



# The Eastlake News

Winter 2021/2022

## Birding in Eastlake

*By Dave Galvin, Pages 4-5*

Dave Galvin's birding column is back with a guide for winter feeding, feeder cleaning and a hummingbird PSA.

## Eclectic Eastlake: The Moderns

*By Judy Smith, Pages 8-11*

An exploration of the neighborhood's Northwest modern architecture.

## 1,000 Stories at Mort's Cabin

*By: Annie Gustafson, Pages 12-15*

A spotlight on the art and community Darold Anderson has cultivated at Mort's Cabin.

## Eastlake Food Drive

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## Entrepreneuring in Eastlake

*By Marilyn Michael, Pages 6-7*

## Eastlake Future's Fund

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## Learn How to Get Involved in the Neighborhood!

*See the back page!*

There are many opportunities available to get involved in the local community through volunteering, representing local organizations and Eastlake Community Council (ECC) membership.



*Cover: Gesse on Lake Union in the snow. Photo courtesy of Angela Shier.*

**Eastlake Community Council**  
117 E. Louisa Street, #1  
Seattle, WA 98102-3278

website: [www.eastlakeseattle.org](http://www.eastlakeseattle.org)  
email: [info@eastlakeseattle.org](mailto:info@eastlakeseattle.org)

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## Eastlake Community Council President's Letter

Two of the things that make living and working in Eastlake so appealing is our lake front and green space. Most

of us can walk to the lake front or along a tree-lined street and sometimes take it for granted.

While you are taking that walk, our vibrant retail area also lets you pick up anything from a taco to a fly fishing lure.

The pandemic certainly put us in touch with our homes and neighborhoods. Working from home or simply staying safe meant that much of our interaction with the outside world was done in our neighborhood. Our tree-lined streets, parks and lake front made the experience richer not to mention cooler during our unprecedented June heat wave.

We are a neighborhood that likes things a bit imperfect, not too manicured or over designed. Perhaps the imperfect provides a buffer to the fact

that we are less than a mile from the heart of a growing city. Or a tribute to a much earlier time in Eastlake history when the neighborhood had a different atmosphere? Whatever it is, it is Eastlake.

The ECC board has been working on projects for 2022 and I am sure that keeping our parks, trees and lake front healthy will be part of those plans.

Each of us has an opportunity to contribute to the environment of Eastlake. Planting a tree, cleaning up a park, adding plants and trees to curb space, tending to existing trees and plants, adding a pot with plants on a balcony or front step. It can be a small or large effort. Each effort is appreciated by everyone in the community.

If you have ideas that could enhance the environment of Eastlake, we would like to hear them. In the meantime, stay well and enjoy being part of the Eastlake community.

The Eastlake News is a quarterly publication of the Eastlake Community Council. We welcome comments, articles or images for possible publication; please include a contact phone number. Articles may be edited for length and clarity. Articles in the newsletter represent the view of the author and not necessarily the ECC. Please send submissions to [info@eastlakeseattle.org](mailto:info@eastlakeseattle.org) or by U.S. mail to the return address on the back of this newsletter. For advertising contact Detra Segar at [advertising@eastlakeseattle.org](mailto:advertising@eastlakeseattle.org).

The deadline for ads and submissions is: March 10 for the spring issue. Publication schedule is as follows:

Spring - March, April, May  
Summer - June, July, August  
Fall - September, October, November  
Winter - December, January, February

Masthead artwork sketch by Victor Steinbrueck. Other artwork sketches by Karen Berry.



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# Please Join Your Neighbors and Put Something in the Barrel!

The Eastlake Community Council is again sponsoring a Food Drive for the University District Food Bank.

Collection barrels are available at:

- Eastlake Coffee Cafe**, 2245 Eastlake Ave E.
  - Otter Bar and Burger**, 2379 Eastlake Ave E.
  - Pete's Market**, 58 E. Lynn St. will be collecting food all year.
- After Christmas:  
**Lake Union Mail**, 117 E. Louisa St.

Needed food items include: canned fruit; chicken, tuna, and salmon; soups and stews; peanut or other nut butters; shelf stable milk and alternatives; cereal; cooking oil; and baby formula.

Thanks for helping your neighbors!

## Eastlake Fund

The Eastlake Community Council Board invites you to join them in making a donation to ECC. Our Board members have recently made pledges and contributions totaling over \$3,200 to support the Council's work.

Over the past two years, our neighbors have contributed over \$4,500 to support the Council's efforts to build a sense of community, engage with City officials, and support our local businesses. In addition, several organizations have supported our Movie Night in Rogers Playground.

As the pandemic wanes, we want to offer more activities and events. The Board welcomes your suggestions at: [info@eastlakeseattle.org](mailto:info@eastlakeseattle.org).

Please join us in helping fund this important neighborhood work with your donation at: <https://www.eastlakeseattle.org/join-donate-volunteer>.




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## Write for The Eastlake News!

