



Slider, the otter, to return to Nadaka Nature Park in 2025

Once again, the pieces came together

By Charlotte Becker
Gresham Outdoor Public Art

About eight years ago, Joan Albertson, a member of [Gresham Outdoor Public Art's](#) (GOPA) board, brought the idea of art in Nadaka Nature Park to the board. GOPA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with an all volunteer board. The group's goal is to commission and install permanent art in Gresham's public spaces. Most of the permanent art, until 2016, was in and around Historic Downtown, so Joan's idea got wings...as well as fur and a tail.

But first, a group from GOPA, along with Wilkes neighborhood champion Lee Dayfield, met at Nadaka to see what might be a good fit for the park. A path of rocks resembling a meandering stream bed seemed like home for some kind of water-loving creature. And a nearby towering timber could be the perfect perch for a squawking bird. Board member, David Baumann, said he had something at home that the group might like.

A few days later, the group got together again at Nadaka to see David wheeling in a bronze otter on a hand truck! It was created by [Troutdale artist Rip Caswell](#), and it was perfect. Part two of the project got off the ground, when we met with Rip and his son, Chad, who agreed to create a life-sized raven to perch atop the timber.

The otter and the raven were installed in the park in 2017 with help from the City of Gresham. Neighborhood families came to see the unveiling, and children entered a contest to name the creatures. That's how the otter became "Slider" and the raven became



Gresham City Councilor, David Widmark, GOPA Board member, Joan Albertson, and artist Rip Caswell unveil Slider in 2017

"Seeker". Nadaka was to be their permanent home.

Until 2024, when Slider disappeared. It seemed someone needed him more than the neighborhood did. The word went out with the hope that Slider would be returned, but not even Seeker could find him. Not giving up, GOPA President, Judy Han, met with a representative from the City to discuss how to replace Slider. Rip Caswell told GOPA he had created an additional otter, the last of his kind, and would offer it to GOPA at cost. Once again, the pieces came together to bring Slider back to Nadaka.

GOPA and the City of Gresham plan to return Slider to his meandering stream in June 2025. We'll provide more information on the date as it is known. Visit Gresham Outdoor Public Art's website, www.greshamoutdoorpublicart.com, to learn more about GOPA, the project at Nadaka and other projects in Gresham. ■

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Wilkes East Land-Use Update

By Greg Hartung,
Board Member, Land-use Co-Chair

Hello members of our Wilkes East Neighborhood Association.

The Wilkes East Neighborhood Association board regularly receives land use plans from the City of Gresham to notify us of land use projects within or proximity to the Wilkes East neighborhood boundaries.

Plan Number [PRE-24-00722](#), Address: [17777 NE Sacramento St Portland Or, 97230](#).

Description: Convert an existing hotel into an assisted living facility. Proposal: to convert an existing 104-room hotel to a 104-unit assisted living facility. Both the existing footprint and the total square feet of the building will remain the same. Other site development elements such as parking, landscaping, circulation, etc. will remain unchanged, unless otherwise required as part of the conversion. Site Description: The 124,697 square-foot site is currently developed and used as a hotel. The site is designated Moderate Commercial (MC) which allows Elderly Housing (Table 4.0420), with Assisted Living a subset (See Article 3 Definition - Elderly Housing). At this time ENN (Early Neighborhood Notification) has not been scheduled.

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Growing Hope: Advocating for Maternal Health

By Alma Landon, Wilkes East Neighbor

As a dedicated doula, my work is never done. I am passionate about supporting mothers and families during one of the most transformative times in their lives. I'm taking my advocacy to the state capital to present my testimony for Senate Bill 692 and Bill 693 before the Early Childhood Committee. These bills aim to enhance early childhood and behavioral health services, a crucial step in nurturing the next generation.

Having witnessed the profound impact that maternal mental health can have on families, I firmly believe that providing comprehensive support is essential for fostering healthy

connections. Our community's well-being starts with ensuring that mothers feel heard, supported, and equipped to thrive.

I envision a world where every mother has access to the resources and care they need, allowing them to embrace their role with confidence and joy. Together, we can create a nurturing environment for our children and help build a resilient future.

