KRC hums with numerous renovations and improvements

By Janice Maloney High
KRC associate professor of English

Ahead of schedule and going well: That is the latest status update for the paramedic and nursing laboratory renovation in the KRC Goodrich Building. Originally slated for summer completion, the work is now expected to be finished during Spring Break, with students moving in shortly after, according to Orion Construction of Wasilla.

“We will be able to share the simulations area with the EMT students and collaborate with them,” said Janet Gleason, assistant professor of nursing. “We will have more room and be able to use the space as a more realistic setting.”

Relocating the labs from the second floor of the Ward Building opens the Ward space to other uses. It is slated to become the site of a faculty office suite, and bids for the project are currently being accepted. The new area will include 22 faculty offices, an administrative support area, and a conference room.

Assignment of individual faculty offices will be determined by seniority, said Paul Landen, KRC Faculty Forum president. Work on this project begins at the end of the current semester, said Phillip Miller, KPC construction project manager. “The big advantage is that now most faculty will be in one area, and students will no longer have to go on geographic hunts for instructors,” Miller said.

Across campus in the Brockel Building, approvals are in progress for library renovations, which could be completed as early as August, said Miller. Besides replacing the circulation desk, adding signage and lighting, the renovations “will improve the appearance of the library by replacing worn sections of carpet near the entrance, as well as creating a counter for book processing and an enclosed office for the library staff,” said Jane Fuerstenau, KRC associate professor of library sciences.

The second phase of the plan calls for extending the library down the hallway and providing an entrance directly off the lobby. “Private study rooms would be created along the hallway side of the library that could be reserved for group meetings or study,” said Fuerstenau.

These projects, as well as parking lot lighting upgrades, carry with them a $2 million direct construction cost.

At the KBC campus, a project is under way that will convert the heating systems from fuel oil to natural gas, with an expected annual savings of $17,000 in fuel cost. The conversion, said Miller, should be completed by summer.

KRC already booking summer conferences

By Tammie Willis
KRC associate director of Residence Life

The KRC Residence Hall (Kenai Hall) will be busy this summer as word spreads around the state about the conferencing capabilities and wonderful amenities it offers visitors.

In June, art teachers from all over the peninsula will gather at KRC to explore best practices when it comes to teaching the arts to students with disabilities. Also in June, KRC will provide guest housing for up to 40 visitors attending the grand opening of the new Kenaitze Wellness Center.

In July, in collaboration with Brown University, KRC will host students from all over the country as they explore the Alaskan environment, ecology, culture, and issues facing Alaska from a variety of perspectives. With several more conferences in the works, KRC is looking to be a busy place this summer.

With the opening of the Kenai Hall and the Career and Technical Education Center, KRC is able to offer a full range of conference services that includes overnight accommodations in addition to flexible meeting space and high-tech training facilities. The combination of these facilities and the recreational opportunities available on the Kenai Peninsula permits the college to offer unique educational and conference opportunities for people to work and play on the Kenai.

KRC will be working with local individuals and organizations to schedule sight-seeing tours, fishing trips, golf outings and other recreational activities while also providing high-tech training facilities for the gas and oil industries. KRC will also promote local, state and nationwide conferences on regional topics such as ecology, indigenous cultures and marine science as well as a variety of unique summer educational and leadership programs for high school and college students.

The goal of KRC’s summer conference program is to turn any meeting, conference or program into an unforgettable event by combining top-notch facilities with all that the Kenai has to offer.

To find out more about summer conference opportunities, please email Tammie Willis, associate director of residence life, at tdwillis@kpc.alaska.edu or call 262-0275. More information is also available online at http://www.kpcreslife.com/conferencing/
Governor’s UA budget proposes $14.9 million general fund reduction: KPC plans for $416,300 deficit

By Gary J. Turner
KPC director

Based on the governor’s proposed budget, UA will be funded $14.9 million less than requested by the Board of Regents in December. Consequently, UAA projects a $4.6 million shortfall starting in FY15. This is a 4 percent decrease across the UAA system and equates to a $416,300 decrease for KPC.

The KPC Leadership Team met Jan. 28 to discuss how we might handle this reduction. Our goal was to protect and lessen any potential impacts on our current personnel and programs that serve our students and communities. Keep in mind that faculty and staff salary/benefits comprise the vast majority of our operating budget.

