

# atomic ranch

MIDCENTURY MARVELS



FALL 2009



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- before & after
- like flw
- mod nebraska
- danish treat



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# fall 2009

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### cover

All geometric volumes, a 1956 Wendell Lovett–designed home near Seattle takes great advantage of its Hilltop acre view lot. The beneficiary of new windows, a can't-fail roof and edited landscaping, the modernist ranch holds an inspiring collection of Danish modern delights—furnishings and homeowners alike. Story page 46.



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## meanwhile... back at the ranch



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here must have been a '70s classic rock song playing somewhere in my head when I read the news that a much publicized modern prefab home designer was calling it quits after building 40 homes in five years. Caught up in the current economic miasma, reportedly a lack of investment capital and tightened financing for buyers contributed to the company's demise.

It certainly wasn't for lack of positive, breathless press in some of the biggest magazines in the home/shelter universe. By its very nature, print media craves something, anything, that is fresh and exciting; for a while prefab was it. It sure seemed like the coolest way to spend money for four walls and a roof—way sexier than a double wide. But we have been down this road before.



Our publisher generating excitement at the pre-prefab Teepee Design Conference 1958.

In our own brief history, Atomic Ranch has covered two prefab stories and they both illustrate some of the inherent problems and allure of the concept. Industrialist Carl Strandlund attempted with his all-metal Lustrons to answer the need for modest housing in post-World War II America. A single flatbed truck would deliver all the components for on-site assembly of the porcelain-clad ranch homes. All told, more than 2,000 Lustrons were produced, but transportation costs limited their distribution to the Midwest. The Summer 2004 issue outlined the three-year arc (1947–1950) of the company that was ultimately done in by enormous start-up costs, the difficulty of producing enough homes to realize the economies of mass production, resistance from labor unions and lack of G.I. Bill approval. Jump ahead to our Summer 2007 issue and the cover story on one of the seven U.S. Steel Homes built in Palm Springs in 1962. Designed by Donald Wexler and built by Alexander Construction, these modernist homes featured a factory-built central module that was trucked to the site and craned onto the slab

foundation. Prefabricated wall sections extended from the central core and a steel roof was bolted in place. At the time, construction costs were comparable to conventional stick-built homes, but soon the price of steel rose and the profit margin evaporated; Alexander canceled the proposed 38-unit development.

These instances don't mean that conventional home building is the only way, but I, for one, maintain a healthy skepticism of the press' unbridled enthusiasm for prefab. Does it look appealing? Yes. Does it have challenges? Most definitely.

In that other hot media topic, green sustainability, it's been noted that existing homes are on the glide for resource and energy consumption—the vast majority of those costs have already been expended during their construction. I feel it's far better to use and treasure the vintage homes we already have; preserving, restoring and repurposing an existing house makes so much more sense financially and ecologically, and that's what Atomic Ranch has been talking about all along.

Oh, the song that was playing? "Deja Vu" by Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young.

*Jim Brown*, Publisher





Publisher

**Jim Brown**

Editor

**Michelle Gringeri-Brown**

Art Director

**Nancy Anderson**

Advertising Design

**Carol Flores**

Logo Design

**John Skelton**

Editorial Assistant

**Cheyenne Wortham**

Web Design

**Josh Tackitt**

Copy Editor

**Vickere Murphy**

Advertising Manager

**Christina Walker**

503.297.5605

atomicranchadvertising@comcast.net

**Publishing Office**

3125 SE Rex St.

Portland, OR 97202-8573

503.771.4171 p 503.771.4172 f

editor@atomic-ranch.com

atomic-ranch.com

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Atomic Ranch, PO Box 9624, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33310-9624

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# modernwisdom



\* I recently picked up a copy of *Atomic Ranch* and really enjoyed the content and format; I had the book but wasn't aware of the magazine. Having been a proponent of the

midcentury style since the early 1980s (before things really took off here in L.A.), I was pleased when I was able to bring all my period furniture, paintings, dinnerware, etc., to my new 1959 ranch in the hills. Built by Dan Felger, who was in his late 90s at last check, we are the third owners.

The house literally sat for nearly two years after Felger's wife passed away before we fell upon it one rainy Sunday in January 1996. The realtor had forgotten to lock a sliding glass door, so we sneaked in and were blown away by the great bones it had, the openness and how untouched the home was. After removing orange shag carpet and frightening '70s wallpaper, and sandblasting the white paint from the fireplace, the home got a fresh paint job, with one wall in each room painted a Sherwin-Williams color from the 1950s: Pink Flamingo,

Holiday Turquoise and Chartreuse. The neglected landscaping is now a tropical paradise to escape to.

Thanks for a great magazine!

**Brian Van Lenten & Susan Cushing**

*Sherman Oaks*

\* I've noticed in your magazine and elsewhere that many people are painting exterior and interior brick walls of their midcentury ranches. From my point of view, this is unfortunate. It is likely that the brick surfaces were not painted when the houses were built, so it seems inconsistent with an effort to maintain or restore the houses. Even if one were comfortable with the concept of updating aesthetic features of midcentury houses, the architecture has an inherent minimalist sensibility that entails using materials in their natural, organic and unadorned state.

On a practical note, painting exterior brick walls on a house has the effect of converting a nearly maintenance-free surface to one that will require regular care. Further, once the brick is painted, it is difficult or impossible to return it to its original state, as sandblasting and other treatments often damage the surface. I would be interested in your thoughts on this, and I hope your readers will give it careful consideration.

**Greg Taylor**

*Durham, N.C.*

*The should-I-paint-my-brick question has come up several times, most recently in the Winter 2008 Ranch Dressing column; this issue's home in Connecticut [page 25] shows the lengths subsequent owners may go to to re-create a period look. We agree with Greg that natural brick is both period correct and blissfully low maintenance. That said, many people have inherited painted masonry surfaces, usually done in an attempt to update the look (HGTV anyone?) or lighten a wall or fireplace. As he cautions, stripping brick is difficult and it's a rare surface that looks pristine after doing so.*

*I'd like to add another "please don't" to the list: painting exterior concrete surfaces. The paint bubbles in the rain, peels in the sun and good luck getting it all off. We're looking into solutions for our own front*



*porch, which had been coated with a red composite popular in the '60s then painted by the flippers. We'll tell you how it goes in an upcoming issue.*

—ar editor

\* A few years ago my husband suggested that we downsize our home to prepare for a hoped-for early retirement. I was reluctant to join his bandwagon as I wasn't ready to sell the house we had built in 1997 and all the furniture that wouldn't make the cut in a smaller home. That is, until I discovered Atomic Ranch.

I was in a bookstore when your magazine caught my attention for the first time. As I was flipping through



page after page of midcentury modern redos, I knew I had found the motivation to make the move and not care one iota about all that I thought I was giving up.

We purchased our 2,200-square-foot 1954 ranch home in 2008 and started stripping 1980s decor from our living/dining/entry room. I consider the biggest compliment I've received since this recent redo to be when my 71-year-old mother said, "This reminds me exactly of what homes looked like in 1956 when I got married." Mission accomplished.

**Janice Friedman**  
Wichita, Kansas

\* Have you guys thought about hiring some freelancers in other areas? I lived in Portland for seven years and there are some houses that can bear the Atomic Ranch title but not enough to facilitate an entire magazine. The lack of sunshine in the photos is just weird. To have a "real ranch," one must travel to or have lived in CA, the birthplace of the ranch! In the last two to three issues, the cover home has been from PDX. There are no mezzanines, no atriums, no fire pits, walls of glass, courted entries, open garages, motor courts, sunken living rooms, conversation pits, tri-sided fireplaces, sun walls, breezeways, outdoor gaming areas, pools, skylights, lofts and all the other things that make up a ranch!

And stop with the Shaker/Salt Box houses already—ick! The whole Rockahippy thing is ugly, tacky and impure. I don't care about martini sets and saltshakers, I want architecture! Back the camera up a couple of feet and show the home. Give us some perspective and depth, more panoramics, more full outside shots, maybe a blueprint, or an entry-to-yard sequence. The cover home this month was more than 3,000 square feet and it looked cramped, like the camera barely fit. How many Streng houses have you featured?

Have you ever done an MCM materials issue? A look back at what was used would be great: Formica (boomerang) tops, hardware, lighting, flooring, wall dividers, pullout mirrors, cottage cheese ceilings—that kind of thing. The rock used on planters, fireplaces, walls and entries is an entire issue. What about all of the cool fireplaces and glass and decorative woods used? Nothing gets me more wound up than a woven fence or old Schlage doorknob with a cool faceplate. What about all of the cool prints and designs that were used on Plexiglas and curtains?

I like the mag, I really do. But with only getting a few issues a year, I expect more! I understand the "leave 'em wanting more" concept. But after a whole year and numerous back issues, I want a lot more. I'm starving!

Thanks for reading.

**Craig**, a 36-year-old married (to a woman) father of one from California

...comments?

—ar editor



# morewisdom



\* I am embarrassed to say how late we are to the party; we just discovered your magazine this spring. It is like finding a support group for a strange addiction you thought you suffered

alone. How refreshing to find others with the same love and passion for midcentury.

I wanted to mention that the couch on the cover of the Winter '08 issue, referred to as an eBay find from Errol Flynn's estate, is an original 1954 Adrian Pearsall Craft Associates design. My partner, Bill Doyle, and I just purchased an identical one (as well as one of Adrian's signature coffee tables featured in the same issue [page 60]) for the 1954 Florida ranch we're restoring.

Adrian Pearsall was trained as an architect and designed and custom built his own furniture when he was first married because he couldn't afford new pieces. That, in turn, was the start of his business. Eventually he went on to design and build his family's



The Pearsall family home

private residence in Wilkes Barre, Penn., in 1959. This house is still in the family and is a remarkably original example of midcentury modernism. At more than 10,000 square feet, it includes an indoor pool, indoor/outdoor dog quarters, a darkroom, pottery room, multiple skylights, indoor stone ponds, circular and floating fireplaces, and glass walls looking onto several courtyards.

I know all of this because Adrian is my father. It is only now as he is aging that we are fully digging into

and appreciating the creativity and history of his early designs. It means a lot to us to see how his work is finding renewed interest and we'd love to hear from any of his fans with questions, information or interest in Craft Associates pieces.

**Jed Pearsall, [jed@performanceresearch.com](mailto:jed@performanceresearch.com)**  
*Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.*

\* I don't normally email a magazine editor about a publication, but after reading My 2 Cents in the Spring 2009 issue, I had to. First, let me say, when I saw the no. 14 issue I was blown away. Everything about your publication was "me." The articles are not only well written but realistic in their approach to restoring mid-century homes for my baby-boomer generation. I now live in a 1989 French Country/Colonial ranch but I am looking for that all-original '50s/'60s contemporary that will say "I'm Home." In the meantime I have your magazine to give me hope and encouragement.

I am renewing my subscription, of course, but am passing along the word to others of your wonderful magazine. I will also support your advertisers and let them know where I saw their ads. I want you to know how much I appreciate your work and your magazine. We must support our passions through this down economy, otherwise they may not be there when recovery arrives. Three cheers for your Atomic Ranch!