Through advocacy, education, and community engagement, we can continue to grow hope for maternal health and well-being. ■

Se Habla Español



Mark Your Calendar!
Wilkes East Neighborhood

Spring 2025 Meeting
March 10th • 7PM

Moose Lodge • 16411 NE Halsey

Wilkes East Neighborhood Association Newsletter

Published three times a year. Over 1500 copies distributed throughout Wilkes East.

The Wilkes East Neighborhood Association (WENA) is a non-profit organization in Gresham, Oregon. Deadline for submission is the 10th of the month prior to publication. WENA reserves all rights, and all copy may be edited for clarity and length. Download a PDF of this newsletter online at: wilkeeastna.org/newsletter.htm.

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BOARD MEETINGS

Meetings are held on the second Monday of each month at 6:30PM. See wilkeeastna.org for details.

CONTACT US

Email: info@wilkeeastna.org.
Postal Mail: 620 NE 167th Pl, Portland OR 97230

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Get involved. Let us know how you'd like to help. Email info@wilkeeastna.org for details.

SPECIAL THANKS

- The newsletter is funded in part through a generous grant from the [City of Gresham](http://www.cityofgresham.org).
- Printing by [Hush Ink / Print Results](http://www.hushink.com). 971-279-4960



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Dear Neighbors • a message from your WENA President

The recent snowfall has melted. Flower bulbs have started to appear. Spring is right around the corner!

Recently, coyotes have been seen in our neighborhood. Usually very early, before dawn, or near early dusk. Their habitat is somewhere near the west cyclone fence of HB Lee Middle School. Please don't approach them or leave food out. If they become a bother please call Multnomah County Animal Control (Troutdale) at 503-988-7387.

Our March meeting will be in person at the Moose Lodge, 16411 NE Halsey St, Monday March 10th at 7PM.

Speakers for this meeting will be: Emon Ghassemi, Youth Director, City of Gresham; Jan Hann, President, Arts Group of Gresham; Lucy Harden, WeShine Community, 123rd & Halsey

Our next community project is one we haven't done in several years; **SPRING CLEAN UP!** We feel very lucky to be partnering with the Moose Lodge at 16411 NE Halsey. We are in need of volunteers! Please sign up! The Moose Lodge is offering their parking lot, as well as their

connections with the agencies who can assist with this kind of project. Let us know how you can help make this clean-up event successful. We will have sign-up sheets at the March 10th meeting or contact any Board member.

All WENA meetings are open to the public. Please mark your calendar for the following meetings: Board meetings take place on the 2nd Monday of each month via ZOOM (excluding December). Visit our website <https://www.wilkeeastna.org/> for the Zoom board meeting link. There are also three (3) public meetings during the 2nd Monday of March, August & November. We would very much like to see or hear from you! Please plan to attend.

There are many opportunities to make a difference in our community. Feel free to contact any Board member for details.

Looking forward to seeing you Monday March 10th!

Your Neighbor & Friend,

Kristen Freiermuth

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Hotel at 17777 NE Sacramento St Portland Or

For these and other public records, you can visit this link: City of Gresham, OR (tylerhost.net).

<https://gresham-or-energygovweb.tylerhost.net/apps/SelfService>

You do not need to create or register an account with online services to access project files. To search for project files and public records:

- Click on the search icon.
- In the screen that loads, type in the Plan case number in the search field and click on the search button.
- The page will reload with the results of the search, including highlighted direct links to cases.
- Click on the highlighted link for the Plan case. In the page that loads, click on the Attachments tab to view project files.

You can also view detailed instructions on how to search for public records at:

<https://www.greshamoregon.gov/search/?q=search%20for%20public%20records&page=1>

If you have any questions about accessing the files online or any projects, please contact PlanningTech@GreshamOregon.gov ■

Did You Know? Strawberries are the only fruit with seeds on its outside

UpRiver Village, Aging at Home Volunteer Opportunities

By Jane Foreman, UpRiver Village

UpRiver Village is a developing not-for-profit organization that will help older adults remain living in their own homes and engaged in their communities as long as possible by providing social activities and extensive volunteer services in Gresham, Troutdale, Fairview and Wood Village. Please see our website at www.uprivervillage.org.