We agreed unanimously that we will discontinue current faculty searches for a KRC tenure track biology professor, KRC term math professor, and KRC computer science professor. We will also not fill the term geology position that will be vacant as of June 2014. KBC’s portion of the 4 percent reduction will be derived by reducing that campus’s contingency funds (unallocated permanent revenue) and reallocating some trust funds. KRC will also reduce a portion of KBC’s unallocated permanent revenue.

KPC presently has no vacant positions or searches in progress. The above actions will cover this projected shortfall.

KPC has three other searches in process at this time: AES tenure track process technology professor, KRC term instrumentation professor, and KPC process technology coordinator. We will continue these searches as the demand for these programs continues to be unmet, resulting in maximum overloads on our current faculty in these areas.

We also looked at decreasing travel costs, decreasing professional development funds, and allowing adjunct-taught classes to “make” only if the enrollment is more than nine. We decided at this time, however, not to pursue these options because they would result in insignificant savings; if there are future reductions, we will reassess them.

Although we hope that the legislature can restore some of this reduction during this session, we will not know what the final budget is until the governor releases it in June. Consequently, we felt that it was best to determine a course of action now so the KPC community could continue moving forward.

Summer registration begins soon!

To see what’s available, visit www.kpc.alaska.edu/schedule

Registration Dates
Currently admitted students: Feb. 24
Public registration: March 3

Need more information? Call 1-877-262-0330 or e-mail iyinfo@kpc.alaska.edu

Gary J. Turner, KPC director
Photo provided by KPC Advancement

The KPC Connection editorial team consists of:
-Gary J. Turner, KPC director
-Suzie Kendrick, KPC advancement programs manager
-Clark Fair, KRC adjunct writing instructor
-Janice Maloney High, KRC associate professor of English

Questions about the KPC Connection or how to submit articles for this newspaper can be directed to Suzie Kendrick at wskendrick@kpc.alaska.edu or by calling 262-0320.

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Campus Abbreviations
KPC Kenai Peninsula College
KRC Kenai River Campus
KBC Kachemak Bay Campus
RBS Resurrection Bay Extension Site
AES Anchorage Extension Site
UAA University of Alaska Anchorage

Peninsula Clarion, Kenai, Alaska. www.peninsulaclarion.com
A Day in the Life: Ashley Bell, KRC sophomore

By Janice Maloney High
KRC associate professor of English

There's more than one way to help save lives. KRC sophomore Ashley Bell knows that very well.

Born in Alaska, and having spent most of her life here, she is an experienced Alaska firefighter and Emergency Medical Technician. She is also currently pursuing a degree in psychology.

“My ultimate goal when I graduate is to work with people who have been diagnosed with co-occurring disorders. That is, people who suffer from mental health illness and drug and alcohol addictions,” she said. She volunteers weekly at the Serenity House Treatment Center. “I have seen so many lives destroyed by addiction, and I want to be there to help others seek recovery.”

Bell is also a resident advisor and front-desk assistant at the new KRC Residence Hall. “I love the opportunity I have been given to work with different students from different backgrounds.” Among her goals is to help establish a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT)-Straight alliance group to “provide students and those in the community a safe place where they can meet, hang out, and support each other.”

When not working or attending one of her four classes this semester, Bell can be found hiking and photographing around the area, or snowboarding on the slopes of Aleyeska. “I also play guitar, and even though I can’t sing, I try to anyways,” she added. “To keep a successful balance of work, play and study, Bell says she ensures she has blocks of time scheduled each week for her various activities, responsibilities, and relaxation. An only child, she credits her parents for much of her success. “We talk on an almost daily basis, and they tell me how proud they are of me and what I have been doing in my life so far.”

Tim Jolley Memorial Scholarship: Fitting tribute to a dedicated student

By Suzie Kendrick
KPC advancement programs manager

The unexpected death of KPC student Timothy Scott Jolley was a great loss to the KPC community. His death, just three weeks after the accidental death of KPC student Jonathan Granger, sent shock waves through the college—too much loss in too short a time.

In the face of great sadness and while grieving for their son, Jolley’s parents took solace in a way that indicated their level of appreciation for what the college had meant to their son’s life. They wanted to establish a scholarship in their son’s name that would benefit other students in Jolley’s area of study: process technology.

