it in its time period. A lot of the ideas above are significantly less controversial today than they were in the 1500s. More wrote *Utopia* under a monarch, but Utopia was a republic (vaunted in its sub-title as “The Best State of a Republic”). More was also a Catholic—Catholic to the extent of being a martyr for that faith and later being canonized a Saint. This means that many of the tenets of his *Utopia* were not what Thomas More actually believed. More was executed for opposing Henry VIII's divorce, but divorce was legal in Utopia. The society he wrote was also characterized by a strong sense of religious tolerance, which More was not especially a figurehead of, because he was no friend of the then-new Protestantism. In fact, his opposition to the separation of the Church of England from the Catholic Church was what led to his execution in the first place. So it is unclear exactly why he wrote *Utopia*. I am inclined to think that, contrary to modern utopias—which are full of people willing to believe in good—More wrote *Utopia*—which is a society that sacrifices individuality and privacy to work—in order to emphasize that society always sacrifices something in order to work. More's *Utopia* can be taken, not necessarily as a cautionary tale, but as a lesson on how things work in the world—and a sermon on paying attention to what we give up in order to live comfortably.

UAS WHALESONG

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— *Kingsman: The Sexy Service* —

BY ALEXA CHERRY

For the UAS Whalesong

I first saw the trailer for *Kingsman: The Secret Service* when I was visiting extended family in Virginia over Christmas break. My aunt saw me sitting with my laptop and told me to pull the trailer up because she thought it was something I'd be interested in—and I was. But it wasn't coming out for a while, and when it finally did come out, I didn't think I would actually get to go see it because I went to see *Jupiter Ascending* instead. I ended up getting to go see it after all—and I am delighted that I did!

Kingsman is an action-adventure spy movie like no other. You might not want to watch it because it seems like a *James Bond* spoof or spin-off, but allow me to ensure you that *Kingsman* is much more than this. It certainly makes a few allusions to James Bond and other popular spies, but in a self-aware way that fits with the film's setting and doesn't detract from what's already going on in the movie. Certainly it's about British spies, but the Kingsmen are not the kind of agency that pulls orphan boys off the street and gives them a license to kill when they get old enough. In fact, everyone in the agency is carefully hand-picked—an issue that is addressed very early on in the film.

The *Kingsman* agent “Galahad,” played by Colin Firth, explains that Kingsmen used to be tailors for the social elite until they decided to use the wealth and influence they had amassed to branch out into the business of secrets—becoming a company that solved problems quickly and efficiently, outside the bureaucracy of typical government agencies. Unfortunately, this aforementioned wealth and influence created a class gap. Originally, the *Kingsman* agency was composed of only other Kingsmen, and when they had to bring in outsiders due to either the untimely or inevitable death of their members, their recruitment pool was composed of more of the wealthy social elite. Galahad grows tired of the agency's prejudice, and when a new *Kingsman* position opens up, he chooses the scruffy, unfortunate young Gary “Eggsy” Unwin as his recruit.

Surrounded by young adults with expensive haircuts and pretentious coats, Eggsy has to do his best to keep up with the competition in order to secure his place as one



Whalesong reporter Alexa Cherry stands alongside the poster for *Kingsman: The Secret Service* at the 20th Century Theatre downtown. (Photograph provided by Alexa Cherry)

of the final runner-ups for the *Kingsman* position. This has been done before in movies, of course, but *Kingsman* gives it several endearing twists. For example, after the recruits show that their teamwork skills are in need of some polishing, their handler “Merlin” gives them each a dog to take care of. There's a Standard Poodle, a German Shepherd, several other large dogs—and a Pug. Eggsy, of course, chooses the Pug. Have you ever seen a spy-in-training trying to get a Pug to keep up with him? Watch *Kingsman* and you will.