UpRiver Village is currently offering several social events each month and hopes to be fully operational and able to fill member service requests by as early as July 1, if we are able to recruit for the following volunteers:

- Member Coordinator: coordinates a small team that will provide intake and enrollment of prospective volunteers.
- Communications Assistant: develops written content for one or more of the following: website; monthly newsletter; social media posts; brochures, handouts and signage; articles for newspapers and external newsletters; display ads. We are also in need of a Mailchimp expert to help with formatting our newsletter.
- Outreach Assistant: initiates contact with target groups that serve older clients, and follows up to schedule presentations or tabling opportunities.
- Volunteer Management Assistant: provides intake, onboarding and training of new volunteers.

Please let us know if you're interested in volunteering for one of these positions by emailing us at contact@uprivervillage.org. ■

Quirky, one-of-a-kind shops in Gresham

By Janet Unruh, Wilkes East Neighbor, Board Member

There are at least 28 quirky, one-of-a-kind shops in Gresham, including such things as yesteryear consignment shops, guitar and musical instrument shops, upscale resale women's clothing, antiques, Mexican and Latin American flea markets; and probably others I haven't found yet. For this article, I left out a whole category of grocers, but they include Mexican, Middle Eastern, Euro-Russian, Pacific Islander, and a little farther away: Somali, Indian, and Asian. However, I have to make an exception for the PDX Halal Supermarket and Kabul Restaurant. They sell Persian rugs, furniture, wall art, housewares, spices, and packaged foods from the Middle East. It's right in our neighborhood at 16223 NE Glisan Street. Google reviews: Friendly people from Afghanistan! Great food with big helpings. The bread is always delicious. Great prices. Immaculately clean market. Food is authentic Afghani. Food is probably the best Afghani food that I have had in the Oregon area.

We also have a new Mexican flea market nearby called Oregon Flea Market, at 16321 SE Stark Street. Google reviews: They carry an assortment of things like candy, food, snacks, toys, gifts, shoes, clothes, jewelry, electronics, and so much more. Great place! Great vibes! There's a really awesome second-hand shop on the east end way in back of the covered area, highly recommend. Lots of cool and unusual stuff, always getting new stuff. Hidden gem!

As I was collecting the list of quirky shops, I looked at the photos for each shop in Google Maps. My eye landed on a "Fire King Jade-ite" juicer. See below.



My family has a large collection of this light green, opaque "milky" glassware: dishes and bowls of different sizes, cups and saucers, serving bowls, etc.

However, this juicer is one piece that we don't have.

Permit me a little diversion. Once upon a time, my family had a cabin in the Colorado mountains, which we visited every summer. We have fond memories of the scent of pine forests, evening cookouts, and the path into town. On the way to town, we'd cross streams and run through the patch of wild roses to avoid a bee sting. It was there that we had these dishes. They were inexpensive in the late 1940s, but now they are collectible.

I couldn't read the price of the juicer (does it look like \$69.99? Ouch!), so I went to look at it in person. It was at a shop called Side Hustle Auction and Thrift at 317 NE Roberts Ave., Gresham, OR 97030. It's a consignment shop with several rooms full of interesting items. 17 Google reviewers gave it five stars. What's extra quirky about this shop is that the owner, Carrie Hughes, runs a weekly online auction at <https://sidehustleauctions.hibid.com/>

I asked about the juicer and it had already been sold. But I was amused to find a few pieces of the green uranium glassware under a blacklight, which causes them to glow. This type of glassware is made with a small amount of uranium and is radioactive, but its radioactivity is very low. I browsed the whole place and had a good time. I was tempted to buy a blue guitar in good shape. Google reviews: Amazing hidden gem! So very great deals! My friend had to drag me out because I was about to buy half the store. Awesome place. Lots of cool stuff. Don't think I've ever been in and not come out with something. Love collecting VHS tapes from my childhood.



Side Hustle Auction and Thrift, Gresham Or

Here's my list (so far) of quirky, one-of-a-kind shops:

- Amiton Furniture, 202 N Main Ave. Retail home furnishings.
- CB's Tropical Aquarium, 3 NE 181st Ave. Fresh and saltwater fish, and accessories.
- Cheap Charlie's Beer and Wine Superstore, 79 NE Roberts Ave. 1,000-plus brews, plus many wines.
- Deep Creek Garden Center, 2330 NE Hogan Dr. Seasonal trees, shrubs, annuals, and perennials.
- Discounts Plus, 211 NE Roberts Ave. Closeout and liquidation.
- Eagle Bargain Outlet, 867 E Powell Blvd. Eclectic furnishings, household items, clothes, etc.
- Eastside Music, 21977 SE Stark St. Musical instruments.
- "FLEA" Market, 18340 SE Stark St. Booths with lots of Mexican items, jewelry, electronics, and mini cafes.
- Found on Fremont, 560 NW Eastman Pkwy. Consignment.
- Foxtrot Vintage, 227 N Main Ave. Upscale antiques, etc.
- Gaia's Workshop, 475 NE Burnside Rd. Drums and sacred art.
- Gresham Guitar, 835 N Main Ave. All things guitar, electric and acoustic, repairs, and lessons.
- Gresham Music, 620 SE 223rd Ave. Brass, woodwind, and stringed instruments. Orchestra, band; rentals, and lessons.
- Island Hope Mart, 17308 NE Halsey St. Pacific Islander clothing, jewelry, packaged foods, and snacks.
- JunkYard Deals Thrift Store, 23 NE 10th Dr. Upscale used furnishings and clothes.
- Let's Play Again, 20 NW 2nd St. Toys, dolls, stuffed animals.
- La Pulga Fantastica, 19340 SE Stark St. Super-large Mexican flea market with all kinds of Mexican items and mini cafes.
- Maggie Mae's Bookshop, 50 NW 1st St. Books, games, gifts for all ages, especially baby to teens, reading challenge, teas!
- Molly's Upscale Resale, 111 N Main Ave. Women's clothing.
- Montavilla Sewing Center, 971 NE Kelly Ave. Sewing supplies.
- NW Creations and Collectibles, 364 NW Eastman Pkwy. Crafts. They are looking for another (cheaper) location.
- Oregon Flea Market, 16321 SE Stark St. Mexican flea market.
- PDX Halal Supermarket with Kabul Restaurant, 16223 NE Glisan St. Middle-east furnishings, grocery, and restaurant.
- Schedeen's Nursery, 845 NE 10th St. Plants, farmer's market, gifts, and preserves; something for every season.
- Second Nature Pet Supply, 17 NW 1st St. Food, snacks, toys.
- Side Hustle Auctions and Thrift, 317 NE Roberts Ave.
- The Gresham Toy Shop, 126 N Main Ave. Toys, collectibles.
- The Other Side Nursery, 458 SE 185th Ave., #103, Rockwood Market. Wide variety of indoor plants, plus rocks and crystals.

Let's visit these quirky shops and keep them going!

For a map showing the location of these shops, please visit https://www.wilkeseastna.org/files/quirky_shops_map3_2025-Q1.pdf ■

WeShine Micro Village Update

By Lucile Harden

The micro village at Parkrose Community United Church of Christ continues to be a successful transitional shelter for people whose goal is to get into permanent housing. In addition, WeShine helps village guests obtain or renew identification documents, secure health care, connect with resources for mental health or substance abuse, obtain employment, go back to school, apply for benefits, save money, and explore housing options.

In the Fall of 2024, WeShine opened a second village in SE Portland, and a third village is set to open in March of 2025 in North Portland. ■

Stay in Touch With Your Student's School

Visit Reynolds School District at <https://www.reynolds.k12.or.us/>, click on "Schools" in the top left corner. Access all the latest school news, calendars, events, bus schedules, resources, and more. ■

A Message from Emon Ghassemi



Hello Gresham neighbors,

I'm Emon Ghassemi, and I'm honored to serve as the Youth Services and Recreation Manager for the City of Gresham. Since joining the city in 2022, I've been dedicated to creating meaningful opportunities for young people and families in our community. As I approach my third year in this role, I continue to be inspired by the resilience, energy, and potential of Gresham's youth.

At the heart of my work is a commitment to expanding youth services, increasing access to recreation, and strengthening violence prevention efforts. One of my top priorities has been the East Multnomah Outreach Prevention Intervention (EMOPI) program, which we launched to address youth violence, provide intervention and mentorship, and connect young people with the resources they need to succeed. Through EMOPI, we've partnered with 18 community-based organizations to provide outreach, case management, and positive youth engagement throughout Gresham and East Multnomah County. This work is critical to ensuring that young people facing challenges have support systems in place rather than being pushed further into harm's way.