They expressed how “super happy” Jolley was with his classes and how he had bonded with faculty members during his time on campus. He was very proud of his successes in the KRC Math Lab; his eligibility for induction in Phi Theta Kappa, the honor society for students attending two-year colleges; and raising his GPA. While attending the Kenai River Campus, Jolley earned straight A’s in all of his classes.

Jolley’s parents worked quickly to establish a named, restricted memorial fund so that donations for Tim could be directed toward the new scholarship. The purpose of the scholarship is to provide financial assistance to a deserving KPC student working toward a degree in process technology.

Applicants studying process technology face-to-face at KRC (versus online), living in the new Residence Hall, and participating in the Process Technology Living/Learning Community will be given preference. Recipients will be selected by the KPC Standing Scholarship Selection Committee.

“He loved going to school and living in Alaska,” Jolley’s family said in his celebration of life statement. “His ashes will be sprinkled in the Kenai River in the spring when the ice melts. Tim’s life ended much too soon, and he will be dearly missed.”

For more information about the Tim Jolley Memorial Scholarship, or to set up a new scholarship to benefit KPC students, e-mail ws kendrick@kpc.alaska.edu or call 907-262-0320.

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Grades and successful academic progress: more complicated than one might think

By Bill Howell, KPC student services director

One of the last things students want to see on their transcripts is an “F” or a “D.” Therefore, some students decide to withdraw from courses in which they are not doing well or have stopped attending, opting for “W’s” on their transcripts instead of low grades. As it turns out, this strategy is not always the best choice. To maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress, all students must meet three criteria: they must maintain a cumulative grade point average of 2.0; they must complete two-thirds of the total credit hours they attempt; and they can attempt no more than 150 percent of the total credit hours required for their degree program. Withdrawing from a course may help students maintain their GPA, but that course will still count against them for the other two criteria. Completing two-thirds of attempted credit hours can be especially problematic for new students, who may have completed few courses.

Also, a D can sometimes be harder on financial aid than an F. When a student receives what is known as an “earned” F (meaning the student completed all aspects of the class, rather than stopping out at some point), that student can receive aid to retake the class. However, a student who receives a D has passed the class, so no further aid can be received for that class, even if the student needs a C to satisfy the prerequisites for subsequent subjects. Students who receive an “unearned” F—because they stopped attending the class or failed to submit some required work—are also ineligible to receive aid to retake that class.

It is important for students to carefully evaluate their class load, drop any classes during the 100 percent refund period, if necessary, and try to complete their remaining courses with a B or better. Anything else may hinder their future financial aid eligibility status.

Before withdrawing from any course, students should visit the Financial Aid Office at either campus to gain a clear understanding of the ramifications on their future financial aid. This semester’s deadline to withdraw from a course is April 11.

KPC and Cook Inlet Tribal Council to partner with Brown University on summer program

By Dave Atcheson
KRC evening and environmental program coordinator

Brown University’s highly touted Environmental Leadership Lab attracts highly motivated high school students from around the country and draws from a variety of disciplines, including biology, anthropology, geology, and economics.

The university currently runs its Brown Environmental Leadership Labs, or BELL programs, in Costa Rica, Hawaii, Louisiana, and at its home campus in Rhode Island. These intensive two-week courses are designed to introduce students to the field of Environmental Science and impart to them the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to create positive change in their communities and on the planet.

Because of its location, still-intact ecosystems, and abundant natural resources, BELL officials must have deemed it only natural to include Alaska in their plans. Contact was originally made between Brown and Gloria O’Neill, CEO of Cook Inlet Tribal Council and current UA regent. O’Neill’s daughter had attended a BELL program the previous summer and O’Neill, impressed with the course, connected Brown with KPC. It wasn’t long before KPC Director Gary J. Turner was on board and the Alaskan course was on its way to becoming a reality.

This summer, students from across the country and around the globe join a select number of in-state students for the state’s first BELL program. Their two-week Alaskan odyssey will begin at UAA with an introduction to state history and an overview of some of the issues facing Alaskan Natives attempting to balance culture and environmental preservation with economic growth. Later they will travel to the Kenai Peninsula, staying at KRC and across Kachemak Bay at the Center for Alaskan Coastal Studies, and visiting KBC. Before returning to Anchorage, students will cross Prince William Sound by ferry, spending several days in Valdez at Prince William Sound Community College.