**Gary McDonough**  
*Myrtle Beach, S.C.*

\* I just received my first issue of your publication and was very impressed; I'm not sure why some people would want to live life in the past but I like the basic architectural style. I had a client mention Eichler to me last year and I had no idea this midcentury industry existed. Since that time I've seen numerous homes in our area of this style and have shifted my design paradigm toward this form as I continue to incorporate green building solutions into each renovation or new-build project. I look forward to sharing articles with my subscribers and clients to educate them on breaking out of the box.

**Ken Kunka, Flywheel Building Solutions**  
*Okanagan Valley, B.C.*

✱ Thanks for the great article on the Murrays' home in the Winter 2008 issue ["Flower Power"]. I commiserate with their frustration regarding the soot stains on their fireplace. We bought a 1958 ranch last year and took down the massive Art Deco fireplace hood to discover 50 years of blackened soot underneath. After doing tons of online research as to how to clean brick walls, we bought simple and inexpensive "soot sponges" (also called "dry cleaning sponges") off the Internet (I couldn't find them at any retail stores even though we live in a big city); we rubbed the wall (do not add water!) and the soot came right off. It took us probably five to 10 hours of rubbing and was a very dirty job, but our wall looked much worse to begin with than theirs does. I bet they could get it off with \$30 in sponges and less than two hours of time.

**M. Allen**

✱ I live in Manhattan and will probably never own a house—ranch or otherwise—but I enjoy reading your magazine. One thing that I have noted with concern is that many of your renovation stories describe homeowners having to deal with problems that go well beyond the cosmetic: rotting wood, bulging plaster, leaky showers. Is it fair to say that the quality of construction in these houses frequently fails to match the quality of design?

Also, do you have any words of encouragement for someone who is increasingly drawn to midcentury design, but who will probably never learn to like blond wood?

**Rebecca Koblick**

NYC

*Construction quality can vary depending on the builder, the initial price of the home and when it went up; a custom home, then or now, is built with a little more care and costlier materials than a simple tract home that's one of 200. And some seemingly debatable choices were made—Eichlers' mahogany paneling under the wet areas of master baths, the propensity for flat roofs to leak (Hello, Mr. Wright?), or the dirt-cheap utility rates that made energy losing*

*window walls an aesthetic choice and less of a practical concern.*

*Were midcentury homes built out of old-growth timber, lath and plaster and craftsman-made built-ins? Typically no—postwar architecture was forward looking, stripped of "old fashioned" ornament and utilized economy of scale. But it's all relative: bungalows were once considered shoddy and slapdash by lovers of Victorian architecture, and most midcentury ranches were well built from sturdy materials such as concrete, brick, solid wood posts and beams, metal windows and the like.*

*Water, whether in the form of rain or snow on an exterior beam that needs painting or a leaking shower valve will eventually wreck havoc with finishes and structural elements. Most often, the remodels we feature address deferred maintenance or decades of neglect as neighborhoods went out of style and ranches turned into economical rentals. And many upgrades are a nod to lifestyle changes—the electrical loads our homes are called upon to provide today are much different than those needed in the '60s, and many homeowners view brand-new baths and kitchens as necessities, not niceties, and a way of making their homes reflect themselves.*

*Regarding your allergy to blond wood: if that means Heywood-Wakefield, sure, lots of people love it, others not so much. Maybe that extends to Danish teak, too; you have to look a little harder, but walnut was plenty popular as well. But the midcentury aesthetic is quite wide-ranging in our opinion: from '40s overstuffed sectionals, club chairs and floral drapes to '50s butterfly chairs and low sofas through the plastic fantastic '70s and '80s. Do you like a collection-heavy "retro" look or are you more a minimalist modernist? We try to show a wide variety of aesthetics, price points and examples in our pages.*

—ar editor

*Write us at [editor@atomic-ranch.com](mailto:editor@atomic-ranch.com)  
or send a note to Atomic Ranch, Publishing Office,  
3125 SE Rex St., Portland, OR 97202.  
We'll print the good ones.*



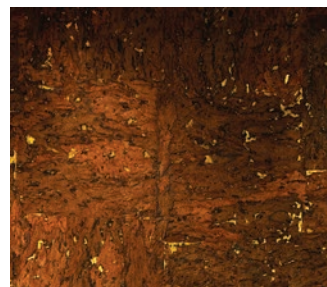
# cool|stuff



As the weather cools, cozy up for some stylish tea and games. The Tonfisk coffee/tea [or me] set keeps your hands cool and your drink hot. Paired with the Maharam take on the classic memory game—updated with classic MCM textile patterns—this begs for a rainy afternoon of caffeine and competition. **\$219 and \$36 from [nest-living.com](http://nest-living.com)**



Take your walls back in time to when texture was king. Soften the echo of band practice with 36" wide bolts of cork in 10 natural shades. Covering up hideous '80s wallpaper are we? Add some sheen and delicious color with wild to mild Juicy Jute grass cloth. Showrooms, close-ups and installation shots at **[phillipjeffries.com](http://phillipjeffries.com)**.





Not in love with that plastic box fan you picked up during the last heat wave? Pass it along to Goodwill (or a less design savvy neighbor) and invest in the Otto. With three speeds, adjustable feet and an oiled wood frame it will keep you, your martini and, most importantly, your style cool. **\$199.99 from [swizz-style.com](http://swizz-style.com)**



Originally introduced in the '60s and brought back by original manufacturer KH Lighting, MoonSpun pendants give that vintage glow you're going for. Available in three sizes with five standard colors—plus the option for both custom sizes and colors. How fab would they look with your mint Color Craft spaghetti string glasses? **Starting at \$275 from [moonspunlights.com](http://moonspunlights.com)**



The reupholstered blue Thayer Coggin couch is paired with a John Keal for Brown Saltman coffee table whose top slides back to reveal a candle-powered coffee warmer. The area rug is from IKEA.





# Cult Of Personality

From  
Saarinen's trashcan  
to Warhol's Brillo pads,  
two children of the '50s  
roll around  
in the modernist stew.

Peter Swanson blames it on his Marcel Breuer–designed elementary school in Litchfield, Conn. In Bob Gregson's case, it was a 1959 *House Beautiful* paean to Frank Lloyd Wright. Whatever the cause of their obsession with modernist design, the boys got it bad.

"We've taken many trips to visit the great monuments of modern architecture," says Gregson. "We call them 'architreks.' Peter and I have roamed Corbu's Villa Savoye, Gehry's Guggenheim, Johnson's Glass House and of course Wright's Fallingwater."

The trips to Frank Lloyd Wright sites alone number more than 100: the Imperial Hotel—or what remains of it—in Nagoya, Japan; Taliesin, the Pew House, Wingspread and the Johnson Wax Building in Wisconsin; the 1939 Pope-Leighey Usonian house in Virginia; Kentuck Knob in Pennsylvania;



Bob Gregson (left) and Peter Swanson trekking through Philip Johnson's New Canaan complex.

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*text* Bromley Davenport

*photography* Robert Gregson





Opposite: In the living room, the red Womb chair and ottoman were purchased from Knoll about 10 years ago, and the vintage Saarinen tulip table was found at the Pier Antique Show in New York. Two plywood-back Ib Kofod Larsen chairs were reunited—one from a junk store and the other from the curb. Artwork includes a Sol LeWitt woodblock hanging over a Keith Haring lithograph next to the floor-to-ceiling window, and a hard-edge painting to their left by homeowner Bob Gregson.

Left: The owners discovered the original aqua blue under layers of paint on their front door and chose it for the trim as well.

Below: Connecticut industrialist Arthur Klepper designed the one-of-a-kind table in the hallway in 1947 for Wor-De-Klee, a joint venture between Klepper, Hans Wormann and J.F. Dex.

Taliesen West in Arizona; the Marin County Civic Center in California; the hemicycle house Wright designed for his son Robert near Washington, D.C., plus many more. And they have a knack for meeting FLW players—Edgar Tafel and Wes Peters for two—and for getting behind-the-scenes tours the average Joe Tourist doesn't even know about.

The pair's design fetish extends both forward and backward from their postwar birth years of 1947 and 1950 to embrace environmental designer Lawrence Halprin (Ghirardelli Square, the FDR Memorial), Dutch designer Rem Koolhaas (Seattle Public Library, Maison a Bordeaux) and architect Zaha Hadid (Vitra Fire Station, Cincinnati's Contemporary Arts Center). They collect fine artists, too.

"I'm a long-time Warhol fan," Gregson says. "I was fortunate to escort him around Hartford Art School in 1968 and I had him sign a Brillo box. In 1970 I visited Warhol's Factory on Union Square and I've met many of his superstars over the years. In fact we've met many of the artists we've collected—Josef Albers, Claes Oldenburg, Sol LeWitt, Keith Haring."

But back to the house: it was after visiting Wright's first Usonian, the Jacob House in Madison, Wisc., that the couple found their own home in Orange, Conn., a postwar modern with some Wrightian touches.

## All Wrighty Then

"In 1991, the house had been on the market for several years and a large portion of the property had already been developed as building lots," says Swanson, a physician.











"After we've returned from an 'architrek' we get inspired," says homeowner Bob Gregson. "Russel Wright's Manitoga inspired our walking paths, Carlo Scarpa inspired our terrazzo floors and we have also been greatly influenced by Breuer, Saarinen and Neutra, as well as Zaha Hadid and many contemporary architects."

The pair bought the four-bedroom home in 1991. "Over the years the cedar siding had been painted and much of the infrastructure needed updating due to the usual wear and tear," says Peter Swanson. Part of their exterior upgrade included new cypress siding with redwood splines that emphasizes the horizontal lines of the architecture.



*For more on Wright's modernism, see page 64 for Frank Lloyd Wright Mid-Century Modern, available at [atomic-ranch.com](http://atomic-ranch.com).*



"Real estate shoppers skipped over a modern, especially one in need of help. The house was largely in its original state with the exception of deferred maintenance and the removal of several windows. Over the years, the cedar siding had been painted and much of the infrastructure needed updating due to the usual wear and tear.

"We found out our home was built in 1956 by a young family with architectural insight. They contacted Marcel Breuer, who designed a nearby house, but he declined because he was in Paris designing UNESCO headquarters. Instead, they chose a local modernist architect, Carl Blanchard. The couple raised their family of five children here and, after about 25 years, sold it to another owner who lived here for approximately 10 years," Swanson says.

Gregson, the creative director for a culture and tourism group, addresses the home's Wright connection: "Usonianians were intended as Wright's answer to low-cost housing. He boasted economical materials with minimal

maintenance, modest size, open plans, carports and design stripped down to the basics," he explains.

"Our elements are similar: cypress siding, large glass windows, redbrick and open plan living areas—entry, living room, dining and kitchen flow together—while bedrooms are small and functional. Both the front door and the service entrance are off the large carport and an atrium cutout has a Japanese maple poking through. The fireplace mass, which usually ties into the center of the house in a Usonian, is at the far end in ours, creating a visual focal point that can be seen from the dining room and kitchen.

"The house is oriented at a 30°/60° angle to the sun's path, a Wright trademark, and the house is sited diagonally to the lot lines and street, which gives the illusion of a larger lot. Much of it remains wooded, and a fence extending from the walls of the house defines an outdoor area, which is also a Wrightian twist to making an outdoor room," Gregson says.