Our approach is holistic, data-driven, and deeply rooted in community collaboration. We've built partnerships with schools, law enforcement, behavioral health providers, and grassroots organizations to ensure that intervention efforts are preventive rather than reactive. Our goal is to interrupt cycles of violence, provide alternatives to exclusionary discipline, and create more opportunities for youth to succeed in school, work, and life. Through these efforts, we're not only making an impact on individual lives but also strengthening the entire community by fostering safer neighborhoods, more engagement in positive activities, and greater investment in our city's future generations.

In addition to our violence prevention efforts, I've been focused on revitalizing Gresham's recreation programs to make sure families have access to safe, fun, and enriching activities. Whether it's summer camps, after-school programs, sports leagues, or citywide events, my goal is to create spaces where all young people feel included, supported, and encouraged to thrive. Recreation plays a crucial role in building connections, improving mental and physical well-being, and keeping youth engaged in positive experiences. My vision is to expand these programs so that every young person in Gresham has access to activities that inspire them and help them grow.

This March, I have the privilege of chaperoning four outstanding young leaders from Gresham to Washington, D.C., for the National League of Cities' Congressional City Conference. Three of these youth represent the Reynolds School District. This experience will allow them to engage with elected officials, learn about public policy, and connect with youth leaders from across the country. As someone who believes deeply in the power of mentorship and civic engagement, I'm incredibly proud to support these young people as they represent Gresham on a national stage. These opportunities not only shape young minds but also empower them to become future leaders, advocates, and changemakers in their own communities.

A little about me. I was born in 1982 in Tehran, Iran, during the Iran-Iraq War, a time of great uncertainty and hardship for many families. My parents made the difficult decision to leave Iran when I was just over four years old because they wanted a better life for me and my sister, free from war and instability. We arrived in the United States and eventually made Oregon our home, where we worked hard to build a new life. Growing up as an immigrant, I experienced firsthand the challenges of adapting to a new culture, learning a new language, and trying to fit in while holding onto our heritage. Despite these challenges, I've always been grateful for the opportunities this country and this state have provided me.

I earned my B.A. in International Studies from Portland State University, where I developed a passion for understanding global issues, cultural dynamics, and social change. I later pursued my M.A. in Peace & Conflict Studies, which deepened my commitment to youth development, violence prevention, and creating pathways for young people to succeed. My education and life experiences have shaped my belief that every young person, regardless of their background or circumstances, deserves opportunities to thrive, learn, and contribute to their community.

Gresham has always felt like a special place to me. This city is full of passionate, hardworking people who care about their neighbors and are committed to making Gresham a great place to live. Whether I'm working with community-based organizations, collaborating with school districts, or organizing events for local families, I see firsthand the power of connection, mentorship, and community-driven solutions. I believe that when we invest in our youth, we invest in a stronger, safer, and more vibrant future for everyone. I'm proud of the work we've done through EMOPI, recreation, and youth outreach, and I'm excited about the opportunities ahead to expand and strengthen these efforts.

Looking forward, my focus will remain on growing these programs, deepening partnerships, and advocating for the resources our youth and families need. I welcome anyone who wants to get involved, whether you're a parent, mentor, or community leader, because real change happens when we work together.

Thank you for letting me be a part of this incredible community. I look forward to continuing this work and seeing the positive impact we can create together! ■

GOT JUNK? • GET RID OF IT!

Wilkes East Spring Clean-Up Event

SAT MAY 10th 9AM - 1PM

MOOSE LODGE, 16411 NE HALSEY



BRING junk, furniture, small appliances, beds, yard debris, metal, cardboard, plastic, reusable items.

NO food garbage, chemicals, soil, rocks, tires, paint, batteries, propane tanks, construction debris, tv's, AC, electronics, fluorescents.

See website for details

Volunteers Needed!

Save the Date!
**Wilkes East Neighborhood
 Spring 2025 Meeting
 Monday, March 10th, 7PM
 Moose Lodge • 16411 NE Halsey**

- Emon Ghassemi
 Youth Director, City of Gresham
- Jan Hann, Arts Group of Gresham
- Lucy Harden, WeShine Community
- Spring Cleanup Volunteers Needed!
- Neighborhood news and more!

See you there!

Are you signed up?
 Nextdoor.com is the social networking service for neighbors to connect with each other. Sign-up today!