Throughout the program they will attend classes led by experts in their fields. They will also observe wildlife, fisheries, explore remote beaches and tide pools, tour archaeological sites, meet with oil industry representatives, and speak with local elders and Alaska Native leaders.

Students will also have the opportunity to develop their leadership abilities by participating in workshops focused on public speaking, interpersonal communication, and group problem solving. By the end of the program students will create action plans indicating how they will further share, and apply their knowledge when they return to their home communities.

Alaskan high school students interested in the program should visit the BELL Alaska web site at: http://brown.edu/ce/pre-college/bell/alaska/
Word on Campus:
“Would you like to see KPC offer more online or more face-to-face classes, and why?”
Compiled by KPC advancement department

Angel Willard, KBC, bachelor of natural sciences
“Face-to-face, because it is easier for me to do face-to-face. However, specifically for the sciences doing lecture online would be okay, but I would have to have some form of face-to-face lab.”

Kristen Bush, AES, associate of applied science occupational safety and health
“KPC should offer more online classes in the sciences, which typically have long waiting lists. Further, KPC should definitely add summer OSH classes (online or face-to-face). For those who work or have kids in school, the ability to take summer classes can assist in completing the degree in two years.”

Keith Kalke, KBC, associate of applied science industrial process instrumentation
“Face-to-face. Human interactions explain a lot more than computer.”

Nita Dreyer, KRC, bachelor of arts
“KPC should offer more online classes so that we don’t have to drive to class in Anchorage when the weather is terrible!”

Diana Rauh, KBC, bachelor of social work
“Face-to-face classes, because if you need help or have questions, the college campus is there to help, and it’s better than trying to find the solution online where it might not always be accurate and time efficient.”

Dawson Herrick, KRC, certificate in welding technology
“I prefer face-to-face classes. I’m a hands-on person, and it’s much easier for me to work with something that is right in front of me as opposed to on a screen.”

Dean Henderson, AES, associate of applied science process technology
“The online courses that KPC offers have worked out well. They have been a lifesaver. I have been able to complete a degree while working a rotation shift on the North Slope.”

Rachel Beckmann, KRC, associate of art
“I prefer face-to-face classes because I feel like I can connect with the teacher better and it leaves less room for technology problems.”

By Tony Lewis and Clark Fair
KPC history book authors

Although Mary Epperson never enrolled as a student at KBC and never taught a class or earned a paycheck there, she had an impact. For more than three decades the Homer piano teacher devoted her life to building a “real” college in her hometown so that others could benefit from higher education.

Epperson’s relationship with the college dates back to the early 1980s, when the fledgling Homer campus operated out of a donated 1,800-square-foot building on the grounds of a local hotel. Despite the school’s humble home, the soft-spoken Epperson harbored big dreams for the college, and she never wavered in her support. She joined the school’s advisory board in 1983 and served for 28 years, frequently testifying to the Board of Regents, conversing with university presidents, lobbying legislators, and meeting with city leaders. She was known as a prolific letter writer, penning messages whenever she thought it might help KBC.

“I took every opportunity to promote (the college) to anybody who was of power,” she said. “When I see people who are striving for something, it’s just a natural thing for me to help.”

One of Epperson’s biggest impacts on KBC occurred in 1986 when she persuaded Carol Swartz to apply for the campus director position. After Swartz was hired, the two worked in lockstep for the next 25 years as the campus grew. While Swartz became the face of the college, Epperson supported her friend behind the scenes. In turn, Swartz looked to Epperson for inspiration.

“You were steadfast and you were tenacious,” Swartz told Epperson in 2013 as they recounted their years together. “I remember that’s what you were teaching me: to stand up for the community and what the community wants.”

Epperson, who retired from the advisory board in 2011 at the age of 89, influenced the community beyond her work at KBC. She received the Governor’s Award for Arts in 1988, and was named the City of Homer’s “Citizen of the Year” in 2004. In 2011 the university presented Epperson with a Meritorious Service Award for her dedication to KBC and the southern peninsula.