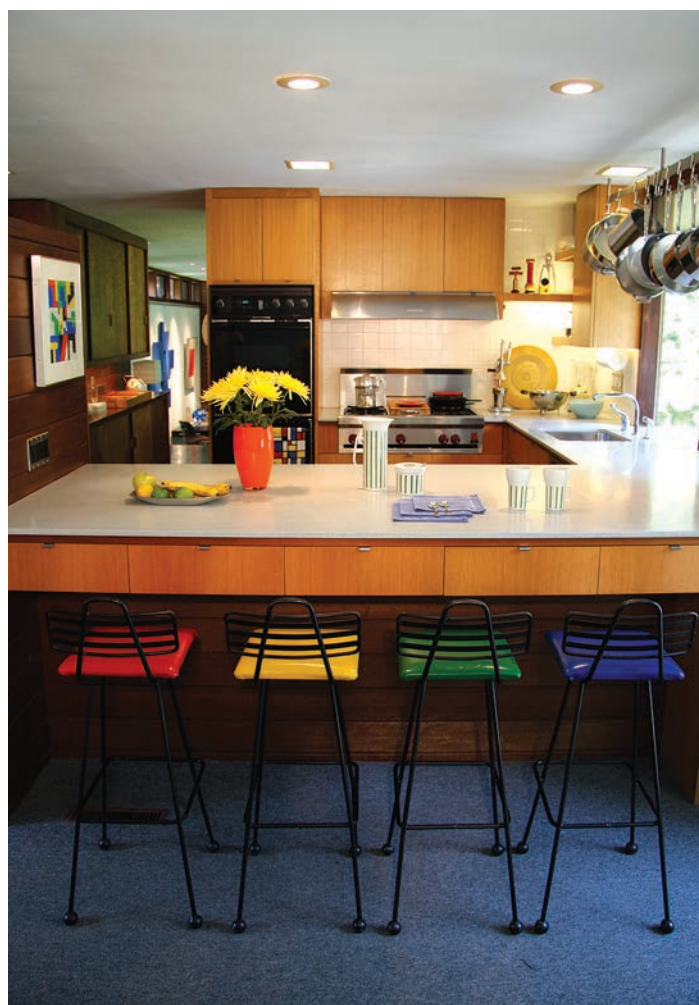




The dining area is lined with built-ins holding stainless steel serving items and hundreds of pieces of Tackett, Hall, Bennington Pottery and generic white ceramics, while the marble and birch table is set with Poppytrail Contempora by Metlox. The vintage Saarinen chairs were rescued from an office salvage company in the 1980s.

The four kitchen stools are from the Pier Antiques Show in NYC; their frayed seats were recovered in primary colors picked up from artwork hanging in the kitchen.

Glass shelves edged in wood display both vintage and modern collectibles including Eva Zeisel ceramics and a Philippe Starck juicer cum sculpture.





## Spin Doctors

The house came with a complete set of blueprints that showed a missing set of clerestories in the living room. Swanson and Gregson had them re-created and added terrazzo floors in the dining area, kitchen and hallway to tie the open plan together. They kept the footprint of the kitchen but designed new rift-oak cabinetry with Fountainhead solid surface countertops. Both the search for a replacement wall oven and the fireplace makeover in the adjacent living room epitomize the couple's tenacity and perfectionism.

"The Thermador CMT series double oven was a staple since the 1950s," says Swanson. "Its face changed with the times but it was always the workhorse of the modern kitchen. When we renovated, we kept the existing 1982 Thermador but planned to eventually replace it with a convection model, thinking it would always be available; wrong. It was discontinued for a wider oven, so in order to keep the same cabinetry, we had to find a new oven in the old dimensions. That's where eBay came in. I located a 1989 CMT still in its crate in California. It slipped right into the old enclosure; for fun we sent in the warranty card and got a confused call from a Thermador representative."

The fireplace was another research tale: "The original fireplace was cement block but somewhere along the way it was covered with fieldstone and the open-ended

The narrow window next to the refaced fireplace looks as if it could have been part of the original design. Bob Gregson designed the FLW-inspired fireplace screen as well as the white piece of art on the brick surround.

cantilever was closed in to create a traditional firebox," Gregson explains. The blueprints showed that steel beams anchored in footings supported the majority of the masonry mass. "We held our breath and had the stone jack-hammered off; the revealed cantilever held fast.

"Inspired by Wrightian brickwork, I dashed off a drawing of how we wanted the finished product to look," he continues. "Peter suggested red Norman brick but it isn't easy to find. A local supplier located a source in Indiana and we had several pallets shipped—perfect! The mason constructed a wide, raised bluestone hearth at seating height and then clad the whole masonry structure with the bricks inside and out. The grout lines were deeply raked a la Wright. And a thin vertical window was inserted between the fireplace and the paneled wall to separate it gracefully, allowing the fireplace to be read as a single mass."





## Habit Forming

In addition to tons of design and art books, the pair collects ceramics, midcentury furniture, the aforementioned artwork and myriad decorative objects. In 1986, a real estate tour of a New Haven brownstone turned into the genesis of one of their most extensive collections.

"Throughout the house, and heavily concentrated on metal racks in the basement, were scores of wonderfully simple cylindrical porcelain vessels. We soon learned that we had visited the home of Lagardo Tackett right after his death," Swanson says. "He is most known for his designs for Architectural Pottery, which dotted all the photo shoots in the Case Study Houses. The ceramics were his and the whole environment was impeccable. Sadly, we didn't buy the house and the family sold the contents to a dealer before we could intervene. But I began to research Tackett's work and vowed to collect as much as I could find." Their Tackett pieces now number more than 100.

Then there's the notorious trashcan story, which goes like this: "One of our architect friends worked closely with Eero Saarinen in the 1950s on projects such as the St. Louis arch



Clockwise from top: A Joe Atkinson desk houses a MOMA ceramic light fixture, a working Ericofon telephone and glass collectibles from Dino Martens, Carlo Scarpa, Alvar Aalto and an unknown Venetian. The Saarinen table holds Lagardo Tackett pieces. "Blue Balloon Dog" by Jeff Koons shares a table with Ruscha ceramics.





Clockwise, from above left: Other stealth vintage scores include a pair of Heifetz lamps (one seen here) and two plywood midcentury chairs from Goodwill. Lagardo Tackett heads, Swatch watches and bowties share a dresser top in the bedroom. For years Peter Swanson looked for two Herman Miller twin-size headboards for the master bedroom and was finally successful on eBay. A Zaha Hadid rendering hangs over the bed. A tea trolley and Ligne Roset Nomade couch in the library.

and the TWA terminal," says Gregson. "He arrived one day at our house with a cylinder of beige leather. 'Do you know what this is?' he said. We had no idea. 'It was Eero Saarinen's trashcan that he used in Michigan. I think you should have it.' We looked inside, unsuccessfully, for a few crumpled drawings but were thrilled nonetheless to be entrusted with this special treasure.

"We're compulsive collectors who enjoy research and collect only the things that we love," he explains further. "As our collection expands it unwittingly begins to be a visual expression of our personalities. The furniture, art-work and objects are as important as the architecture that contains them. Everything seems integrated—from garden to house to furniture to each object—which we believe is the essence of what modernism was, and hopefully still is." 📖



# ranchdressing

House parts ...  
midcentury collectibles ...  
the inside scoop on  
what's what  
and where to get it



**Q:** I purchased these two pieces at an estate sale (when they were peacock blue!), and the elderly owners told me they were purchased in Copenhagen in 1965. I paid \$5 for the couch and \$2.50 for the chair, then reupholstered them for a total of \$1,300. Any ideas on the company who built them would be appreciated.

**Karin Koller Webb**

**A:** Val Ibardolasa from Retro@Home in Emeryville, Calif., weighs in: "Wow! Where does she live? I wanna buy stuff for \$2.50 to \$5.00 too! I've had a few of these in the store and, based on the legs and the arms, I think these pieces may be manufactured by Dux of Sweden. They're ultra comfortable!"

**Q:** I have enclosed a picture of a nightstand, part of a Heywood-Wakefield bedroom set we bought several years ago. We are trying to find another one and have had no success. We can't find it in any Hey-Wake books, dealers have never seen one like it, and online inquiries go unanswered. Since you cover so many aspects of mid-century style, I am hoping you can help us.

**Elaine & Rich Barrick**

**A:** Heywood-Wakefield produced many lines, as was evident when we consulted two dealers who specialize in the maker and neither was immediately able to



*ID your nightstand. In Heywood-Wakefield Blond: Depression to '50s, available at [atomic-ranch.com](http://atomic-ranch.com), it sure looks like a Tempo M738, which dates from 1955 and measures 21" x 16". The pull appears to be original and the value in 2005 was estimated at \$250 to \$300.*

**Q:** Page 18 of the Winter 2008 issue features a white chair in two of the photos. I have that same chair, which I picked up at a local thrift store. It's a great piece:



the seat and back sit between the wooden side frames and it's able to recline or can even be used as a rocking chair. The tags are long gone and I can't seem to find any info about it. I was hoping that you would be able to shed some light on its origin.

**Taylor Forrestal**

**A:** *Peter Maunu replies:* "Your Danish Modern recliner is reminiscent of the designs of American Ed Wormley for Dunbar, or the Swedish firm Dux, but more than likely it is from a brand like Selig Furniture that imported pieces from Denmark. I was unable to find an exact designer, but assuming that the reclining function works properly and, with its exposed solid wood frame, (walnut or rosewood perhaps?), the chair is a nice practical midcentury modern piece. Though not a heart stopping design, it appears to be comfortable and well made and should last forever."

**Q:** I own a 1950s raised ranch in Chicago. Most of the ranches in the neighborhood are very similar in design except mine; the fact that it's unusual was part of its appeal when I bought it three years ago. However, the orientation of the house is a bit awk-

ward: there is no front door facing the street—I have two side entrances, one off the living room and the other off the kitchen.

It currently has metal casement windows original to the house. They are in fairly good shape and each has the original storm and screen. I am wondering if it is



best to keep the windows to preserve the original design or to replace them. If I were to replace the windows, what might you recommend? And what would help boost the curb appeal? My hope is to relocate the AC unit to the side of the house later this year. I have thought about staining the concrete decorative pieces on the chimney a dark brown. I am not a fan of the current awnings over the windows, but feel as if the house would look "naked" without them! Any suggestions would be much appreciated.

**Connie Mixon**

**A:** *Your '50s ranch has similar details to the Chicago Bungalow Belt 1920s homes: the cement windowsills and chimney details, the brick construction and perhaps other elements not seen in this view. It would have appealed to postwar buyers who liked traditional*



# more ranchdressing

Chicago bungalows, while capitalizing on a simpler shape with less ornamentation that was cheaper and quicker to build—a link between Arts & Crafts and the horizontal modernist ranches of the '60s if you will.

Your home is very charming, albeit quietly so, in our opinion. I'd urge you to never paint the original cement and to retain the windows, particularly if they still function well. Painted or stained cement always, always eventually peels. Those details lend authenticity that can't be replicated.

If you feel your facade is too blah, think about the windows and fascia boards painted a more sprightly color and new awnings (perhaps they have a valuable sun-blocking function?) that tie in with that color. For instance, gray-green trim and alternating green & putty-colored ribs on the awnings that would coordi-

nate with the trim and the cement details. You could also remove the awnings and have a more starkly modern look.

From the shadow on the house it looks like there is a sizable street tree; a couple of layers of landscaping might really make the facade shine and boost the curb appeal. It would be easy enough to camouflaged your air conditioner with several shrubs, which would be simpler than moving it.