Have a story or interest that you'd like to write about? Take photos? Create art? Send your work to us at: [info@eastlakeseattle.org](mailto:info@eastlakeseattle.org)

Eastlake Community Council membership is open to all who live, work, or own property in Eastlake.

## GET INVOLVED:

See the back page to find ways to get involved in the Eastlake neighborhood through volunteer opportunities, joining committees, helping at events and of course, donations. To volunteer and/or become a member of the Eastlake Community Council, please fill in & mail the form to the right, OR join online at: <http://eastlakeseattle.org>.

For questions: [info@eastlakeseattle.org](mailto:info@eastlakeseattle.org)

### Sign Up & Join via Mail

We invite you to check off one or more interest(s) below & complete the the form to the right.

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- Newsletter content/production
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## Birding in Eastlake Winter Feeding

*By Dave Galvin*

Dark and stormy nights. It's winter in the 'hood: cold, wet and, yes, dark. But usually not freezing, which is thus a great benefit to our local birds. Those on the water enjoy our unfrozen lake and bays, and those on land can at least find seeds or spider eggs without having to dig through snow.

Many people have asked: "to feed or not to feed?" My answer, helped by expert advice from Seattle and National Audubon Societies, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, as well as the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), is that it is O.K. to put out bird feeders, just do so intentionally and with some regular maintenance. Our birds don't need local feeders. In our climate, they can find food, the one exception is the Anna's Hummingbird, which has moved north from California because of sugar feeders. If you feed hummers, you need to keep it up throughout the winter.

Ducks and geese do NOT need bread. In fact, feeding them bread is not healthy for these birds. They do fine finding aquatic vegetables and surface grass for their vegetarian diets.

Birds certainly take advantage of easy food sources, such as seeds, suet, peanuts and fruit, as well as sugar water for the hummers, that humans put out. It is a great joy to see them up close when they come to a local feeder. So go ahead, there is no harm to them except when unclean feeders promote diseases. We had a spate last winter of Salmonella in wintering finches, especially Pine Siskins, such that WDFW asked ALL bird feeders to be shut down over the winter and early spring 2021. We have an ongoing crisis with unclean hummingbird feeders causing a lethal fungus to our resident Anna's Hummingbirds.

If you choose to put out food for birds, here are a few guidelines.

1) Don't use a cheap, generic seed mix from the grocery store; it tends to contain stuff that the birds don't prefer,



which bulks up the sale price but results in a mess below the feeder conducive to rats as well as diseases. Instead, buy high quality local seeds and mixes. I highly recommend Seattle Audubon's selections (at its Nature Shop in Wedgwood, with curbside pickup available, go to: www.Seattle-Audubon-nature-shop.shoplightspeed.com) they vet their suppliers and only provide top quality seeds, suet or mixtures.

2) Use sunflower or thistle seeds if you want to attract Chickadees, House Finches and our state bird, American Goldfinches; whole peanuts for Steller's Jays; suet for Downey Woodpeckers, Red-breasted Nuthatches and Chickadees; fruit slices for Robins. Some birds, such as Dark-eyed Juncos and Song Sparrows, prefer to feed on or near the ground, so some spill-over of a mixed seed will be helpful to them, but be careful to avoid attracting rodents and to not let spill-over get too thick so as to promote disease.

3) Cleaning feeders between fillings is always a good idea. Clean them with soap-and-water regularly and twice-a-year with a 10% bleach mix that will knock down potential diseases.

Eastlake winter is a time to enjoy feeder birds; local mixed flocks of chickadees, kinglets, etc., finding spider eggs and seeds from bushes throughout the neighborhood; wintering robins and maybe a few Varied Thrushes among them; and wintering waterfowl. Many water birds who nest farther north or in the mountains enjoy our ice-free waters to eat fish or aquatic veggies. Enjoy seeing Common Mergansers, Buffleheads, Ring-necked Ducks, Scaups, American Coots and Double-crested Cormorants, as well as Great Blue Herons, on or near the water throughout the winter.

**DO NOT PUT OUT HUMMINGBIRD FEEDERS IF YOU CANNOT COMMIT TO WEEKLY CLEANING.**

We need to keep sugar-water feeders clean for our local hummingbirds. Do not feed hummingbirds unless you can commit to cleaning the feeders weekly throughout the winter, more often (every 3 days) in summer heat. Fungus develops quickly in the sugar-water. One outward sign of a diseased hummer is a tongue sticking out, as shown in the attached photo from Eastlake. This indicates a fungal disease called "swollen-tongue" which is lethal. You need to thoroughly clean your sugar-water feeders every week on a schedule, at least with soap-and-water, preferably with bleach, to make sure you are not promoting diseases common to these lovely flying jewels, and to keep the feeders re-charged every week with a 4:1 water:white sugar mixture (do not use honey or brown or organic sugar). Put "hummer feeder cleaning" on your weekly list! If it is going to freeze over-night, bring the hummingbird feeder inside, and set your alarm to put it out again before first light where it will be so appreciated after a cold winter's night in thin feathers.