“She has been a giant when it comes to making the needs of KBC known,” Swartz said at the awards ceremony. “Her ideas and vision of what KBC would be have made the campus what it is today and what it will become in the future.”
KPC introduces new staff and faculty members
Compiled by Clark Fair
KPC adjunct writing instructor

Kathi Overpeck
KRC financial aid clerk

1. What are your duties?
I assist students with all things financial aid. I really enjoy helping students with the process of financial aid. They usually arrive in Financial Aid confused, scared, or frustrated. I connect them with federal and agency resources, and scholarship opportunities. Along with assisting the students with filling out necessary paperwork, I use this situation to help them understand the process and show them how to monitor their financial aid on UA Online.

2. What was your last position? Where?
I was a worship pastor at Abundant Life Assembly of God Church in Sterling.

3. Where did you go to school?
I have attended Christ for the Nations Institute of Biblical Studies New York, Assembly of God Alaska School of Ministry, Youth with a Mission Philippines, and Kenai Peninsula College.

4. What brought you to Alaska?
My dad's dream. He always wanted to live here, and my whole life he talked about Alaska like it was the "Promised Land." During second grade in Noti, Ore., I marched into the school secretary's office and proudly announced, "I am moving to Alaska!" That didn't happen until 1982. (Dad arrived in 2004 and was buried in Cooper Landing five years ago.) In the back of my mind, I had a desire to broaden my education experience, so I applied to be a full-time student at KPC. I worked as a student employee in Student Services for a couple years, and I loved it so much that I applied for my current position. Now I work 40 hours per week and take 10 credits.

5. What are your long-term goals at KPC?
I will complete an Associate of Arts in May 2014, and I will work toward bachelor's degree in Liberal Studies and a bachelor of arts. I plan to eventually pursue a master's, and who knows what will follow? I will be a life-long learner.

John Michael Pollock
KPC Veteran Services coordinator

1. What are your duties?
I assist veteran students with Veterans Administration educational benefits, and, based on student demand, I work to expand veterans-related offerings at KPC to meet student needs.

2. What was your last position? Where?
My last position was as a member of the Senior Executive Service with the federal government. I was the Country Lead in Afghanistan for the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency. Prior to that, I served in the Marine Corps for 25 years and retired as a colonel.

3. Where did you go to school?
I attended undergraduate school at Virginia Military Institute. I also have advanced degrees from the Army War College and Marine Corps Command and Staff College.

4. What brought you to Alaska?
My wife had lived here earlier in her life and wanted to move back.

5. What are your long-term goals at KPC?
I want to build a comprehensive veteran's services program that helps our veteran students smoothly transition back to civilian life.

Bonnie Rose
KBC IS net technician 7

1. What are your duties?
I am responsible for installing, maintaining, and troubleshooting all IT-related systems, such as networks, computer workstations, and instructional technology, on the Homer campus. I am also a lead for the KBC IT team in assisting faculty and staff with ongoing IT issues and operation.

2. What was your last position? Where?
I was the head projectionist/IT support for Digital Movies Homer Theatre in Homer.

3. Where did you go to school?
I attended Fullerton College in Fullerton, Calif.

4. What brought you to Alaska?
Family brought me here. My stepson and his wife and their children live in Anchor Point. After trying to convince them to move to Colorado, we ended up moving to Alaska to be close to the family.

5. What are your long-term goals at KPC?
Since I am basically a new employee, I would like to continue making KBC technologically strong by using my 30 years' experience as both an engineer for Hughes Aircraft Company and my IT experience from Hughes, Capital Group, MindSpring Mental Health, and Colorado Community Colleges. I would like to see KBC and KRC merge under Mark Jensen's leadership and become a strong force under the UAA umbrella. Technology is constantly changing and with it comes the lack of training for our students and faculty. As an IT, I would like to see us more involved in helping make sure that KPC IT is able to spend the time helping faculty and students better understand the technology they have at their fingertips and how to best utilize that technology.
### Adjunct Spotlight

Compiled by Clark Fair
KRC adjunct writing instructor

#### Sarah Jones-Foster

I have been teaching 12 semesters.
I am teaching Biology 100 and Biology 102.

1. Why do you teach as an adjunct?
Being able to share my love of learning and amazement at the world around us is what drives me to teach as an adjunct. I absolutely love being able to share my interests in biology with all my wonderful students!