*Need a renovation resource or wondering if that flea market find is anything?  
Send your questions and photos to  
[editor@atomic-ranch.com](mailto:editor@atomic-ranch.com)  
and we'll run them past our experts.*

## croutons

✕ I have some information for David Allen and Frank Steele regarding their Tap-Lite switches featured in Spring 2009. In 1957 Henry Dreyfuss designed them "in the round" to keep step with the famous round thermostat he did for Honeywell. The push button is an integral part of the switch and is not removable. Homeowners could use their elbows to push the button on or off if their hands were full.

Ask your neighbors if they have any of these switches or covers they would like to sell or get rid of. I've had great luck in my Houston neighborhood, as most of the houses had these switches.

### Don Emmite

✕ Bill Shields also wrote in to say that the Tap-Lites in his mother's Minneapolis ranch are still going strong after 53 years, and John Huggins reports that,



in his home, they are only found in the bathrooms, where they have matching wallpaper swatches behind the clear switch plates. He recommends a saved eBay search for 'Honeywell Tap-Lite' as the best bet.

# Before & After: Austin

*text & photography* Will Butterfield

*i*

first saw our house about a year before we actually bought it. It was really run down, with dead trees and more weeds than grass, but I could look past the negatives and liked all of the windows and the great midcentury lines. But since it was overpriced and my wife, Brette, and I were still in the middle of renovating our first house, I just drove by. A year later, with a newborn daughter in tow, we started looking for another house project. The 1962 ranch was still on the market and still too much money, but Brette agreed that it had potential, despite the inside looking as bad as the exterior.

Luckily, we were able to negotiate the selling price down to where a remodel made financial sense. While we were working out the financing, we discussed midcentury





modern upgrades with our banker, Robert Malina, and realized that he was not only a MCM fan, but also an Atomic Rancher, so working with him was a natural fit for us. Construction/remodel loans are tricky sometimes, but he made the process very easy.

A real plus was that we liked the floor plan as it was, so no walls needed to move. We immediately started planning the scope of the project so we could begin the day escrow closed. Our vision was an interior with modern, clean lines that still felt warm and inviting. Luckily, Brette and I have similar ideas and tastes, so deciding on what we wanted was pretty easy. Making our ideas into reality was considerably harder. While we had the luxury of doing the renovation before we moved in, we also had two mortgages in the interim so time was definitely a factor.





We tried to be as green as possible, which included installing energy efficient windows and sliding glass doors, exterior solar shades, Teregren bamboo floors, dual flush toilets and extra insulation. The hollow-core doors were in terrible shape, so we replaced them with solid ones to minimize the sound between the closely placed bedrooms. We also updated some of the electrical, which included adding recessed lighting in most rooms, simple industrial ceiling fans, hardwired smoke detectors and indoor and outdoor speakers. In all, about 20% of the drywall needed to be replaced and the rest was floated with almost no texture.

I did not want to do much, if any, of the work on this project because I had done almost all of it on two other remodels. But I did jump in on occasion to keep things on schedule or when I knew I could save us a lot of money—demo-ing the bathroom after our crew quit because the tile was too hard to get up, and installing some of the kitchen and bathroom cabinets after an

The den has two vintage pieces, a Broyhill credenza and a Vincent Brooks Day bird lithograph; the couch is from Crate & Barrel.

## Despite the hardships, it was all worthwhile

We ended up doing more extensive landscaping than planned, although it was money well spent because we spend more time in the courtyard than in our living room. Removing a large dead bois d'arc in the front of the house cost much more than expected because it is one of the densest trees. A 2" layer of gravel was topped with weed barrier then 2" of 5/8" crushed limestone. The limestone is nice because it compacts and keeps the surface firm. Surrounding the circle of grass is 3/16 steel edging that is allowed to rust. The fountain and planter on the right (see page 35 view) is made of the same material.







A home we saw in Atomic Ranch inspired us  
to create a courtyard in the front of the house



The couch and chairs are from IKEA, the rug is Crate & Barrel and the vintage coffee table was found on craigslist. Drywall in this room was replaced after we added insulation, and the fireplace is locally quarried limestone, as is the new privacy wall near the driveway and the crushed rock in the courtyard.

Opposite: The dining room benefits from a fresh paint scheme and a new bamboo floor and sliding glass doors. The four-light door on the right replaces a paneled one, allowing in more light from the courtyard.







unsatisfactory job by the trim carpenters. We neglected to hire someone to reinsulate the fireplace room ceiling so I did that one long night so the drywall would go up on time, and I also built the fence and gate. The worst task, though, was hand cleaning the fireplace rock with a wire brush. I should have power washed it like we did with the exterior rock, but by the time I thought of it, the new drywall was in.

Brette really has an eye for paint colors and interior design, so I stayed out of the way and let her do her thing. Since our house has a very open floor plan and it is relatively small—1,800 square foot, 3/2—we wanted the rooms to flow into one another. Brette chose a palette of browns, whites and neutrals with small splashes of color to add some contrast. Since we were working within a strict budget, we opted for high gloss IKEA cabinets for the kitchen and baths, and decorated the rest of the house with a mix of vintage finds, modern and traditional pieces. She did an amazing job with the interior on a pretty tight budget.

A home we saw in Atomic Ranch inspired us to create a courtyard in the front of the house. This would shield us



In the kitchen, we chose Dacor stainless steel appliances for their minimalist look and solid performance. Quartz countertops with recessed sinks in the kitchen and bathrooms make cleaning easy; the Zodiac kitchen counters are one of our favorite things in the house.



Brette really has an eye  
for paint colors and interior design

from a relatively busy street and allow us to leave the sliding glass doors without window treatments. Again, to do our part to be green, we wanted landscaping that used a minimal amount of water. We had a general idea of what we wanted to do, but called local landscape architect Robert Leeper to help us with the final design. He had some great ideas including making part of the courtyard wall out of stone that matched the original stone of the house. We love the space and spend a lot of time out there; a mostly rock yard really cuts down on the bugs and makes the whole yard like an outdoor living room.

The floor plan is perfect for our small family. We use every room and the house has a cozy feel while the vaulted ceilings and many windows make it open and airy. The natural light the house gets is amazing; even on cloudy days we don't have to turn on the lights. A few visitors have even tried to turn off our lights during the day only to realize that they weren't on!

Even though we knew to plan for cost overruns and extra time to complete the work, we still went over budget and took a few weeks longer than planned. The

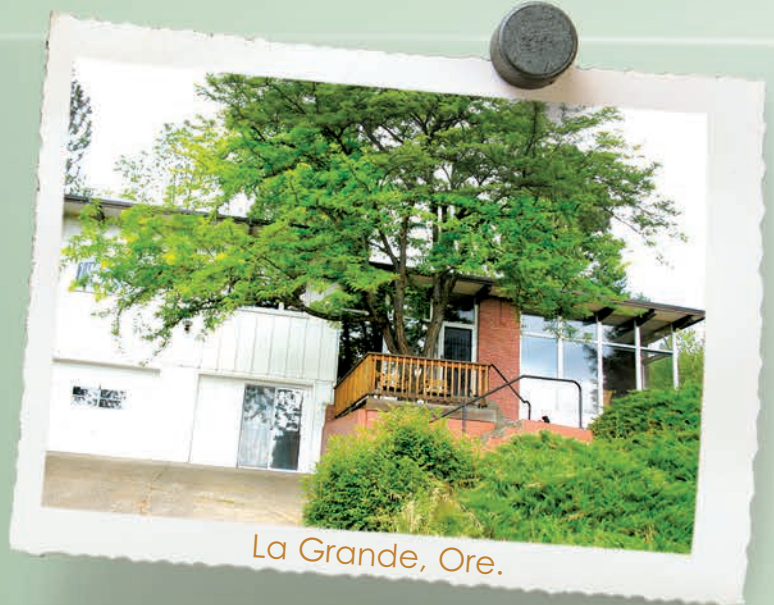
landscape is a work in progress—we still have the side yard to do, pavers to install in the front and a few plants, a deck and fence to add in the back yard. Despite the hardships, it was all worthwhile. We love the house and plan on staying for a long time—unless Atomic Ranch inspires us to take on another project ... 📖

*Realtor Brette Butterfield grew up in Santa Cruz before moving to Austin, where she met Will, a salesman; they have a three-year-old daughter, Mia.*





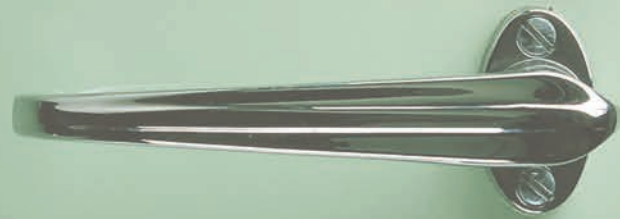
Columbia, Mo.



La Grande, Ore.



Knoxville, Tenn.





# home page

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## Columbia, Mo.

Our ranch dates from 1957 and was in wonderfully preserved condition when we bought it in 2006. Roman brickwork on the exterior and interior, knotty pine paneling in the basement, original seafoam green ceramic in the bathroom, blond bookshelves, cabinetry and doors (unpainted!), and almost all of the original fixtures. We have been trying to trace the home's history; the exclusively MCM neighborhood was developed in the 1950s by prominent Columbia-based architect Hurst John and he may have designed our house. It isn't big, but it is intelligently designed to give a feeling of spaciousness in a small area.

**Michael Yonan & Adam Connors**

## La Grande, Ore.

Our midcentury modern home is located in a rural town on the old Oregon Trail in the Blue Mountains of northeastern Oregon. This 1955 house is unusual for the area. We fell in love with it two years ago when we first entered the living room with its big beams and floor-to-ceiling windows. The view across the Grande Ronde Valley clinched the deal. We've been having fun painting, searching out inexpensive vintage furniture and planning renovation projects.

**Anne & Gary Olson**

## Knoxville, Tenn.

We love our home! Located in the West Hills subdivision, our rancher was constructed of all concrete block and beam with commercial grade aluminum framed glass in 1964. The roof is traditional white rock, and the floors are terrazzo throughout. Our neighbors and friends thought we were nuts to take on such a project—every wall inside was torn down and the total restoration took two years—but we're very proud of the outcome. Each plant, tree and flower was carefully selected and placed to bring the outdoors in. The kidney shaped pool in the back yard is just the icing on the cake.

**Beth Boline & Peggy Douglas**

Put your home on our fridge; send in a high-resolution photo or sharp snapshot and a couple of sentences about your cool pad for our next issues. See contacts page 7.









# Quite the Dansk Wienerbrod

(Danish pastry)

There's a Danish word that comes to mind when you visit the home of Linda and Claus Mercer. "Hygge" (pronounced hueg gaw) is a bit like "umami"—hard to translate but you know it when you taste it. Abundant well-being, family and friends gathered 'round the hearth with plentiful food and drink, simple pleasures enjoyed in tranquil surroundings—that scratches the semantics surface at least.

The Mercers came to New York in 1985 from Denmark, and five or six houses and states later, they and their two teenagers are happily at home in Hilltop, a slightly iconoclastic enclave in Bellevue, Wash. Its 40 postwar ranches are sited on 63 acres with a green belt,

Two blue Ox chairs by Hans Wegner are paired with Warren Platner side tables purchased at an Enron liquidation auction. Arne Jacobsen floor lamps, designed for the SAS Royal Hotel in Copenhagen, make this a great reading area at night. The coffee table is a Poul Kjaerholm PK61, and the Eilersen custom sectional is covered with Maharam fabrics. There are seven Poul Henningsen lamps in this view: five PH4/3 pendants in the hall and kitchen, a PH6 over the dining table and the budget-busting PH Artichoke overhead.