Keep me posted of your observations and questions, at galvind53@gmail.com. Thanks for your continued interest.

Photos courtesy of Henry Draper Jr. Page 4:Female House Finch & Page 5: Hummingbird at feeder (top right), Male House Finch (bottom right).

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## Entrepreneurship in Eastlake

By Marilyn Michael

People who choose to develop and run small businesses have been on the minds of many of us given the challenges they've faced in these trying times. My husband and I left a suburban home to live on a boat thirty years ago. Our lifestyle change brought us in touch with a special community of like-minded entrepreneurs in this unique corner of Seattle. We taught classes in a method of psychotherapy we'd developed and Eastlake was the perfect location. We kept an office in the Aries Building, a haven of small businesses and entrepreneurial spirit and rented the facilities of the Pima Medical Institute (now gone) for teaching.

Just like living in a smaller dwelling that floats isn't for everyone, neither is running your own small business. Not all can handle not knowing from month to month what money may come in; having that Trumanesque sign on your desk, virtual or not, The Buck Stops Here, or having to figure out by yourself how to navigate and evolve with the changing times as did any small business moving from the '80s to the '90s into the computer age.

Successful entrepreneurs are often referred to as the backbone of a community. In my beginnings in Eastlake, I saw that. I was a daily regular at, what I dubbed, Jules and Kevin's Corner. I picked up my mail at Jules James' Lake Union Mail and did a ton of copying at Kevin Upton's G & H Printing. I observed them both as quintessential entrepreneurs. From the beginning I could count on them and they both went out of their way to help me. They were interesting to talk to and seemed to genuinely enjoy our conversations. Both had their eyes on the community's goings-on and needs.

I had married a man with an entrepreneurial mindset and had observed first-hand numerous factors that shaped a person's life in that direction. To thrive in the world of the entrepreneur, it clearly took a certain type of person.

When I asked Kevin what drove him most, he responded quickly with a laugh, "Fear," but added maybe a more relevant motivation, "I don't like disappointing people. Other printers work 9 to 5 and won't go out of their way for customers." It wasn't unusual for Kevin to show up at 5am to make sure a job was finished on time.

When the question of what drove him most was posed to Jules, he was quick to reply, "Being a community shopkeeper". He didn't see his business as working for himself but, instead, working for the public. He enjoyed keeping an eye on the community and found it rewarding to build a community business. "Out sweeping the sidewalk," he said, "you can start a conversation about the time of day. I can relate to lots of people in so many ways. I enjoy communicating and sharing; having 500 conversations going at the same time and each day adding one sentence to that conversation."

It was interesting that like my husband, Kevin and Jules even backed up my more formal observations on the subject that successful entrepreneurs may often be of a certain neurological type. Beyond a formal, psychological treatise on the subject, there are clearly people who seem made for the entrepreneurial challenge. As a student of varying neurological styles since the 1980's (more popularly understood today) it seems clear why some people thrive in small businesses they own and control themselves.

Kevin, Jules and my husband were all left-handed. There are many ways of understanding how the brain works but hemisphere dominance is one way. Left handers tend to favor the strategies of the brain's right hemisphere. The left hemisphere deals more with language processing



and all three clearly did not succeed as entrepreneurs with knowledge learned from books. They were undoubtedly more strong in the intuitive, creative, big-picture thinking functions. They were strong in reading people and sensing people's natures and needs. They had creative minds that could find, often, unusual solutions to the constantly changing needs of a small business. They could focus on the big-picture keeping in mind all the aspects of an enterprise rather than specializing. Also, they might more easily see how that enterprise needed to evolve to meet the needs of the larger community.

Both Kevin and Jules developed business styles that didn't involve a focus on 'selling'. Both had tried the corporate world and it hadn't fit for them. Briefly, out of college with a degree in finance, Kevin worked as a stock broker. He loved the financial work but didn't like selling. He took over G and H Printing from his father in 1980. "Dad stuck around until 1986," said Kevin. "He loved what he did." Like his son, Kevin's dad didn't consider what he did as work.

Starting in 1989, Jules tried a couple of entrepreneurial approaches, one involving recycling, before realizing Eastlake's need of a mail center and built Lake Union Mail. He's always eschewed the concept of upselling, preferring to help customers find the most cost effective and efficient way of meeting their needs. In 2016 Jules sold Lake Union Mail but can still be seen often continuing those 500 conversations.

Caring about those who worked for them or others trying to make it in business seems alive in successful entrepreneurs. In the beginning of the epidemic, Kevin's business, which focused in a large part on printing for the local Seattle music and theater scene, came to a halt. "I took advantage of the small business loans to stay afloat and pay my employee," he said "even though I had no work for him, I continued to pay his health insurance." Over the years Jules has helped numerous folks wanting to start mail centers like his by letting them work in his business for a month to learn the ropes.