2. What skills and experiences do you bring to the classroom?
As I was completing my M.S. in Biology, I had the opportunity to research the diets of juvenile Chinook salmon in the Kenai River. This experience gave me an appreciation for this amazing resource and how important it is that we successfully manage it for future generations. By teaching 100-level biology courses, I have a great opportunity to share a wide variety of topics with my students - many of whom are new to science – and promote the idea that we all need to be good stewards of the natural world around us.

3. What is the most challenging aspect of being a part-time faculty member?
It is a challenge to find a balance between student and family needs. As a mom of three young children, I often must do late-night grading and answer student emails on the go. But it always seems to work out wonderfully each semester, and I wouldn’t have it any other way.

#### Jack Castimore

I have been involved with KPC since the 1980s when we started teaching Computers in the Classroom at Kenai Central High School, which had a full lab of computers. Later, the Soldotna college campus received computers.

I am teaching web-based Fundamentals of Supervision and Personal Selling at KBC.

1. Why do you teach as an adjunct?
I have enjoyed working with older students during evening and weekend classes and providing many short workshops on computer application software to those who work and need to upgrade their skills. From time to time, I have filled in for the regular business staff who moved to other locations, while KPC sought new, full-time instructors.

2. What skills and experiences do you bring to the classroom?
I began with computer software a long time ago, with mainframe computers and before small PC’s and today’s application software. Before moving to this area, I was employed in industry with the Ford Motor Company, Southwest Forest Industries, the Carnegie and Ford Foundations, to mention a few. I have and can bring real-life business experiences into the classroom. Back in 1990s, the IBM Corporation awarded me the Teacher of the Year award for my innovative involvement in updating the latest technology to the local schools.

3. What is the most challenging aspect of being a part-time faculty member?
The continuous adaptation to changing technologies and software is the biggest challenge. Because the new web-based courses are very different from the traditional face-to-face classes, some adjusting and adaptation is required. But I enjoy being a part of the KRC/KBC adjunct staff, and I hope they will continue to use my talents. I like to say it keeps my brain active and alert.

#### Evangelina Canedo-Escarcega

I have been teaching for almost 30 semesters.
I teach Spanish.

1. Why do you teach as an adjunct?
I’m passionate about my culture and I like opening others up to what I know best in life. Teaching my native language is a way to keep alive my identity and upbringing. Sharing the language and culture to students is very gratifying, and I believe that learning a new language can melt barriers. The world is never the same again when anyone is exposed to a new way of thinking, new perspectives and new solutions to life. I feel that as a foreign language instructor, I’m like an ambassador, a representative of the Hispanic world who brings a personal perspective from one culture to another.

2. What skills and experiences do you bring to the classroom?
I bring to the classroom not just knowledge and mastery of the language, but my personal and cultural experiences from growing up in a Hispanic world. I understand and feel for my native culture so I share my experiences and empathy with them. I also bring to the classroom a very personal and relaxed attitude that helps students feel safe, engaged and comfortable trying out a new language.

3. What is the most challenging aspect of being a part-time faculty member?
One of the truly challenging aspects of the job is showing students the benefit of learning Spanish (or any new language). Another challenge is trying to offer more advanced classes for those students who want to continue their Spanish education, such as a conversation course, online courses for those who can’t take face-to-face classes, and other courses that would enhance their communication or cultural understanding.

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**Spring semester offers late-starting courses; summer semester registration approaching**

By Hannah Parker
Advancement/Residence Life assistant

Although KPC’s spring 2014 semester is fully under way, many people don’t realize that plenty of KPC courses are still available this spring. In fact, many interesting classes start at various times throughout the semester.

KRC’s popular Kenai River Guide Academy and Beginning Fly Fishing course both begin in March. The Guide Academy, spans one week (March 10-14) and trains Kenai River fishing guides in various regulatory, safety and habitat subjects. An April guide academy class is offered, but has no seats available. Kenai River fishing guides are required by the state to successfully pass this course before they can guide on the Kenai.

CED A133 Beginning Fly Fishing (March 20-May 5) is a one-credit interactive class for aspiring anglers, introducing the basics of fly fishing, including selection of equipment and techniques geared toward local lakes and streams.

KBC also offers some enriching late-starting elective courses, including BIOL A124 Pinnipeds, and OSE AC019 Garden Design and Creation. Pinnipeds (March 18-April 15) explores characteristics of animals, plants, fungi and protists of Alaska in a classroom setting, with additional hiking and camping field trips (as determined by the instructor). Get a taste of summer with Garden Design and Creation (April 12-26), which will meet on Saturdays and cover topics such as horticulture, landscape design and greenhouse management.