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text Michelle Gringeri-Brown

photography Jim Brown









sports field, tennis court and pool, and a pervasive community spirit. Developed by a group of local architects—Wendell Lovett, Lionel Pries, Perry Johanson, John Morse, Fred Bassetti, Paul Kirk and Roland Terry—in 1947, the Hilltop aesthetic was “straightforward contemporary in character,” with each home plan in harmony with its site. The neighborhood still draws its water from a well, eschews sewer connections and votes on improvements and alterations to their slice of nirvana.

Richard Corff, the founder of Seattle realty company 360° Modern, is also a resident. He and his family live in a Kirk-designed home that his wife, Elizabeth Robinson, grew up in; her grandmother was one of 18 founding families, building a Bassetti plan several doors down from the Kirk house.

“My interest in starting 360 was in getting people to look inward at places that have already been developed, that are already serviced by infrastructure—an enormous residential inventory that was being disparaged,” Corff says. “‘Split-level’ was a very derogatory term.”

Today’s residents include Microsoft families, doctors and other professionals, plus a smattering of artists and architects as well as second generations like his wife hankering to return home. “Hilltop originally attracted owners interested in modern architecture, but in the ’70s and ’80s some painful remodels happened,” he says. “In the last few years I’ve seen a shift back. To hear my neighbors speak about their homes and the architects who designed them with new interest makes me smile.”

Mary Norris of 360 helped the Mercers find their 1956 Wendell Lovett-designed home, which sat on a wooded acre lot when they bought it; they’ve since opened up the view. Although structurally sound, the 2,900-square-foot house needed repairs and energy efficiency improvements; Claus and Linda also wanted to upgrade some of the finishes and materials.

“The house is unique, being from the same time as

The front facade of the 1956 Wendell Lovett house has a one-level ranch appearance from the gravel drive. The wood-clad privacy wall has clerestories and ribbon windows that illuminate the living room, while the ground-level slot windows let additional light into the walkout basement family room. The walls facing the back yard and the end sections next to the chimney are all glass and, with the editing of numerous maples, the house is much brighter, a valuable commodity in the Northwest.



Two upstairs baths are largely original. The angled cabinetry has the same ribbed glass as on the kitchen/dining built-in. The homeowners are mulling over what to keep or if they should opt for a full-on makeover.

Claus Mercer collects scales, microscopes and other old scientific instruments, which he displays in his downstairs office. The artwork was done by the couple's daughter when she was 13.

The office has another Henningsen light fixture and two of six blue Egg chairs bought at the same Enron auction. Claus intended to come home with just one, but discovered after his bid was accepted that six were in the lot. "Yellow or blue?" he was asked. The Kjaerholm PK55 chair at the PK55 desk is one of his favorite designs: "To me this is some of the most interesting work that he did. You have an H-shaped piece of steel, a T-shaped piece of steel, the board, leather—it's more than just a chair, it's a piece of art." The artwork is "Cheval Bleu" by Walasse Ting and the curtains are from IKEA.













Around an Kjaerholm PK54 table are six Arne Jacobsen Series 7 cowhide chairs bought at a Danish auction. The family originally had three-legged Ant chairs, also a Jacobsen design. "They look pretty with the table," Linda Mercer says, "but every time you get up, they're on the floor." "If we bought more collectible vintage chairs for the dining room, we could only afford two and not six," adds Claus. "The period and authenticity of the architect's design is important to me but not the age of a piece itself."

Below and right: The kitchen and problematic entry (behind the dining storage wall) remain on the Mercers' remodeling backburner. Push the doorway outward or reconfigure the dining/kitchen footprint and lose original elements; hmmm ...



most of our personal furnishings and fixtures. It has large windows that flood it with natural daylight; there's a spectacular view of the surrounding area at night," says Claus, a consultant in the food industry. "It probably is best summed up when compared to a long search for the right frame for a favorite photo." In this case, the photo is an extensive collection of Danish-designed furniture and accessories.

Most of the repairs facing the Mercers were due to a once leaky roof that had rotted wood window frames, the front door and the sill under it. Number one on Claus' list was a can't-fail roof, but first the crew had to wait out two months of Biblical rain that fell in early 2006. This is Seattle, after all.

Come April, three layers of old roofing were removed and ceiling outlets for new lighting installed, followed by a layer of tar paper, then 4" of high density foam, another layer of tar paper, then 1/2" plywood, then a rubber membrane, then a steel roof, giving them an R25 hat for their house. A new front door was faced with the same steel material.

The blueprints showed Lovett was working with an 8' grid: the house is 72' long and 16' wide with posts and beams every 8'. This might imply that the new energy efficient windows the couple wanted would be easily found and installed. Not so.

"There's no 'standard' in this house so everything has to be made," says Linda, who assisted the carpenter and, with her visiting parents, painted the interior prior to moving in. "We have a carpenter who basically lived here for three months."

"Every window is a little bit different because of the setting of the frame," Claus explains, "and some of them aren't 90° angles. I'd show a run of windows to [glass



Replacing the single-pane windows is a painstaking process due to the number and variability of sizes; small sections open for cross breezes during the summer months. Two Henningsen PH 4/3 table lamps light the sectional area. Linda Mercer is mulling over adding some punches of color to the wall, one of the few upstairs areas that isn't glass or wood.





"We've always had lots of glass—  
we can't live without light, it's a must.  
I feel unhappy if I'm in a home that has no light."

—Linda Mercer

company estimators] and they'd just shake their heads."

Determined to preserve the integrity of Lovett's design, the Mercers measured and drew exact window dimensions, then brought the old piece of glass as a pattern for each new fixed pane. "We went to a place that carried individual glass units, or IGUs; none had frames on them, they were just raw glass with a seal," Claus says. "We'd open up the wood frame, install the new window and caulk it." This laborious, one-at-a-time approach was still a work in progress when we visited the house.

The couple made modest changes to the kitchen—replacing an upper cabinet with a window, changing out the appliances and faucet—and would still like to do a major remodel on both it and perhaps the baths. But they're of two minds when it comes to the importance of originality.

In the kitchen, Linda wants a wood floor, high-gloss lac-

quer cabinets without pulls, matte green glass counters and an industrial strength six-burner cooktop. She'd also like to incorporate a large antique table they currently have downstairs and stretch the kitchen into the dining area to include the slider to the balcony—and maybe expand the balcony as well.

"Claus would like to keep all the wood, while I think, Why not take a really shocking high gloss color and make [a section] stand out? I think we can mix it [up], put in a really modern sink or cabinets or an antique piece of furniture—something people wouldn't necessarily expect when you open the door," she muses.

The lack of a mudroom and a super narrow entry hall—you step inside the front door only to face the back of the dining room wall—led them to dream about pushing the door forward, completely redoing the kitchen footprint and maybe putting in a second set of stairs down to the fam-



# details



Under shag carpeting, the bedrooms had unfinished wood floors that the Mercers have been told are pecan or hickory. A diminutive Poul Kjaerholm PK1 rope chair sits next to Montana storage pieces.

The built-in between the kitchen and dining areas has sections of ribbed opaque glass that can slide to the left to provide an edited view of kitchen doings.

The 1928 Le Corbusier chaise longue and the adjustable height chrome and glass table designed by Eileen Gray in 1927 are now downstairs in the family room. A Hans Wegner steel-and-cord Flag Halyard chair designed in 1950 replaced them. Its leather headrest pillow and sheepskin throw make it a great place for a nap.

## You say Toe-ma-toe

Find yourself unsure of how to pronounce the names of the midcentury designers you've read about? Here's our guide to feeling less like an Ug-lee A-mare-a-kin:

**Piet Hein:** Peet Hine  
**Poul Henningsen:** Paul Henning son  
**Arne Jacobsen:** Ar na Yah cob sen  
**Poul Kjaerholm:** Paul Keer home  
**Eero Saarinen:** Eeee ro Sar ah nin  
**Hans Wegner:** Hahns Weg ner

—Timothy Sullivan

ily room. "Whatever projects we do, I just want to make it better," Claus attests.

As interesting as the frame is, the contents are also memorable. Claus admires the work of Poul Kjaerholm, Hans Wegner, Arne Jacobsen, Poul Henningsen and Piet Hein—Danes all—and dips into the Swiss/French pool with a few Le Corbusier pieces from the late '20s. He attributes their personal taste to growing up in northern Europe.

"Functional materials like steel are heavily used, from your mailbox to your doormat to your outdoor furniture and your coat hangers. People think in clean, simple lines and you get this acquired taste. I've personally really grown to appreciate it," he explains.

"Denmark has a history, a handful of classical architects who thought very functionally and weren't afraid of trying some materials that were tough to work with back then. Unfortunately, most of their stuff is very pricey."

"Claus gets very excited—Look how [the designer] did this; it's all one piece!" Linda interjects. "For me it's more about the material and the quality. It means a lot to me when things are natural—wool, cotton, glass."

Claus swings into his topic with vigor, enthusing about the Danish auctions and websites where they've purchased many of their pieces. These are shipped over in containers along with "Danish butter cookies, canned hams and salami sticks" in his food lexicon. "There are a couple of websites that will have 250 pieces of Arne Jacobsen this weekend alone. There'll be 1,000 light fixtures from Poul Henningsen."

He notes that even with a favorable exchange rate, by 2008 furniture prices on the Danish auction sites had doubled or tripled. "So it's still not for everybody," Linda com-

ments about the notion of mainstream modern.

"No, it's not," Claus admits. "[Furniture like this] used to be in reception areas or the [company] president's office; if you read the books about the architects, that was never the intention. Making it available to the masses never happened."

For all their interest in iconic designers, the Mercers aren't snobs and had IKEA furniture when they were first married as well as now in the kids' rooms and at their summer home in Denmark. "The Belle Center outside the Copenhagen airport has a permanent exhibition for the Danish furniture industry and an area with nothing but new pieces by designers following in the footsteps of the old designers—attending the same schools, espousing the same ideals—some high end, some doing really



Claus and Linda feeding the photo crew a smorgasbord lunch, complete with butter and bacon.

simple stuff for IKEA and the like," says Claus.

"When you dig deep and ask, Where did this [modern design] start? it's very apparent that whether [you see a home] in Australia, Japan or some exotic place in Sao Paolo, you've got something from Wagner, something from Arne Jacobsen—these [style influences] are everywhere." 🍷

*Interested in buying direct from Denmark? Email Claus Mercer at [danishclassics@q.com](mailto:danishclassics@q.com). For more on Northwest regional midcentury architecture, we recommend Winter 2008 & Spring 2009 back issues, available at [atomic-ranch.com](http://atomic-ranch.com).*



# modern masters

for your  
ranch:



Eero Saarinen (1910–1961)

## Eero Saarinen



*text* Timothy Sullivan

*Photos courtesy* Knoll, Inc.

**E**ven if you've never heard Eero Saarinen's name, chances are you know his work. One of America's leading midcentury architects, he was the mastermind behind many well-known U.S. buildings including the Gateway Arch in St. Louis. Trained in both sculpture and architecture, Saarinen designed not only buildings but also innovative modern furniture that was decidedly comfortable, too. If you're looking for chairs and tables that will add sculptural flair to your home without breaking the bank—or your back—Eero Saarinen's work might just fit the bill.