It's sad for those who didn't make it during these challenging times. It was interesting to see the creative evolving of services provided by these backbones of the various communities that make up cities. The community of Eastlake, impressively, has some long-term entrepreneurs. Lake Union Dry Dock is undoubtedly the oldest. Established in 1919, though now a corporation, it is still actively run daily by members of the founding family. Most longtime Eastlake dwellers fondly remember Daly's, the hamburger place that closed down a few years ago. It was run by the same family until an extremely long lease ran out and age had caught up with the patriarch. Serafina, and the 14 Carrot have had long-term successful women creator-owners. Patrick's Fly Shop, fitting a unique niche in a modern city, has been in Eastlake since 1946. Mort's Cabin started in 1998 and moved to the community at Eastlake and Harvard by the bridge in 2003. It's now more central, just off Lynn, and a fun place for a Saturday browse. And then there's Pete's Market, as it's known to locals. It's provided Eastlake with food and later wine since the late 1960's with only 3 owners. It's originator, Pete Omalanz sold the store in the mid '70s to George Kingen. George brought in the wine and was a friend of the community for 47 years. He sold the business to Jon Bennet in 2020 and, unfortunately, passed away. I'm missing others but respect and value all the businesses that serve Eastlake.

So, as we've all heard often during these trying times, shop local if you can. The next time you find yourself in one of the neighborhood's businesses, consider thanking the 'person behind the counter' for the role they play in making Eastlake a unique community. And, maybe take the time to strike up a conversation, they're pretty interesting folks.

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## Eclectic Eastlake The Moderns

By Judy Smith

According to a local designer, at one time, around the 1960s, the area south of Boston St. along Eastlake Avenue was known as “Architects Row.” Architects Row? Susan Boyle, a local architect, architectural historian, and former Eastlake resident, thinks it might have been a loosely coined term as there were so many architectural offices on Eastlake Ave along with their studios that were also sprinkled around on other streets in the neighborhood. “It was more an ecology than a row,” she added, noting that in the 1950s and ‘60s, real estate in Eastlake was cheap, the zoning less restricted, and, though close to downtown, Eastlake was still a semi-industrial area, with smoke from the nearby Lake Union steam plant. At any rate, a number of architects and engineers in the ‘50s, ‘60s and ‘70s designed and built their offices here. Many of them – like Gene Zema, George Suyama, Paul Hayden Kirk and others – would become lions of Northwest Modernism.

A healthy ecology has a lot of different elements, and there was considerable variety in the architectural forces taking root in Eastlake. The Modern movement in architecture dates roughly from the 1930s to the 1970s. Here is a look at some of the notable remaining Eastlake buildings designed by leading architects of the time.

The buildings were featured in a 2001 Eastlake Modernism Tour presented by Historic Seattle and DoCoMoMo. WeWa, a group Susan Boyle and others helped found, which stands for DOcumentation and CONservation of buildings, sites and neighborhoods of the MODern MOVement, WESTern WASHington ([www.docomomo-us.org](http://www.docomomo-us.org)).

### 200-210 East Boston Street – Japanese Antiquities Gallery building (pictured below)

This hidden gem above the landscaping and behind the Dreamboat artwork, on Boston Street at Eastlake Avenue, is a Japanese-inspired building that was designed and built by the late architect Gene Zema, who lived in it and had a design studio and gallery. The structure is a leading example of Northwest contemporary modernism. The first phase of the building, the eastward single-story structure, “hovers above the ground to minimize the impacts on the site, giving the impression that the building has a finger, rather than footprint,” notes the DocomomoWeWa tour guide. It was completed in 1953 just a few years after Zema graduated from UW’s architecture school.

The two-story struc-







ture that above Eastlake Avenue was built in 1961, and it “exhibits the influence of the Japanese through Zema’s mastery of wood detailing... as wood was once widely available and relatively inexpensive in this area, Zema adapted Japanese craftsmanship to fit modern design exploration in the Northwest.” Zema influenced other architects including George Suyama who worked for him and who later developed the buildings kitty-corner – the Serafina and Cicchetti buildings.

### 2043 Eastlake Ave. E. – Serafina and Cicchetti buildings

*(Courtyard pictured top left)*

The story behind this site was a little confusing, so I decided to try calling George Suyama’s offices, the

architect who designed it, to see if someone there could clarify. To my surprise, George Suyama called me back. “Eastlake’s my love,” he told me as he tried to recollect the story of the building that was renovated and developed nearly four decades ago.

His first job at the end of college was working across the street with Gene Zema for six months. From there he moved to a building at the northeast of Newton Street, since remodeled into a home (but not by him).

Later I found a biography of Mr. Suyama and his work, *Suyama: A Complex Serenity*, which pinpoints the time exactly: “In 1973, he found ‘an old shack’ at Eastlake Avenue and Newton Street, almost opposite Zema’s office, with a ‘fabulous view’ from a roof deck. Using salvaged materials, he made the shack and its roof deck into an office.”