But the entire film does not focus exclusively on this training process—otherwise it would be a Disney channel

exclusive, and not an R-rated blockbuster. Looming behind the scenes is a man named Valentine, who is played by none other than Samuel L. Jackson. Alright, you might say, so what's the big deal about that? To which I respond, imagine the *Avenger's* Nick Fury in flat-billed caps and gaudy orange sneakers, with a prominent lisp and a plan for world domination. I've got your attention now, have I? Alright, now picture this flamboyant American billionaire—because Valentine is a billionaire—facing off against Colin Firth's character Galahad, who is the absolute picture of a well-dressed, flawless gentleman spy. But in a cool way, not a smarmy *James Bond* way.

I can't say much more without giving away some fairly significant plot points, but what I can't say about the plot, I can say about other things. For example, there is a lot of fighting in this movie—as to be expected from an R-rated film. But instead of being the ten-moves-per-second flurry of fists we've come to expect from fight scenes, *Kingsman* employs excellent filmography techniques, the judicious use of slow motion, and incredible choreography to leave you invested in the outcome of the fight and in absolute awe regarding the talent of the characters doing the fighting. The music helps, too—Henry Jackman does a brilliant job of creating one of those memorable scores with a main theme that lets you know exactly what movie it's from, and when the score isn't playing during fight scenes, an intense dubstep beat is getting rapped out in the background while Eggsy steals cars and gets in bar fights.

Overall, *Kingsman: The Secret Service* is a very well put together film with a good story, soundtrack, and scenery. One way in which it differs from your typical spy movie is that it features some prominent female characters who aren't shoved into the background, offered in the first half hour, or used exclusively for sex—one of them is severely handicapped and uses it to her deadly advantage, which is awesome. If nothing else, *Kingsman* is two hours of sheer fun.

I leave you with what may become the most infamous quote of Colin Firth's career: “I'm a Catholic whore, currently enjoying congress out of wedlock with my black Jewish boyfriend who works at a military abortion clinic. Hail Satan, and have a lovely afternoon.”

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The Desert Can Kill You in a Thousand Ways

BY ALEXA CHERRY

For the UAS Whalesong

I recently got to talk to someone who just moved up to Juneau from Los Angeles, California and our conversation got me thinking about the differences between Northerners and desert dwellers. And it wasn't just him—my fellow reporter Daniel Piscoya is from Fairbanks, Alaska and I once casually mentioned to him how my brother and I would play outside in 120-degree heat. I realized this was a mistake when he went pale in the face and pressed himself as far back into his chair and away from me as he could get. I don't think he believes a real human could survive those temperatures. That's okay—I don't think real humans can survive -50 degrees. Maybe we're both aliens. Anyway, I thought it would be fun and educational to write an article about some of the differences I've noticed after ten years of living in the Mojave Desert (Las Vegas, Nevada) and twelve years of living in the Alaskan tundra (Wasilla) and rainforest (Juneau).

One of the obvious differences is the amount of rain we get in Alaska. It rains a reasonable amount in Wasilla, and it rains even more here in Juneau. Even if it's not raining hard, it's either drizzling or could start raining at any moment. I once had a lifelong Juneau resident tell me "Children here don't ask their parents 'Why is the sky blue?' They ask them 'Why is the sky gray?'" All of this rain bothers some people more than it does others. I, for example, do not enjoy getting or being wet, and therefore don't care much for the rain. This was not something I knew about myself when I lived in Nevada. As a home-school teacher, my mom would cancel school and let my brother and I spend the rest of the day playing outside if it rained. This is because it rained very rarely in the desert, and when it did, it would rain hard for about 15-30 minutes before stopping. Sometimes, it was done raining by the time you heard about it. More than once, my brother and I had to be hauled inside during storms with thunder and lightning just because we wanted to be outside while water was pouring from the sky. Then, when it was done raining, we and the rest of the neighborhood kids would play in the runoff in the gutters, creating dams with sticks and mud, generally delighting in the presence of water that didn't evaporate within ten minutes. When it wasn't raining, my brother and I would take the ice cube trays from our freezer and dump their contents onto our driveway, watch them evaporate, then wait expectantly for clouds to form in the sky. That sort of stuff doesn't happen here.