Saarinen grew up surrounded by art and architecture. His mother, Loja, was a talented weaver and textile designer. His father, Eliel, was thought to be Finland's greatest architect. Until their move to the United States when Eero was 13, Eliel's architecture studio was the heart of the Saarinens' daily life. In 1925 the family joined the Cranbrook educational community in Bloomfield Hills, Mich., where Eliel subsequently designed many buildings.



Opposite, far left: One version of Saarinen's office chair; others on page 63.

Opposite, left: Charles Eames and Eero Saarinen designed the Organic chair in 1940, but it wasn't until 10 years later that manufacturing techniques caught up with their forward-thinking design. The new high back version introduced by Vitra is both taller and more generously proportioned than the standard petite model. Photo: vitra.com

Saarinen said that his Womb Chair was designed to "shape the slouch" and be a comfortable modern replacement for the Victorian lounge chair.

A campus of arts-focused schools, Cranbrook was a hotbed of young design talents, including friends and future collaborators Charles and Ray Eames and Florence Schust (later Florence Knoll).

After Cranbrook, Saarinen traveled to Paris to study sculpture, then returned to the United States to obtain an architecture degree at Yale. Post graduation, he spent more time in Europe and Africa before joining his father's firm. It was during this period that Eero Saarinen began to get attention for his furniture. In 1940, he collaborated with his old friend Charles Eames on the design of a furniture series for the Museum of Modern Art's "Organic Design in Home Furnishings" competition. Their chair designs, which used novel materials like upholstered and veneered plywood, caught the attention of the prominent judges and one won first prize.

After Eliel's death in 1950, Saarinen set up his own architecture office, which he ran until his premature death in 1961. During this time, he took a keen interest in furni-

ture design and created many popular pieces for Knoll, the furniture manufacturer co-owned by former Cranbrook friend Florence Knoll. Saarinen viewed his designs for Knoll, from his iconic Grasshopper and Womb chairs to the widely used office chairs and "Tulip" series, as a matter of sculpture. Unlike many other furniture designers, however, he went beyond aesthetics to model his forms on modern postures. He wanted to design furniture for the way people actually sat.

The Womb chair was a great example: Florence Knoll requested "a chair that was like a basket full of pillows ... something I could curl up in." That made sense to





The iconic Tulip chairs and tables (above and right) cleared up the “slum of legs” that Saarinen thought cluttered the modernist house.

The Grasshopper was the first chair that Saarinen designed for Knoll.



Saarinen, who had observed a need for a comfortable chair to replace the overstuffed Victorian versions. He observed that by midcentury the very way we liked to sit had changed. People preferred to slouch, but were being offered furniture that forced them into more upright positions. In creating the Womb chair, he said that he “attempted to shape the slouch in an organized way by giving support for the back as well as the seat, shoulders and head.” The result was the first fiberglass chair to be produced in America, an immensely comfortable lounge chair that may even be more popular today than it was initially.

Saarinen also hated what he called “the slum of legs” to be found in most American households. He observed that since ancient times, chairs and tables had been made with legs that were an integral component of the structure.



## Saarinen Buildings to Visit



1. The Gateway Arch (1947), St. Louis, Mo.
2. Main Terminal, Dulles International Airport (1958-1962), Chantilly, Va.
3. Terminal 5 at JFK International Airport (1956-1962), New York, N.Y., shown above
4. Kresge Auditorium and Chapel (1950-1955), MIT, Cambridge, Mass.
5. Miller House (1957), Columbus, Ohio

Since the advent of modernism, however, these pieces had often been built of two separate components: plastic or wood combined with metal. To solve the problem, he engineered single-pedestal tables and chairs that would appear as if the various parts were one. The "Tulip" series, available in select colors, fabrics, woods, stones and laminates, was a hit. They were used in American homes and public spaces for decades, and are hugely popular today.

Almost 100 years after Eero Saarinen's birth, homeowners and interior designers have rediscovered his comfortable chairs and elegant tables, many of which fall into the high-end portion of the economic scale. But there is good news for the buyer with limited resources: It is still possible to find vintage Saarinen furniture for budget prices. Savvy consumers watching eBay or Craigslist will find price points that compete with the likes of IKEA. In certain locations, it is even possible to discover free chairs being offered from offices and lobbies for local pickup. With a little effort and some fabric, these timeworn items can be reupholstered into gems with many years of enjoyment still ahead.

*Timothy Sullivan is an art historian interested in midcentury furniture and decorative arts.*

*Learn more about Saarinen in the mighty little Taschen book by that name, just \$14 at [atomic-ranch.com](http://atomic-ranch.com); see page 65.*



Saarinen's executive and office chairs were comfortable to sit in and make great dining chairs, too. The armchair versions are used just for that purpose at the Gregson/Swanson house, shown on page 24.





# atomicbooks



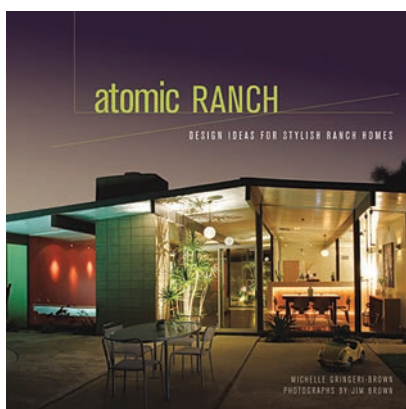
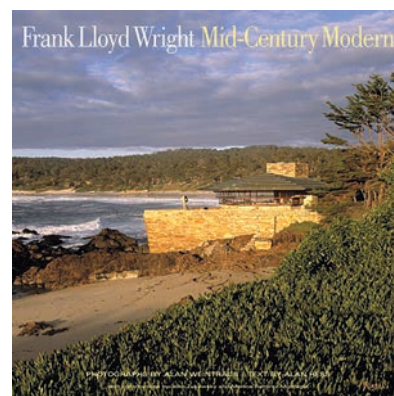
**Ranch Houses:  
Living the California Dream**  
by David Weingarten & Lucia Howard

*new!*

A largely picture-driven book thanks to Joe Fletcher's photography, the writing style is casual, accessible and brief after the 20-page historical introduction. Beautifully covering 14 midcentury homes—some are Top 10 candidates like the Neutra on the cover—it expands your ranch vocabulary to include others dating from the 1800s, as well as six more recently built interpretations. Hardcover, 240 pp., \$50

*new!* **Frank Lloyd Wright Mid-Century Modern**  
by Alan Hess

Nicely captured in Alan Weintraub's color photography, this hardcover book looks at Wright's late-career residences, which include Fallingwater, the Seth Condon Peterson cottage, the Usonian houses and many other unabashedly modern homes built in the Midwest and beyond. Lesser-known designs such as his hemicycles and the Marshall Erdman prefabricated homes are included, and the photography offers a nice mix of site, interior and detail views. The next best thing to an architectural pilgrimage, as readers slip inside homes rarely open to the public. 336 pp., \$55



**Atomic Ranch: Design Ideas for Stylish Ranch Homes**  
by Michelle Gringeri-Brown & Jim Brown

New to the magazine and hungry for content from our early issues? Complete your midcentury reference shelf with an autographed copy of our coffee-table book. From budget decorating and neighborhood preservation to high-end remodels and online resources, there's plenty of inspiration in its pages. Nu skool? Available on Kindle from Amazon; Old school? Buy it from us. Hardcover, 192 pp., color photos, \$39.95

**Back Issues**  
**\$6.95;**  
**sample content at**  
**atomic-ranch.com:**  
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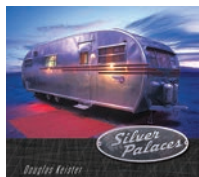
no. 20, Winter 2008



no. 21, Spring 2009



no. 22, Summer 2009



## Silver Palaces

Airstream, Curtis Wright and Shasta aluminum travel trailers and their diminutive interiors, as well as vintage vehicles that might pull them—from a 1965 Plymouth Sport Fury to a 1937 LaSalle Sport Coupe—get the star treatment in this fun softcover book. Douglas Keister, 160 pp., \$24.95



## Inspiring 1950s Interiors

Over-the-top rooms from Armstrong Flooring vintage advertising are a great guide to re-creating authenticity in your own ranch. What colors were they using in living rooms? What bath fixtures should I be looking for at the salvage yard? Softcover, 176 pp., \$29.95



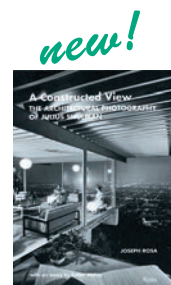
## The Vintage Home

A small hardcover book from the UK that brings to mind Terence Conran titles of the '70s. The room-by-room approach is helpful—the kitchen section chats about cabinetry, dining furniture, flooring, appliances and tableware—and inspires one to think beyond the usual suspects when decorating your home. Judith Wilson, color photos, 144 pp., \$19.95



## Saarinen

A nice volume focusing on Eero Saarinen's architecture, including the St. Louis arch, Case Study House #9 and the TWA and Dulles terminals, as well as his Tulip and Womb chairs and collaborations with Charles Eames. This readable small book profiles 21 of his notable designs with a great mix of vintage and contemporary photography. Pierluigi Serrano, softcover, 96 pp., \$14



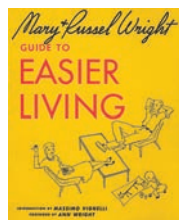
## A Constructed View: The Architectural Photography of Julius Shulman

The celebrated photographer's work in this hardcover b&w book includes the architecture of Koenig, Lautner, Schindler, Lowey, Saarinen, Eames, A. Quincy Jones, Neutra and more. It entertainingly covers biographical information along with Shulman's photographic staging and relationships with modernism's biggest names. Joseph Rosa, 224 pp., \$50



## Little Boxes: The Architecture of a Classic Midcentury Suburb

Westlake, the quintessential postwar neighborhood in the Bay Area, gets the glamour treatment in this attractive hardcover book looking at the "boxes made of ticky-tacky." Built on tight suburban lots, the neighborhood and its unique architecture is inspiring. Rob Keil, 144 pp. \$35.00



## Guide to Easier Living

This reprinted vintage book addresses modern living Wright-style, from organizing household chores to streamlining the dining table. Of particular interest are the sections on contemporary floor plans and Russel and Mary Wright's philosophy of informal living. A great look at the couple behind American Modern. Wright, softcover, b&w illus., 202 pp., \$18.95



## Forgotten Modern: California Houses 1940-1970

Custom Modernist homes—from Edward Fickett ranches and a condo by William Cody, to Wright-disciple Foster Rhodes Jackson's compound in Claremont—are covered in Alan Hess' thorough text. Some 25 architects are explored in Alan Weintraub's 300 contemporary photos, including Mark Mills' organic Bay-area vernacular. Hardcover, 280 pp., \$39.95



## Eames

This small softcover book is a concise overview of the designs and talents of both Charles and Ray Eames. Highlights include their films, two Case Study houses, early plywood experiments and their numerous chairs. Gloria Koenig, 96 pp. \$13.50



## Heywood-Wakefield Blond: Depression to '50s

A definitive softcover volume on H-W's birch modern and streamline '30s pieces with vintage photos of upholstered pieces, tables, chairs and case goods; includes current values. Leslie Piña, softcover, 248 pp. \$29.95



## Tiki Road Trip: A Guide to Tiki Culture in North America

This softcover guide to tiki bars and their signature drinks, as well as kitschy restaurants and motels, is a good handbook for sampling local hangouts or planning your next road trip. James Teitelbaum, b&w images, 360 pp., \$16.95



# Working Class

When your house  
drives you buggy

*text* Jon Pearson

*photography* Shelly Sukstorf & the author



We made cutouts in several walls, the most notable in the tiki room, a former small bedroom. Standing in front of the wall that divided it from the dining room, I agonized over whether to tear it out and lose a bedroom, thinking about hurting resale value; it was one of the best moves in the remodel.