While at the Newton office, he remodeled the Serafina building and designed the building in back to blend in with the older, brick building on Eastlake Avenue. (Before Serafina moved in the space was occupied by Nick and Sully Carry Out Cuisine.) He specifically designed the new building in back around a courtyard between the two structures to preserve an old tree, either a Maple or an Oak. He couldn’t remember which. (That courtyard has now become a favorite neighborhood gathering spot.)

He moved his offices into the new building and was there for 10 years, later moving to Belltown; another architect moved in. Later around 1998, Susan Kaufman, the owner of Serafina, bought both properties, when that architect also moved to Belltown.

*Suyama: A Complex Serenity* also clarified the Serafina and Cicchetti story in the very first paragraph of Chapter 2, Evolution:

“In 1982 Suyama began construction of a new office for his practice at 121 East Boston Street, on the southeast corner of its intersection with Yale Avenue, a block west of Gene Zema’s office. The property extended eastward to Eastlake, and included an existing one-story, brick commercial building from the 1920s, fronting on Eastlake, that would become the Serafina Restaurant. Between it and the new office, Suyama created a courtyard to serve both office and restaurant, accessed from the west side of the restaurant and, from Boston Street, by means of a stair and a gate integrated with the new office. The exterior of the complex, and especially the north elevation with courtyard wall and gate makes a strikingly sympathetic contribution to the ambience of the neighborhood. Suyama moved his practice into the new building in early 1983....”



### 1945 Yale Place – Former Pacific Architect and Builder Magazine Headquarters *(no photo)*

Further cementing Eastlake's "ecology" for architects, this building, built in 1960, was designed for the Pacific Architect and Builder magazine to house its business offices and printing facilities. The architect was a consulting editor, architect A.O. Bumgardner, who designed many

notable modern residences and public structures, and Al Dreyer, one of his partners. The Bumgardner office was later located on Minor Avenue E.

The building is distinctive for its peaked, rhythmic, white thin-shell roof that contrasts with flat, dark walls below. The entry ramp bridges the gap between building and hillside, dramatizing the sloped site.

In January 2018, the city granted this building landmark status thanks to the work of DocomomoWeWa. The Eastlake Community Council assisted the effort with archive photos and a letter of support. The building's current owner, W. G. Clark Construction Company, supported the landmark status, embracing the building's iconic features.

### 2000 Minor Ave. E. – Former architectural office of Kirk, Wallace, McKinley and Associates (1960-61)

### 2009 Minor Ave. E. – Former Community Psychiatric Clinic (1962) *(Pictured page 9, bottom left)*

These two buildings were designed by the firm of Paul Hayden Kirk, a renowned modernist who designed many private and public buildings and specialized in medical facilities. His interest in designing medical buildings, as noted in the book *Shaping Seattle Architecture*, may have been due to having "contracted polio at an early age, which necessitated crutches for walking." Quietly visionary, Kirk provided accessible ramps to both these buildings long before the 1980

Americans with Disabilities Act required such features.

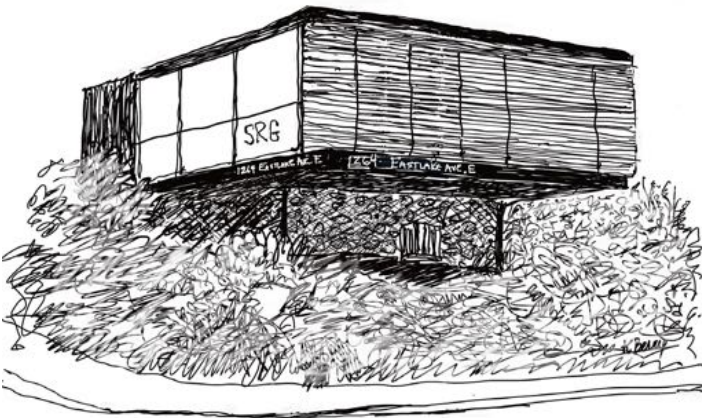
DocomomoWeWa notes that Kirk's architectural office building, at the corner of Minor and Newton, "is a beautifully scaled, simple wood post-and-beam frame structure articulated with delicate details and connections and clad in cedar siding ... Following the natural slope of the lot, the structure was raised from street level, poised over open ground area, providing parking spaces underneath."

Of note to passersby is the colored glass on the south side of the building: "The clear-glass corridor [is] punctuated with multi-colored glass vent louvers, giving the walkway a touch of brightness."

Next door to Kirk's office building, at 2009 Minor Avenue E., his firm designed a building that was originally occupied by the Community Psychiatric Clinic; it is now the headquarters of the survey and engineering firm Bush, Roed, and Hitchings. The building "is similar to Kirk's office," writes DocomomoWeWa, "acting almost as an extension of it. Since the site was sloping, the building was raised to provide privacy and parking, but the similarities stop there. Function, plan and scale define a very different type of environment..."