Another difference is the wildlife. In Alaska, we have two primary hazards to our continued survival: cold weather, and large dangerous animals like moose, bears, and wolves. The first can be negated if you dress properly, and the second you can generally see or hear coming and avoid with relative ease. This is not so in the desert. It is hot and the sun is out all the time, so you are constantly at the risk of heatstroke, sunburn, skin cancer, or simply just being outright miserable. When it is cold, you can



The next time you complain about living in Alaska, consider the amount of things that can kill you here, and then compare that to the significantly larger amount that exists outside of Alaska, especially in the desert.

(“Desert Tarantula” by James Marvin Phelps. Photograph available via Flickr’s Creative Commons. Printed in black and white.)

put on more layers, or sit as close as conceivably possible to a fire and hope for the best. When it is hot, you reach a point where you wonder if you can remove your skin and still remain alive. There are also only so many layers that you can take off before people start getting arrested for public indecency. When it's cold, you can save on your heating bill by making a fire, wearing extra layers, or piling on the blankets; when it's hot, your options are to pay your air conditioning bill or die. That's pretty much it.

Wolves are to Alaskans as scorpions are to desert-dwellers. “But Lexi, don't you mean coyotes?” No, I do not. Wolves will mess you up. They are bigger and stronger and not afraid of you. Coyotes are giant weenie scavengers who talk a big game but will not, in all likelihood, eat you. Scorpions, on the other hand, will come into your house and crawl on your carpet, threaten your dog, and send you scrambling onto any high surface while your mom looks for a dictionary to drop on it. And then, when you pick the dictionary up and it's still alive, she grabs your father's shoe and starts pounding on it, all while your Rottweiler cowers in the back of the house and howls. Scorpions are unrepentant, poisonous yellow land-lobsters that fear nothing on the face of this earth. And they're not even the only thing we had to deal with. I narrowly escaped death when I was

a tiny baby because I wanted to pick up a black widow spider and put it in my mouth. In the evenings, we had to avoid being dive-bombed by germ-infested bats. Sometimes we would stare through the glass porch doors and wish that we could go play in the backyard, but we had to wait because two tarantulas were duking it out on the wall.

To be fair, we did not have giant birds of prey continually swooping overhead and threatening our continued existence as small children instead of dinner for baby eagles. But when I think back on my childhood in the desert, I'm pleasantly surprised to find that I still exist today, and I would like to thank my mother for playing what was probably a large part in keeping my siblings and I alive to this day.

So the next time you complain about living in Alaska, consider the amount of things that can kill you here, and then compare that to the significantly larger amount that exists outside of Alaska, and especially in the desert. Then reconsider complaining. We've actually got it pretty good here, guys. Count your blessings. And the next time it rains and you're thoroughly disgusted, remember that at one point my brother and I weren't allowed to play with the yard hose anymore because the city had placed a restriction on civilian water consumption due to the fact that the golf courses were getting a little brown.

— The Importance of Choosing Respect —

BY JASMINE MATTSON-WOLFF, Kóot Xheech

For the UAS Whalesong

Over spring break I participated in the Aiding Women in Abuse and Rape Emergencies (AWARE) Advocacy Training. It was a huge commitment of my time, as well as a mental, psychological, and personal commitment.

Domestic violence (DV) and sexual assault (SA) are both huge unethical and utterly disgusting crimes that residents of Alaska are victims and perpetrators of on far too regular of a basis. On Oct. 17, 2011 the Justice Center at the University of Alaska's Anchorage campus released the results of their Alaska Victimization Survey in Juneau, as part of their research on violence against women in the state. According to this survey, out of every 100 women who reside in the City and Borough of Juneau 47 experienced intimate partner violence, 35 experienced sexual violence, and 55 experienced intimate partner violence, sexual violence, or both. We are looking at similar numbers statewide. According to the Alaska Network on Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault (ANDVSA) out of every 100 adult women, 48 experienced intimate partner violence, 37 experienced sexual violence, and 59 experienced intimate partner violence, sexual violence, or both.

