

EDITORIAL & OPINION

The Whalesong

The student voice
of UAS

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The University of Alaska Southeast student newspaper, *The Whalesong*, is a free bi-monthly publication with a circulation of 1000 copies per issue. The Whalesong's primary audience includes students, faculty, staff, and community members.

The Whalesong will strive to inform and entertain its readers, analyze and provide commentary on the news, and serve as a public forum for the free exchange of ideas.

The staff of *The Whalesong* values freedom of expression and encourages reader response. *The Whalesong* editorial staff assumes no responsibility for the content of material. The views and opinions contained in this paper in no way represent the University of Alaska, and reflect only those of the author(s).

Change is everywhere

By Vita Wilson
Whalesong Editor

Change, so they say, is the only constant. Even those who resist change still must face it in some way, usually to their detriment. I say that change often comes when you least expect it, and when you most need it.

Take for example, my life. No, just kidding! Take, for example, the past month. Spring semester began, I was taking a full load of classes that I wasn't terribly excited about, wondering how could I get out of Juneau for a bit this spring, and I was flat broke and working my butt off to put this newspaper out for your enjoyment. In a matter of a few days, I had not one, but *two* jobs, which allow me to attend school just part-time. I had the sudden opportunity to travel to California for a week to help out a close friend, and the free airfare, room and board sure is nice. I was given the chance to be Whalesong editor and work with another awesome all-female production staff. Change, the only thing one can count on, rescued me again. I'm still flat broke, but that, I'm almost certain, will change soon!



I should take this opportunity to introduce the spring 2003 Whalesong staff, though we'll keep you waiting for a staff photo. You all saw Michael Johnson standing in front of the Taj Mahal in the last issue. He's a wonderful satirist, as proven by his article on this page. Veteran staff writers Montgomery Mahaffey, Benjamin Nestler and Sean Smith (also one of our new student senators; see page 6) bring their expertise to our group. Joshua Edward will keep you up-to-date on the latest music, entertainment and cultural events going on around Juneau, and Evelyn Cushing,

originally a staff writer, has joined our staff as a very competent production manager. Virginie Duverger remains the most persuasive ad manager the Whalesong has ever seen. Rounding out our group are regular contributors Kaci Hamilton and Jenni Hotch-Hill, among others.

Oh, boy! Oh, wow! Ai yai yai! My two-year-old daughter would say. "Ai yai yai indeed." It's a lot of changes to deal with over just a couple weeks, but remember, change is growth. And growth, for the most part, is good. It's how we adapt to circumstances. Stand in the mud with your Xtra Tuffs on too long, and a nasty mold is likely to develop on your feet. It's time to make a change or two!

Be Different: Buy Gap

By Michael Johnson
Whalesong Staff

When was the last time your philosophy class was torrentially tormented? How often do you break fresh trail through the snowy-wet woods just to make it to school? Or are faced with the occasional flashflood that submerges the Soboleff Building?

At this point, oh curious reader, I regret to inform you that if you answered 'yes' to any of my questions above, I insist that you read no further. In fact, if you think I just asked any 'yes' or 'no' questions at all, I recommend you discard this article and wade your way to a student counselor. Please.

Now that I have eliminated a good 86 percent of my audience, I must turn to the other 53 percent of you whom have no business wearing what is a stylistic sin: the XTRA TUF.

These rubber renegades are running the footwear fashion world at UAS, and with good reason: there's not a shoe that stands to oppose them.

I know reader, I know, I can hear you already, "But my foppish footwear is functional!" This I cannot deny. In all fairness, these belligerently brawny boots kick some serious commercial fishing tail. They're perfect for a non-maintained trail trek, too. But while your creative writing teacher may refer to your class as a stormy sea of students, one must ponder the possibility of metaphor before reaching for raingear.

What the hell does XTRA TUF stand for anyways, written in those suggestively acronymic block letters? Xenophobic Treehuggers Rally Against Tennies Under Foot?

Surely that must be it, because that is what's happened here in Juneau, where the term 'tennis shoes' only leads people to bring to mind these water-waders, tastefully colored in the two major forms of human excrement.

Bewildered, I set about questioning some of my TUF peers who choose to don such outlandish apparel. All the answers were nearly identical, "Because I don't care about fashion, I (and everyone else) am amazingly unique" blah, blah, blah... something like that.

Oh, my poor misled Juneauites, burning to breathe free, I have bad news for your soul: that air you inhale smells just like the sole of your neighbor. What's more, that air is likely unhealthily moldy and dank, as foot fungus cases run rampant in these impermeable eyesores. Impermeable, indeed. Though no *outside* water can penetrate these intolerant boots, no *inside* water, such as sweat, is allowed to escape either.

I must concede that such an outlandish item of apparel is difficult to label as 'trendy.' But I have no XTRA TUFs, and my feet somehow manage to stay dry while I go about my daily life. And comfort? Am I to believe that an eight pound pair of rubber galoshes is more comfortable my New Balances?

Students and staff, you leave me no choice: there is a secret superficial society afoot at UAS, where the largest trend seems to be centered round trying to avoid trends. Everyone here loathes fads, and it is this very fact that binds us.

My advice to the students at UAS is that, if you really want to be unique, if you truly wish to convey that you don't care what people think, log on to Gap.com and buy yourself a wardrobe that no one else here has.



Taking fashion a bit too far?!

Letters to the Editor

The Whalesong gladly accepts letters to the editor. Letters may not exceed 300 words, and may be edited for length, clarity, and grammar. Letters must be signed and include a means of contact for verification. Send your letters to 11120 Glacier Highway, Juneau, AK 99801, whalesong@uas.alaska.edu, by fax to (907) 465-6399, or bring them to Room 102, Mourant Bldg.