DocomomoWeWa notes that the waiting room area once had an open-sky courtyard that offered "a place for relaxation and contact with nature ... In its expression of enclosure, and in the way light gives character to spaces, the clinic is representative of Kirk's sensitivity and talent to create simple but rich spatial composition."

"No Seattle architect of that underdocumented era shined more brightly than Paul Hayden Kirk," writes Dale Kutzera, who amends that "underdocumented era" with his recently published book, *Paul Hayden Kirk and the Rise of Northwest Modern*. "A little research told me he was the most-awarded and -publicized architect of his era. Touring his houses and medical clinics showed me why. If the story of Northwest Modernism were to be told, it should be through the work of this midcentury master."





**1264 Eastlake Ave. E. – Former architectural office of Steinhart, Theriault & Anderson.** (Pictured on page 10, top left & illustration middle left)

Of this modernist building DocomomoWeWa writes, “This building is a striking example of post-war International Style Modernism in Seattle. Built in 1956, it was designed by Steinhart Theriault and Anderson as their architectural office, and was occupied by the firm until the mid-1980s. The building attracted considerable attention when it was built because of its design and its highly visible location near the intersection of Eastlake and Fairview Avenues. In September 1960 Pacific Architect and Building noted, ‘This little building (is) “a real eye-stopper” with an overall design quality that removes it from the gimmick category.’ This building is the subject of a recently prepared landmark nomination.

**2717 Franklin Ave. E. – Castlewood** (Pictured bottom left)

Lastly, while not an example of mid-century Northwest modernism, Castlewood was an early, career-defining building for modernist architect Paul Thiry. Built in 1928 as apartments (but now condominiums), it is important for marking how Thiry began to break with the ornate architecture of the past to a more modern style. “[Castlewood] is very well preserved and exhibits distinctive Art Deco/ [Art] Moderne characteristics on a plain brick façade,” notes DocomomoWeWa, “When the Depression of the 1930s drastically reduced the number of his commissions, Thiry took the opportunity to travel around the world, where he met influential modernist architects including Le Corbusier. He quickly abandoned the stylistic Art Moderne features of his University of Washington Beaux Arts training upon his return home in favor of variants of the modernistic ideals he had observed in Europe. These included incorporation of modern life and new technology into architecture, open floor plans, and the expression of structure.”

“Thiry is credited with introducing European modernism to the Pacific Northwest,” writes DocomomoWeWa.

Three decades later he became the principal architect of the optimistic and futuristic 1962 Seattle World’s Fair, overseeing other architects and designing the Coliseum, aka Key Arena. Renowned for Thiry’s hyperbolic paraboloid roof, the structure is a Seattle Landmark. The roof is the only feature preserved in the recent updating of the building that, looking again toward the future, was renamed Climate Pledge Arena.

If you would like to provide the Eastlake Community Council with any more information about these buildings (or stories about these architects in Eastlake), please send it to [info@eastlakeseattle.org](mailto:info@eastlakeseattle.org)

*Photos Courtesy of Judy Smith & Chris Leman. Illustrations by Karen Berry.*

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## Characters of Eastlake Spotlight Meet the Eastlake Bench Animals and the Stories they Guard: 1,000 Individual Carvings

By: Annie Gustafson

Have you ever had the feeling you're being watched while you walk south on Eastlake Avenue—especially as you pass Mort's Cabin? The source of that gaze may be the eagle, cougar, mama bear, or cub clustered around the wood bench in front of the bus stop. These are the animals of the @eastlakecabinbench, and each one is a 2-3 ft carved masterpiece from salvaged cedar.

Given the constraints of formally interviewing these animal talismans, I turned to their benefactor and the owner of Mort's Cabin, Darold Andersen. The animals, I soon learned, are not the only intriguing feature of the bench. Over the past three years—and always by Darold's personal invitation because he supplies the tools and supervises—the bench has amassed approximately 1,000 individual carvings. Each one is from a different individual or group, and the designs are as diverse as they are eclectic: heart-encased lovers' initials, boats, airplanes, and even a test tube, to name a few. Darold shared with me what the animal guardians already know: everyone who has carved has imbued the bench with something unique and personal. In this way, the Eastlake bench in front of Mort's Cabin is a vibrant and evolving memorial of the characters that live, love, work and pass through here.

**AG: How did the idea of a bench come to you?**

DA: For more than a decade, I have wanted to give something to the community of Eastlake. Considering I drove a bus for the City of Seattle for twenty-five years and the proximity of the bus stop (a few steps away from the entrance of Mort's Cabin), it made sense to provide a place to sit for those waiting for the bus and/or for those

desiring to take in the sights of Eastlake Avenue. The original concept was for the bench to offer respite and delight. I'm 76 years old and I think part of what fuels me—and all of us—is making space for awe. The bench is a little extension of that from me to the Eastlake community. Fremont has the statues Waiting for the Interurban and Late for the Interurban so my intention was to bring the theme of people and public transit in public art to Eastlake. In more precise terms, I joke that my best ideas come from a dream or when I'm fully relaxed in a hot tub.