Looking at it from a national perspective, 1 out of every 6

American women are the victims of rape or attempted rape in their lifetime. The Rape Abuse & Incest National Network's research shows that 17.7 million American women have been victims of rape or attempted rape. If you look at RAINN's statistical data of victims by race, the lifetime rate of rape/attempted rape is 17.7% white women, 18.8% black women, 6.8% Asian/Pacific Islander women, 34.1% American Indian/Alaskan women, and 24.4% mixed race women. These numbers are disturbingly high. The predominance of DV and SA crimes that are relevant to everyone in some way is unbelievable, and it is time to bring it to an end.

When learning about such a horrific epidemic there are some difficult realities that you become aware of, and it's a lot to take in all at once. I would compare AWARE's Advocacy Training to taking a super condensed, 3-week long 400-level summer class. During the training participants are educated on AWARE's mission to provide safe shelter and supportive services for women and children who have been subject to domestic or sexual violence; they are encouraged to effect the social, political, and legal changes needed to eliminate oppression and violence against women and children. The training also educates participants on what domestic violence, sexual assault, advocacy, and effective avenues of support are, and so much more. AWARE provides a lot of information

in their sessions, and sometimes it's hard to sit through because we don't all realize how big the threat of DV and SA is. At the end of the day though, we can usually leave on a more hopeful note because of the many prevention programs taking action; one of these programs is the Choose Respect Campaign.

The Choose Respect campaign began in 2009 as an effort to bring awareness to domestic violence, sexual assault, and child sexual assault. It's a statewide pledge to bring a stop to this universal epidemic. Mar. 26 is the date for Alaska's 9th Annual Choose Respect Walk. More details about the Juneau branch of this event will be released soon.

There are tons of different things you can do to stand up against domestic violence and sexual assault. If you are interested in volunteering and taking part in helping victims of these crimes, contact AWARE located here in Juneau at (907) 586-6623 or visit their website <http://awareak.org/>.

Some other websites and organizations that are also working to bring awareness and a stop to these crimes are:

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/1is2many>

<http://nomore.org>

<http://www.walkamileinher shoes.org>

Want to read more?

Find previous issues of the Whalesong online at:

www.uas.alaska.edu/juneau/activities/whalesong/

CAMPUS CALENDAR

OFF CAMPUS

MONDAY, MAR. 23

Taku Toastmasters Club, 12:05 p.m., Federal Building. Improve your public speaking skills in a supportive environment. Newcomers welcome! Meetings are held in Room 541 of the Federal Building. For more information, contact Velja at 907-321-4988.

Tlingit Language Learner's Group, 6 p.m., Downtown Juneau Public Library. Interested in learning the Tlingit language? This group, run by Tlingit language learners, is free and open to everyone in the community, regardless of language experience. We meet Mondays at the downtown Juneau Public Library from 6-7 p.m. For more information, email tlingitlearners@gmail.com.

WEDNESDAY, MAR. 25

Write For Your Life, 10 a.m., Mendenhall

Valley Library. The "Write For Your Life" group meets from 10-11 a.m. every Wednesday to share journal entries, memoir, letters, or poetry. For more information, contact Dixie at 907-789-2068.

THURSDAY, MAR. 26

Community Gaming Night, 5:30 p.m., Udder Culture. Shouldn't Juneau have a community gaming group? Of course! Now we do! This is an open video game group that gets together every week at Udder Culture. We play a variety of video games and are open to playing on any platform (Wii, PS3, PS4, Xbox360, Xbox One, etc.). Be sure to stop by and enjoy great food and company at the Udder Culture as well! All ages are welcome! (If you are a minor you will need to get a parent's permission to play, because we play a lot of games rated "M") Email Greg Frank for more information at greg.r.frank@gmail.com.

The Odd Couple, 7:30 p.m., Perseverance Theatre. A classic American comedy from

the master of the form, Neil Simon. This 1965 Tony Award winner is the original play behind the TV phenomenon! Laugh at the classic buddy tale of the slovenly Oscar and the uptight Felix as they try and manage living together. Surprisingly poignant and side-splittingly funny, Neil Simon's witty dialogue, vibrant characters, and hilarious one-liners have made him one of the most produced playwrights of the twentieth century! With some of the best jokes ever told about men living together, *The Odd Couple* will keep you in stitches as we look back at these men from another era and ask ourselves: has that much really changed?