# Heroes



**Several years ago,** I was playing harmonica on stage at a local barbecue joint in Omaha with some friends from Oklahoma City. After one of the sets, drummer Michael Newberry (formerly with Watermelon Slim and the Workers), decked out like a rainbow trout in a metallic blue sharkskin suit, pointed at my Birkenstocks and said, “You sound like a bluesman, but you sure don’t dress like one.”

Mike took me aside and introduced me to the hip world of vintage clothes. This truly was a milestone moment that led to collecting midcentury artifacts of all kinds. I already felt a kindred connection with music from that era, so it made sense for me to channel it into other areas of my life. Within a week I had scored a pair of vented 1940s Florsheim dress shoes at a local estate sale, and nearly a decade later I’m still hooked.





## bringing it on home

Omaha isn't exactly a mecca of period modern homes—especially ones that were in my price range of \$100,000 to \$130,000. But I was fortunate to stumble upon a very enthusiastic realtor who humored me and understood my quirky vision of a home. Six months into the arduous search, I spied a grainy photo of a seemingly modern flat-roofed home online. I called my realtor, and we arranged to meet within the hour.

I arrived first, so I checked out the exterior of the 1961 house. Looking past the hideous peeling paint job, unhinged screen door, weed-ridden yard and dangling soffits, I admired the roof line and spotted the coolest Googie-inspired feature I'd ever seen on a home—a boomerang roof support. I walked up and grabbed the boomerang and, even though the iron was neglected and rusted, I felt a jolt as my heart raced. I knew right then I was going to buy the house.

My realtor arrived and we went inside. Awkwardly, the owner, a single mother in the midst of a messy divorce who was over her head with the mortgage, was home. The interior was in an even worse state of disrepair and its 1,250 square feet felt cramped and claustrophobic. But I could definitely see potential.

I loved the vaulted, beamed ceilings and I thought the kitchen with the original cabinets could be salvaged. A large unfinished basement was a big plus with its high ceilings and walk out patio, but the second biggest (and

admittedly somewhat irrational) selling point was the fall-out shelter buried beneath the garage. What's an atomic ranch without an atomic bomb shelter? I was home.

## rock the house

I cut a deal within a week, paying \$108,000. The day I closed in 2006 I arrived to find an orange Chromcraft glass and acrylic dining set waiting on my lawn, courtesy of my friend "Retro Larry" Holloway, then-owner of the vintage clothing and furniture shop Retro Rocket. I was also pleasantly surprised to find the original blueprints lying on the kitchen counter. I subsequently discovered the house was a one-of-a-kind design dreamed up by the owner and a local architect. Like its first owner, the house definitely stands out in the neighborhood of traditional, boxy 1960-era tract homes.

That night, I invited a carpenter buddy of mine over and, as we toasted the house with a couple of Shiner Bocks, we tore away the drywall that covered the cutout to the basement, beginning a three-month renovation. The place certainly wasn't inhabitable at the time, but I still couldn't believe I actually owned a house and I just wanted to be in it. Returning around midnight, I flipped on the dining room light. As my eyes adjusted, I had the eerie sensation of the floor moving. I turned up the dimmer only to reveal hundreds if not thousands of cockroaches scurrying for the safety of the baseboards.



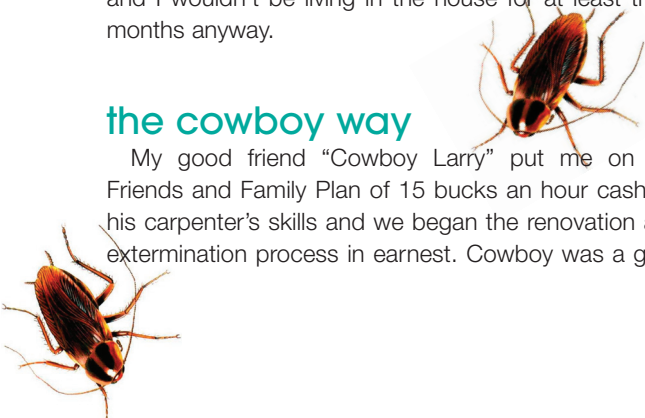


In a state of horrified revulsion I instinctively went “Mommy Dearest”—stomping and smashing as many of the vile creatures as possible. As I investigated the rest of the house, I realized I was vastly outnumbered: the roaches had infested every room of the house, with the epicenter of the horde located in the basement, where they covered the walls and dropped from the ceiling. Several were the size of matchboxes. I was sickened, saddened and seething.

The next morning I called my realtor to inform her of the pestilence. The *Reader’s Digest* upshot was the previous owner denied any knowledge of the pests (this despite the jug of roach killer she left behind in the garage) and, in the state of Nebraska, roaches do not need to be disclosed on a selling contract because they don’t compromise the structural integrity of the home. I was the new owner of an Atomic Roach Motel. Thankfully, family members and friends talked me off the ledge by pointing out that roaches can be exterminated and I wouldn’t be living in the house for at least three months anyway.

### the cowboy way

My good friend “Cowboy Larry” put me on the Friends and Family Plan of 15 bucks an hour cash for his carpenter’s skills and we began the renovation and extermination process in earnest. Cowboy was a god-





The bulk  
of my  
furniture  
is  
thrift shop  
and garage sale  
treasures




send throughout the process. He took my harebrained schemes in stride and offered priceless architectural and psychological advice. If I fretted about tearing out a wall, he'd say, "If you don't like it, we'll put it back," and start cutting. Three months, several rounds of extermination and about \$25,000 later, I was ready to move in.

The exterior was now freshly painted and the soffits repaired. Inside, every wall and ceiling had been repainted or resurfaced. Oak floors in the bedrooms were refinished and cheap Pergo-wanna-be replaced with new hardwood throughout the living and dining rooms and the kitchen. The bathroom was a total remodel, and a metal laminate backsplash, over-stove microwave and downlights were installed in the kitchen. Its original bright turquoise counters screamed "1960s," but they were just too gouged to salvage, so I had gray Formica boomerang-patterned laminate installed.

The bulk of my furniture is thrift shop and garage sale treasures, and I've fortunately been able to furnish the house within my relatively modest means. Among my prized pieces are a curved vintage sectional in the living room; a walnut Danish Mod bedroom set, desk and credenza/bookshelf; Chinese dragon-emblazoned rat-

tan furniture; and a newly acquired Heywood-Wakefield Ashcraft bar and stools that I picked up on craigslist for \$50. All of the light fixtures were replaced with vintage pieces (my favorites being the original George Nelson bubble lamps salvaged from an old ballroom in a neighboring town), and the list goes on and on.

While they say a house is never truly done and I envision several future projects, for now I am extremely content. I truly hope my story can provide a sense of hope and inspiration for other readers who believe they can only dream of owning a slice of midcentury heaven. With patience and persistence, it certainly can be done on almost any budget.

I still look forward to coming home from work every day, and I'm proud and happy to confirm I no longer have any unwanted roommates. I guess you could say I've checked in and they've checked out. 

*Jon Pearson is an avid collector of cool stuff from days of yore, a budding photographer and a blues harp weekend warrior when he's not working at Quality Living, which provides rehab services for adults with brain and spinal cord injuries. MCM collector Shelly Sukstorf is an aspiring photographer who specializes in weddings and portraiture; see her work at flickr.com/photos/slstudio.*

# Prevailing Trends



*text* Christina Slattery & Emily Pettis  
*photography* Mead & Hunt





In 1953 Strauss Brothers Company introduced Lincoln, Neb., to Trend Homes and modern living. Strauss Brothers planned for approximately 650 homes in their Eastridge subdivision on what was once the city's far east side. More than 50 years later, Eastridge's collection of Trend Homes retains its 1950s modernist appearance, optimistic spirit and vibrancy.

Jill Dolberg, historic buildings survey coordinator with the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office, grew up a few blocks away and remembers the area fondly. "My family lived in Eastridge before I was born and we drove through the neighborhood weekly on our way to church. As a child, it was always one of my favorite neighborhoods with its wide, tree-lined drives and the steady rhythm of houses with similar massing and setbacks. Now as a preservation historian, I appreciate the same things, but see more unity in their design and understand the snapshot of the '50s that this area represents in Lincoln."



## Lincoln's New Trend

What set Eastridge apart from other postwar neighborhoods of the era was the planning that went into the designs and the incorporation of modern conveniences. In conjunction with Strauss Brothers, the University of Nebraska conducted a survey of 600-plus Lincoln families to identify what they wanted in a modern home. Utilizing the survey results, Strauss Brothers teamed with Lincoln architects John and George Unthank to develop a series of residential designs for their newly platted subdivision. The result was a one-story, L-shaped home with an integrated carport or garage that reflected the popular ranch style. The name "Trend Home" referred to the mid-century trend of natural, comfortable living, and for more than half a century the simple homes have accommodated evolving lifestyles and changing family needs.

The development was promoted in brochures and newspaper advertisements highlighting popular themes of the postwar period—the importance of family and home ownership, and how modern design improves daily living. Early promotions proclaimed "Home ownership is the bulwark of our free economy—every tree or plant a homeowner cares for carries its roots with it to new and greater

depths in the community" and "Everything about this Trend Home will make it easier for you and your family to enjoy a richer life in your day-to-day living. Its spirit is contagious."

To further entice homebuyers, Strauss Brothers erected a full-scale model home in Gold's department store in downtown Lincoln. According to the *Lincoln Sunday Journal and Star*, it was the first time that such a model home was erected in the Midwest. Strauss Brothers cross-marketed with Gold's to showcase the home's interior and highlight its customizable products, with the store's interior designers on hand to provide advice on color schemes and fittings such as carpets, draperies, wall coverings and furniture.

## Life's Finer Things

Homeowners could purchase a base model Trend Home for \$11,775 to \$14,575, including the lot, driveway paving, water hook-up and closing costs. To personalize the standard L-plans, buyers would select exterior finishes from a palate of stone and brick veneers and wood siding. Other customizable features included planters, landscaping, patios, fireplaces, central air conditioning, built-in wall ovens and cooktops, and enclosed carports.









The first Trend Home models were the two bedroom Trendcrest and Dentrend, which featured a combined living and dining area and single carport. The Dentrend model offered an extra den-sized room that could alternatively be used as a third bedroom. A larger three-bedroom Tritrend model boasted a separate dining area off the kitchen and a double carport or garage.

Like many of the period, Trend Homes were designed to maximize indoor-outdoor living and improve interior flow. Window walls and patios provided a transition between the exterior and interior living spaces. In most

were placed in blocks of six or nine to create a picture window. Living rooms also included a large entryway, tile floors and shoulder-height ribbon windows on the sidewall that allowed for optimal furniture placement.