**AG: Why these animals?**

DA: I knew I wanted Pacific Northwest animals because the name of my shop, Mort's Cabin, is an homage to my father's cabin on the Nisqually River outside Mt. Rainier National Park. Some of my most cherished memories from childhood—such as listening to the

river while smelling bacon and pancakes—are from times spent with my parents at the cabin. The original concept for the bench included the eagle and the mama bear with her cub. It was important to me that the emotion on the mama bear's face be concern, not aggression. I wanted the bench to be inviting and kid-friendly.



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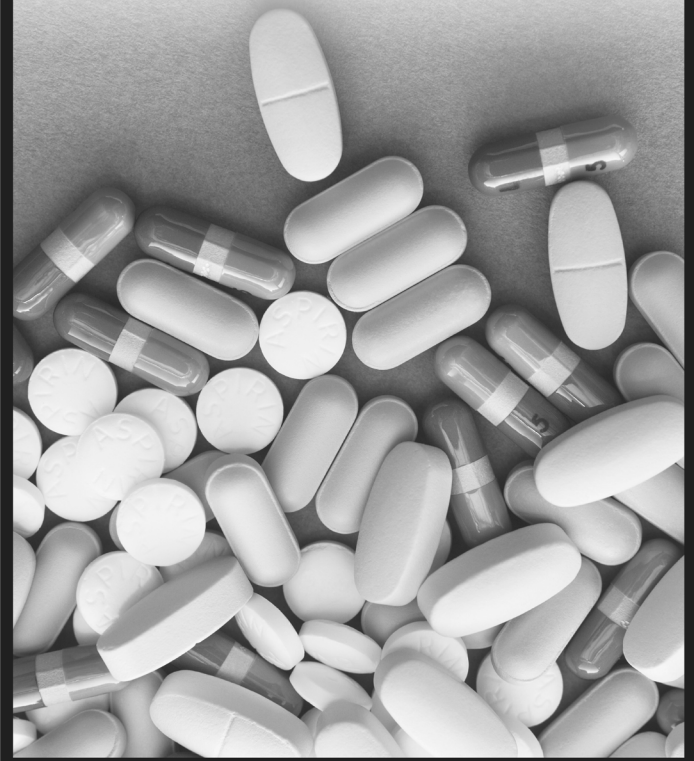
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### AG: How did you find the artist?

DA: I believe in serendipity. From landing my current location, which I've had for almost fourteen years, to finding the perfect artist to create the bench, people and opportunities tend to emerge when I need them. A customer in the store mentioned an artist whose work she admired. I got Tomas Vrba's name from her and—voila!—he's the one who brought my vision to life and then some. He's based in Bellingham, Washington, and uses only salvaged wood. The cougar joined the bears and the eagle about one year after the bench was installed. For me, the cougar adds an integrative element to the piece, and I like how Tomas captured what cougars do best: active stillness.

### AG: Please tell me about the participatory element of the bench – inviting people to carve.

DA: From inception, my desire for the bench was double duty, if you will: a smooth place to sit and a living library to honor the wisdom and eclecticism that pulses through our community every day. I started an Instagram account, @eastlakecabinbench, to document each carving and its creator(s). Perhaps the most succinct explanation of what I hope each person takes away from the experience of carving is my intro on Instagram: Every carved initial has a story. You were here, you will be remembered, you are loved. Be happy on your journey. Be your true self.

### AG: With approximately 1,000 (and counting!) designs carved, do you have a favorite?

DA: Honestly, I love all of them. I am continuously surprised and amazed by the diversity and richness of the people who walk and stop by: Eastlake residents who have lived here for decades, travelers visiting Seattle—or the U.S.—for the first time, couples, singles, families, etc. A number of carvings honor animals too, especially dogs. I feel what's on display is nothing short of the vast and inspired depths of the human soul. So, how can I pick one? They're all beautiful.

### AG: How do you invite people to carve?

DA: Honestly, it's a sixth sense. On a few occasions, I have sensed someone needs a little pick-me-up. I'll be outside the store sweeping, or moving a plant, and I'll tune in to the people around me. It's something I must have honed after being a store owner and bus driver for decades. I have



had a few people thank me for helping them through a difficult time or a loss. There are, of course, dozens of celebratory moments too: engagements, weddings, birthdays, and anniversaries. I simply offer the opportunity to carve – a chance to briefly memorialize whatever he/she/they is feeling at that moment – and supply the tools. I think of the Eastlake community as my family and Mort’s Cabin as the living room. The bench, by extension, has the casualness and the intimacy of a front porch.