FRIDAY, MAR. 27

Organ Concert, 12 p.m., State Office Building Atrium. Concerts on the Kimball Theatre Organ at the State Office Building take place most Fridays during the noon hour.

Music: Dan Hopson Classical Guitar LIVE, 7 p.m., the Gold Room at the Baranof Hotel. For

more information, call 907-586-2660.

The Odd Couple, 7:30 p.m., Perseverance Theatre. A classic American comedy from the master of the form, Neil Simon. This 1965 Tony Award winner is the original play behind the TV phenomenon! Laugh at the classic buddy tale of the slovenly Oscar and the uptight Felix as they try and manage living together. Surprisingly poignant and side-splittingly funny, Neil Simon's witty dialogue, vibrant characters, and hilarious one-liners have made him one of the most produced playwrights of the twentieth century! With some of the best jokes ever told about men living together, *The Odd Couple* will keep you in stitches as we look back at these men from another era and ask ourselves: has that much really changed?

SATURDAY, MAR. 28

Music: Dan Hopson Classical Guitar LIVE, 7 p.m., the Gold Room at the Baranof Hotel. For more information, call 907-586-2660.

Alaska Robotics



Knuckle Hair



CAMPUS CALENDAR

ON CAMPUS

MONDAY, MAR. 23

Fall 2015 Class Schedule Available for View, All Day, UAS. Check out the Fall 2015 class schedule to see if there are any classes being offered that you may need or want to take! For more information send an email to registrar@uas.alaska.edu or call 796-6255.

Open Gym: Dodgeball, 7 p.m., Recreation Center. Ready to flash-back to grade school? Head over to drop-in dodgeball. It's fast, it's fun, and it's at the REC. For more information send an email to rec_center@uas.alaska.edu or call the REC Center staff at 796-6100.

Zumba, 7 p.m., Recreation Center. Party yourself into shape at the REC! Feel the music, let loose, and dance the pounds and inches off! No experience is necessary. For more information send an email to rec_center@uas.alaska.edu or call the REC Center staff at 796-6544.

Jeff Chang, 7:30 p.m., Egan Lecture Hall. Jeff Chang is an American journalist and a music critic on hip hop music and culture. He will be discussing his new book, *Who We Be: The Colorization of America*, and how it deals with race relations, multiculturalism, etc. This event is free and open to the community. For more information send an email to sab@uas.alaska.edu or call 796-6306.

TUESDAY, MAR. 24

Student Government Spring 2015 Meetings, 8:30 a.m., Glacier View Room. Get Involved! Got questions regarding UAS? Come check out a Student Government Meeting. UAS Student Government, the official student government of the University of Alaska Southeast, is responsible for representing student interests to the college administration and for facilitating the organization of a broad range of student committees that work to address issues and concerns and promote services that enhance students' experience at UAS. A significant responsibility of the UAS Student Government is to initiate and

March 23 - April 5, 2015

act upon legislation including proposals to appropriate USUAS-JC Funds as well as serving on at least two USUAS-JC standing committees. For more information send an email to jypres@uas.alaska.edu.

Open Gym: Basketball, 7 p.m., Recreation Center. Join your friends or make friends playing basketball at the REC. All skill levels welcome! For more information send an email to rec_center@uas.alaska.edu or call the REC Center staff at 796-6544.

WEDNESDAY, MAR. 25

Open Gym: Volleyball, 7 p.m., Recreation Center. Join your friends or make friends playing volleyball at the REC. All skill levels welcome! For more information send an email to rec_center@uas.alaska.edu or call the REC Center staff at 796-6544.

Zumba, 7 p.m., Recreation Center. Party yourself into shape at the REC! Feel the music, let loose, and dance the pounds and inches off! No experience is necessary. For more information send an email to rec_center@uas.alaska.edu or call the REC Center staff at 796-6544.

Ultimate Frisbee, 9 p.m., Dimond Park Fieldhouse. Join us at the Dimond Park Fieldhouse for a pick-up game of Ultimate. No experience necessary! Just be prepared to have fun! For more information send an email to rec_center@uas.alaska.edu or call the REC Center staff at 796-6544.