Students can register for late-starting courses until their respective start dates.

Registration also opens soon for KPC’s 2014 summer semester, a good opportunity for local students or college students who are coming home for the summer to complete additional GERs in a short period of time. Several online courses allow students to continue their academic momentum while having the flexibility to complete coursework on their own schedule.

More than 60 courses will be offered this summer in a variety of subjects, including biology, mathematics and communication. Courses are split into one 10-week and two five-week sessions, allowing students to complete several required courses in just one summer.

Summer semester registration opens for returning, admitted students on Feb. 24 and for the public on March 5. Classes kick off on May 19. View course details on KPC’s online searchable schedule, which can be found at www.kpc.alaska.edu/schedule.

Register for spring and summer courses via UAOnline (uaonline.alaska.edu) or contact KRC Student Services at 262-0330 or KBC Student Services at 235-7743.
Travelogue:

Dillingham is beautiful; not without challenges

By Clark Fair
KRC adjunct writing instructor

The last time that I simultaneously traveled someplace for the first time and began living there was in the fall of 1977 when I flew into Missoula to become a freshman at the University of Montana.

Thirty-six years later, I have repeated the process.

This time, however, the move has taken me to Dillingham, a Southwest Alaska city of nearly 2,500 residents living where the Wood and Nushagak rivers meet to form the headwaters of Nushagak Bay, a western section of salmon-rich Bristol Bay.

I flew into Dillingham to join my girlfriend, Yvonne, who now works as a flight service specialist for the Federal Aviation Administration at the Dillingham Airport.

As my move to Missoula did all those years ago, my move to Dillingham has provided me ample opportunities to explore an area I knew almost nothing about. It has also, by extension, provided me ample frustrations.

Dillingham is surrounded by mountains and water—including top-flight trout-fishing lakes and streams, some of the richest salmon habitat in the world, the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge, and the largest state park (Wood-Tikchik) in the nation. But Dillingham also has a meager road system; consequently, unless one has access to off-road power toys, access to these amazing places can be limited, difficult and expensive.

The farthest that one can travel by road here without reversing course is about 25 miles—from the radio-navigation station at the southern end of Kanakanak Road to a sprawling lake at the northern terminus of Aleknagik Lake Road—and most of the mountains, most of those productive lakes and streams, lie beyond the ends of these roads.

Here, a single access point—the unmaintained Snake Lake Road—leads to four trails that venture uphill—to Warehouse Mountain, Snake Mountain, China Cap and Nunavaugaluk Overlook. The rest of the public trailheads lie across large lakes or streams or vast stretches of boggy tundra.

Most Dillingham residents have remedied their access woes with private airplanes, boats, snowmachines and four-wheelers. Lacking all of these modes of transportation, however, Yvonne and I have refused to deter our explorations. We have used snowshoes, cross-country skis, inflatable kayaks, and mostly our own feet to go beyond the ends of the roads. We have bush-whacked across tundra, along stream courses, and up wooded ridgelines to reach unnamed high points. And we've returned windblown, soggy and scratched, yet satisfied.

In the City of Dillingham itself, unlike in the outlying areas, everything is close and easy to navigate. In fact, it is possible to drive from one end of town to the other and stop at no more than three intersections—and at those only briefly. There are no stop lights here. There are also no semis. No motor homes. No dangerous left turns. No traffic jams. No speed limits higher than 45 mph.

In fact, vehicles in Dillingham are generally less important than watercraft.

Also, since it is so difficult and expensive to get them here—we spent about $3,000 to have Yvonne's little Toyota transported by barge—vehicles rarely leave once they arrive. In fact, I think it is fair to say that Dillingham, like many remote Alaska communities, is a place where cars and trucks come to die.

The cost of sending old junkers to a salvage yard on the road system is prohibitive. Consequently, many backyards and driveways here contain rusting, battered hulks, often tucked in behind or alongside the ubiquitous boats and solid-steel shipping containers.

The Dillingham area is strikingly beautiful, but the “rules of access” here keep that beauty somewhat distant for all but the most persistent or mechanically well-endowed.