In an attempt to create the housewife's ideal kitchen, Strauss Brothers studied women working in their own kitchens. The result was eight variations that minimized moving and carrying and provided more countertops, cupboards and dining space. Innovative bathroom features included a combination bathtub-shower with a structural glass surround, a built-in lavatory known as a lavonette, a large medicine cabinet with sliding mirror doors, ample storage space and towel bars.

## By 1956, 300—plus Trend Homes were erected

designs, the main entry was situated so that traffic could flow to the kitchen and dining room, basement or bedrooms without using the living room as a hallway.

The initial planning survey concluded that homebuyers wanted larger living spaces. Strauss Brothers responded with a 15' x 24' living room at the rear of the house, removed from high-traffic areas. The rooms overlooked private outdoor living spaces rather than the street, and multipaned Andersen Flexivent awning-style windows

By 1957 Strauss Brothers moved away from the standard L-plan and introduced new designs to reflect changing architectural styles and tastes. The 400 Series split-level model featured a combination family room/kitchen, an attached two-car garage and an optional fourth bedroom to accommodate larger families. The family room/kitchen was advertised as a "new adventure in space," while the kitchen was coined a "wife saver" since it had two windows above the sink to make washing dishes more agreeable. Basements were promoted as







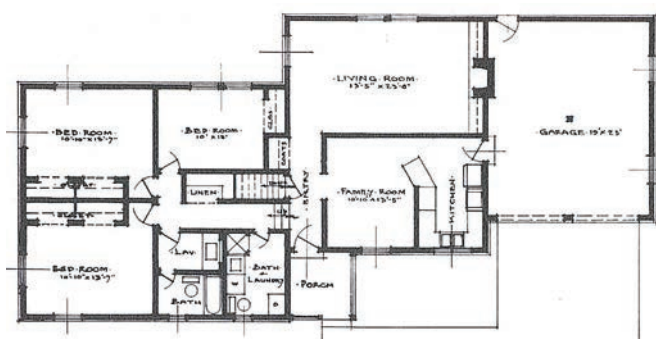


potential rumpus rooms or a workspace for the family handyman, tempting would-be buyers with “If 1957 is your year to enjoy the finer things in life, why not move in?”

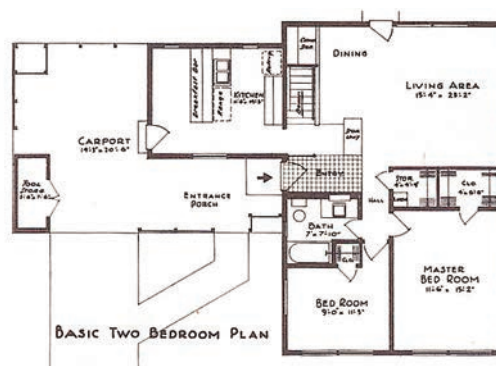
Dolberg recalls her family’s experience: “My parents’ first home was in this neighborhood. They were among the last to buy in the area in 1958 and they were struck by the number of residents that were in the same stage of life that they were in—young married families with several children. They remember the children most of all—gangs of them roaming the neighborhood safely, congregating in one back yard or another, or playing baseball in one of the few remaining empty lots. It was a wholesome, safe place to live.”

## Trend Home Legacy

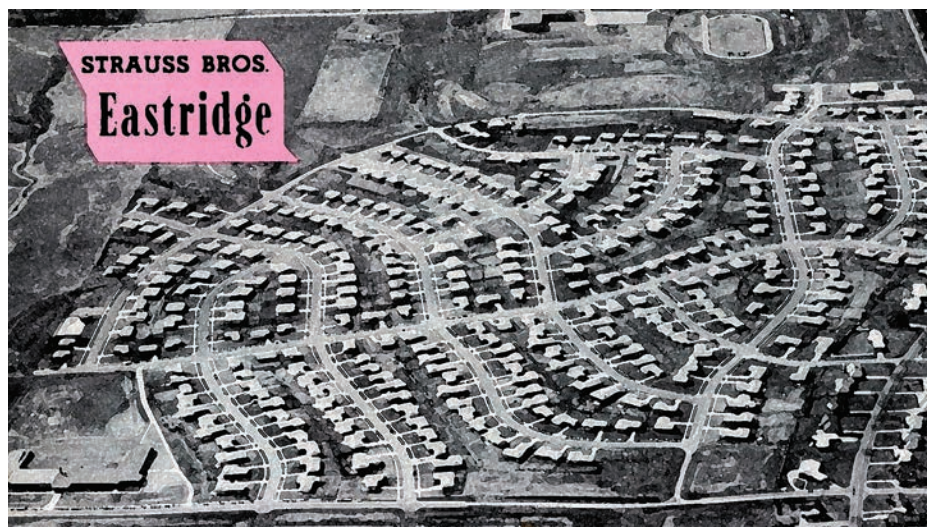
Eastridge proved to be quite popular: before construction even began, more than 20 homes had been sold. By 1956, 300-plus Trend Homes were erected. Today the neighborhood includes a small number of original owners along with newer residents who admire these homes. Jeff Chadwick, a Lincoln architect who appreciates modernism, was drawn to the simplicity of the Trend design when his family purchased an 800 Trend model in 2002. As Chadwick says, “Even after almost 50 years, the simple modern design and open floor plan works remarkably well with the changing



The 400 Series, introduced in 1957, had a split-level floor plan and was larger than earlier models.



The Trendcrest floor plan features two bedrooms at the front of the house and a large living room that overlooks a private backyard patio.



A 1957 promotional booklet highlighted Eastridge’s wide sidewalks and other family friendly features.

Photos courtesy of the City of Lincoln




needs and wants of our family.”

In an effort to increase awareness of the neighborhood's history, the City of Lincoln historic preservation program and the Nebraska State Historical Society's Historic Preservation Office commissioned a booklet to celebrate Eastridge and its Trend Homes. Ed Zimmer, Lincoln's historic preservation planner, describes Eastridge as “a creative development firm's response to the housing demand after World War II that has matured into a friendly, handsome neighborhood. Eastridge remains a valuable resource of quality homes of modest size.” He is pursuing a nomination of Eastridge to the National Register of Historic Places.

As you drive the curvilinear tree-lined streets and pass

the various Trend Home models, you get a sense of the area's history and unique character. The neighborhood retains a strong flavor of the 1950s, and when walking along the wide sidewalks it is easy to envision the smiling mothers and small children featured so prominently in early ads. The marketing slogan still rings true: “Any way you look at it—Eastridge is a great place to live!”

*Christina Slattery and Emily Pettis are senior historians with Mead & Hunt, Inc., a national multidisciplinary consulting engineering and architecture firm. Mead & Hunt completed the architectural survey of Eastridge Trend Homes and developed the booklet to foster an appreciation for the history of the neighborhood.* 



Jeff Chadwick (2)

Although recently renovated, Jeff Chadwick's Trend kitchen retains much of its original simple design.



The garden entry on Chadwick's 800 Trend has modern screen dividers that reflect the midcentury spirit.



# atomic events

**September 24–27 San Francisco**

## **San Francisco 20th Century Modernism Show & Sale**

Fifty 20th-century dealers at the Herbst Pavilion at Fort Mason Center, with an opening night gala to benefit the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. [sf20.net](http://sf20.net)



2008 tour photo, Robert Lemmeyer

**October 3 Vancouver, B.C.**

## **Mid-Century Modern Residential Bus Tour**

The Vancouver Heritage Foundation's annual MCM bus tour of significant modern homes runs from 1 to 6 p.m.; details at [vancouverheritagefoundation.org](http://vancouverheritagefoundation.org).

**October 10 U.S., Canada, Mexico City**

## **DOCOMOMO Tour Day**

The preservation group dedicated to modernism adds Toronto, Montreal, Halifax, Fredericton, St. John's, Peterborough and Quebec City to its annual tour day in several dozen U.S. cities. Log on to [docomomo-us.org](http://docomomo-us.org) to see what's happening near you.

**October 13–17 Nashville**

## **Sustaining the Future in Harmony with our Pasts**

The National Trust for Historic Preservation's conference emphasizes sustainability and LEEDs this year. Twenty-first century historic resources surveys and advocating for '50s–'70s landmarks are among the Recent Past workshops at [nthpconference.org](http://nthpconference.org).

**November 6–8 Winnetka, Ill.**

## **Winnetka Modernism**

Thirty minutes from Chicago, the village of Winnetka opens its 20th modernist show to an expected 50 dealers and 3,000 buyers. [winnetkamodernism.com](http://winnetkamodernism.com)

**November 12–16 NYC**

## **Modernism + Art20**

This year, 35+ modern vendors join forces with the international art dealers of Art20 at the Park Avenue Armory; preview on Thursday, sales Friday through Monday. [sanfordsmith.com](http://sanfordsmith.com)

**December 4–6 Miami**

## **Miami Modernism Show & Sale**

Now scheduled for Art Basel Weekend, 60 dealers' wares will be on offer at the J.L. Knight Center at the Miami Hyatt Regency. [miamimodernism.net](http://miamimodernism.net)

**December 5–6 San Francisco**

## **Art Deco and Modernism Sale**

Deco the Halls features 200 dealers at The Concourse Exhibition Center, plus walking tours, a fashion show and swing dance performances. [artdecosale.com](http://artdecosale.com)

**Through January 10 San Diego**

## **Masters of Mid-Century California Modernism: Evelyn and Jerome Ackerman**

A retrospective of the Ackermans' 50-year artistic career, which includes ceramics, textiles, paintings, drawings, mosaics and more at the Mingei International Museum. [mingei.org](http://mingei.org)

**February 12–14 Palm Springs**

## **Palm Springs Modernism Show & Sale**

During 10 days of city-wide fun—films, lectures, bus tours, gallery openings, a vintage car show, tours of the Frey House II—the Dolphin show expects 80 dealers at the Palm Springs Convention Center. More info at [palm Springsmodernism.com](http://palm Springsmodernism.com) and [modernismweek.com](http://modernismweek.com).



# resources

## cult of personality, pp. 18–27

Kitchen counters: Fountainhead by Panolam Industries, nevermar.com

## before & after: austin, pp. 34–40

Funding: Robert Malina, Prime Lending, Austin, 512.736.6215 ✖ Furnishings: Crate & Barrel, crateandbarrel.com ✖ IKEA, ikea.com ✖ Kitchen appliances: Dacor, dacor.com ✖ Kitchen counters: Dupont Zodiaq, www2.dupont.com/Surfaces/en\_US/index.html ✖ Landscape consultant: Robert Leeper, Austin, 512.751.4642, robertleeperdesigns.com

## quite the dansk wienerbrod, pp. 46–57

Danish auction site: lauritz.com ✖ Henningsen lighting: louispuelsen.com ✖ Storage units: Montana.dk ✖ Kjaerholm designs: fritzhansen.com ✖ Sectional: eilersen-furniture.com ✖ Hilltop architects: 360modern.com/home/?s=resources&aid=14 ✖ docomomo-wewa.org/neighborhoods\_detail.php?id=29 ✖ seattletimes.nwsources.com/html/pacificnw/10072007/2003916597\_pacificpcharles07.html

## working class heroes, pp. 66–70

Vintage furnishings: Retro Rocket, Omaha, 402.341.1969



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# retailers

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The Deal  
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## LOUISIANA

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Honeymoon Bungalow  
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## New Orleans

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