THURSDAY, MAR. 26

Open Gym: Soccer, 7 p.m., Recreation Center. Join your friends or make friends playing soccer at the REC. A fast paced, fun sport. All skill levels welcome! For more information send an email to rec_center@uas.alaska.edu or call the REC Center staff at 796-6544.

Circuit Training, 7 p.m., Recreation Center. Join us for full body conditioning or resistance training using high-intensity aerobics. We'll target strength building and muscular endurance. An exercise "circuit" is one completion of all prescribed exercises in the program. When

one circuit is complete, one begins the first exercise again for the next circuit. For more information send an email to rec_center@uas.alaska.edu or call the REC Center staff at 796-6544.

FRIDAY, MAR. 27

Oratory Competition Deadline, All Day, Native & Rural Student Center. Deadline to register and submit a summary with cited sources of your presentation to the NRSC. Oratory is following Saturday at the REC. For more information send an email to nrsc@uas.alaska.edu or call 796-6454.

Egan Library 25th Anniversary Celebration, 5 p.m., Egan Library. The campus and community are invited to toast the 25th anniversary of the Egan Library. Hors d'oeuvres, music, and memories will be served. For more information send an email to jdbrown@uas.alaska.edu or call 796-6569.

Sound+Motion, 7 p.m., Egan Lecture Hall. "Denali's Howl: the Deadliest Climbing Disaster on America's Wildest Peak." In 1967, twelve young men attempted to climb Alaska's Mount McKinley—known to the locals as Denali—one of the most popular and deadly mountaineering destinations in the world. Only five survived. Journalist Andy Hall, son of the park superintendent at the time, investigated the tragedy in his book, *Denali's Howl*. Sponsored by UAS Alumni and Development Office. Contact Katie K. Bausler for more information at 796-6530 or katie.bausler@uas.alaska.edu.

SATURDAY, MAR. 28

13th Annual Oratory Competition, All Day, Recreation Center. The purpose of this event is to promote our state's rich Alaska Native languages, Traditional Native American Stories, Native American Oratory, and Native American Dramatic Declamation through 5 to 15 minute student oral presentations. For more information send an email to nrsc@uas.alaska.edu or call 796-6454.

MONDAY, MAR. 30

Open Gym: Dodgeball, 7 p.m., Recreation Center. Ready to flash-back to

grade school? Head over to drop-in dodgeball. It's fast, it's fun, and it's at the REC. For more information send an email to rec_center@uas.alaska.edu or call the REC Center staff at 796-6100.

Zumba, 7 p.m., Recreation Center. Party yourself into shape at the REC! Feel the music, let loose, and dance the pounds and inches off! No experience is necessary. For more information send an email to rec_center@uas.alaska.edu or call the REC Center staff at 796-6544.

TUESDAY, MAR. 31

Student Government Spring 2015 Meetings, 8:30 a.m., Glacier View Room. Get Involved! Got questions regarding UAS? Come check out a Student Government Meeting. UAS Student Government, the official student government of the University of Alaska Southeast, is responsible for representing student interests to the college administration and for facilitating the organization of a broad range of student committees that work to address issues and concerns and promote services that enhance students' experience at UAS. A significant responsibility of the UAS Student Government is to initiate and act upon legislation including proposals to appropriate USUAS-JC Funds as well as serving on at least two USUAS-JC standing committees. For more information send an email to jypres@uas.alaska.edu.

WEDNESDAY, APR. 1

Whale Wednesday, All Day, UAS. First Wednesday of every month is Whale Wednesday! Show your UAS spirit and post using the hashtag #UasWhaleWednesday. For more information contact Eric Scott at eric.scott@uas.alaska.edu.

Ultimate Frisbee, 9 p.m., Dimond Park Fieldhouse. Join us at the Dimond Park Fieldhouse for a pick-up game of Ultimate. No experience necessary! Just be prepared to have fun! For more information send an email to rec_center@uas.alaska.edu.

Want to see your event listed in our calendar? Send us all the details about your program and we'll help you get the word out!

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