**AG: Final thoughts?**

DA: As a collector, I’ve always been drawn to objects with a back-story. So, it makes sense that my gift to the community would be a way to preserve stories—one carving at a time.

*Pictured below: Darold Andersen, owner of Mort’s Cabin and bench benefactor, standing in the interior of the store named after his father. Photo credit: Marsha Burns.*

*Pictured on page 12: Darold Andersen, owner of Mort’s Cabin, gifted this nine-foot bench made by Bellingham artist Tomas Virba to the Eastlake community.*

*Pictured on page 14: Close-up of a few of the 1,000 individual carvings on the bench. Courtesy of: @eastlakecabinbench*



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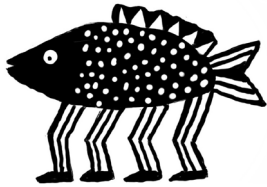
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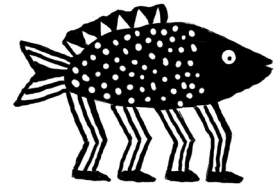
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# Get Involved in the Neighborhood



Ever felt that tug of wanting to do something for your neighborhood? That feeling of wanting to be involved somehow?

The Eastlake Community Council has several volunteer positions for delegates or representatives with organizations that have an impact on Eastlake. The obligation is to attend the meetings – they are usually monthly and all virtual for now – and then write a short report to the ECC about what was discussed and how it might impact the neighborhood. You don't even have to be an ECC member – just a desire to help the 'hood. Here is a list of groups needing an ECC representative or that can use more participation by neighborhood residents.

**If you're interested in joining any of these community organizations or committees or would like more information, contact the ECC at:**  
[info@eastlakeseattle.org](mailto:info@eastlakeseattle.org).

## Non-ECC Organizations Seeking Eastlake Representatives

**TOPS Site Council:** The neighborhood representative for the ECC should not have a child enrolled in TOPS. The TOPS Site Council serves as one of the governing bodies of the school, with responsibilities for leadership, advocacy, fundraising, financial stewardship and strategic planning to assure the highest standards of educational excellence and an inclusive supportive school community.

The neighborhood representative would commit to a two-year term and hold the position for a maximum of 4 years and provide periodic updates to the ECC. Site Council meetings are held on the 2nd Wednesday of each month from 5:30-7:30 p.m., currently via Zoom.

**Seattle Police Department West Precinct Advisory Council:** Help keep Eastlake safe! Attend monthly meetings at the Seattle Police Department's West Precinct Advisory Council, reporting on any issues in Eastlake and receiving updates on West Precinct issues.

**City University Community Advisory Committee:** CUCAC consists of a membership of 16 representatives appointed by surrounding communities and UW. The purpose is to advise the city and university on the development of the greater university area, encourage the provision of adequate services to the area, preserve the positive aspects of the university's presence in the community, review and comment on adverse effects and assist in the protection of the adjacent community and business areas. This group meets on the second Tuesday of every month on the UW campus. The representative would provide updates to the ECC board.

**Eastlake Emergency HUB:** Assist with a group that manages an emergency information site at Rogers Playground in case of a natural disaster.

## ECC Committees Seeking Volunteers

There are several projects where the ECC is working for the community. These are current commitments where volunteers could provide some support:

**Eastlake News Editorial and Advertising:** Our long-time neighborhood newsletter (over 50 years!) is published once a quarter and can always use more writers, page designers, illustrators, or editors. We sell advertising so, if you have a business bent, you could help as our advertising coordinator.

**Eastlake News Delivery:** Volunteers are needed for delivering new issues to addresses in an assigned area. Volunteers are also needed to return to specified businesses during the life of each issue to keep the copies restocked.

**Facebook and Eastlake Social Media:** Know about social media? We can use you.

**Eastlake News Blog:** This relatively new communications vehicle ([www.eastlakenews.org](http://www.eastlakenews.org)) could use some technical support in WordPress. If you have WordPress experience and ideas for how to grow the blog, we could use you. We're always looking for writers and content contributors. Regular contributors have access to the blog and can post content independently.

**Transportation:** Rapid Ride J Line will continue its development south of the University District with an impact on Eastlake Ave. The West End of 520 is a state project that will have an impact on Eastlake at Roanoke. We should know what is going on – join the group keeping an eye on the projects.

**Land Use:** We've all seen the rapid development in Eastlake. If you want to be part of our efforts to have development serve the community, here is your opportunity to join the Land Use Committee.

**Parks:** Eastlake has a long tradition of neighbors taking care of public parks. If there is public space you would like to help take care of, go for it! If you'd like community support, let the ECC know. Cleanups, off-leash areas, improvements. We're developing a database of people interested in stewarding one or more green spaces, and we'd love to add your name to it! Lots of opportunities to make a difference.

**Business Support:** Being informed about the needs of our local businesses and expanding its identity.

**Events:** In 2022 we plan to return to in-person community meetings, social events and fun projects. If you like to coordinate events, this could be your spot.

