Klem hopes to spread awareness about arts

By Beth Harig

Staff Writer

"The Taming of the Shrew" is Alan Klem's current project, but Creighton's performing arts instructor has several future plans.

Klem said he would like to see more awareness among the student body of the work done at the Performing Arts Center.

"I've seen Creighton put on some fine performances and we feel our work is comparable to larger colleges, with larger theater departments," Klem said.

"Extra effort"

"Since the center is off campus, people need to make an extra effort to get over here. When they do, they'll see the fine entertainment Creighton has to offer."

Klem said he'd like to make the performing arts one of the top entertainment activities on campus. It's current offering, "The Taming of the Shrew," ends this weekend with performances tonight and Saturday at 8 and Sunday afternoon at 2:30.

Klem would also like to see more students get involved in performing in Creighton's plays.

"You don't have to be a theater student," he said. "It requires discipline and time, but it's a lot of fun. With interest, one can become involved."

Speech, drama

Klem majored in speech and drama at North Texas State and received his M.F.A. from Texas Christian in 1974. He worked at the amusement park Six Flags Over Texas in their live performances.

After working on his PhD at Indiana University for a year, Klem decided to take a break and try professional theater.

He worked at Casa Managna, one of the largest professional regional theater companies in the country. Klem taught theater and acted in musical comedy with performers like Nanette Fabray, George Maharris and Joanne Woorley.

Artistic director

During his last year there, Klem founded Shakespeare-in-the-Park of Fort Worth, Texas, and was its artistic director for three years.

In 1980, Klem was offered a position at Creighton as visiting professor of theater. He taught for one semester and directed "Two Gentlemen of Verona — the Rock Musical."

Klem then went to Colorado and was general manager of a turn-of-the-century Victorian hotel in Cripple Creek. The hotel also had a restaurant and dinner theater that specialized in classical melodrama.

In 1984, Klem went back to school at the University of Colorado to continue working on his PhD. He was offered a position at Creighton when Bill Hudson took a leave of absence.