

Arts and Crafts Co-op Formed Here to Improve Artists' Income

"When a native artist or craftsman sells his work to a commercial outlet, he only gets about a third of the final selling price. We think he should do better. That's one of the main reasons we've started the coop."

Ernie Hanauer, a longtime Fairbanksan with a deep interest in the arts, said that to explain one reason behind Teknh, the new arts and crafts coop now looking for things to sell in their newly opening showroom on Wendell Street.

Teknh is designed to stimulate arts and crafts—by making them more profitable for the artist—not some middleman. In Greek, Tekna means art forms which can be taught and it is the byword behind a group of energetic artists and craftsmen who want art to be more than a pleasant passtime.

Hanauer donated his former house on Wendell Street to the coop to start the project moving. After all, it was his idea in the first place.

A few months ago, he bought a pencil drawing from a 20 year old Minto youth named Eric Charlie. Eric, he feared, was selling his highly detailed and talented drawings for a great deal less than they were worth.

"How can he afford to spend three days on a drawing and only get 20 or 30 dollars for it," Hanauer wondered. If, however, Eric could get better prices for his work he could do more of it.

So, a group of art-oriented Fairbanksans devised the coop idea—a nonprofit corporation to obtain and sell the works of Alaskan artists and craftsmen.

The old Hanauer house with its picturesque front yard pine tree was completely refurbished—decorated with yellow gingerbread gimcrack and the inside turned into showroom space.

On Sunday afternoons, upwards of 20 people would appear to form work parties—to paint, build, clean and later put up shelves.

About a week ago the brightly painted Teknh sign, designed and painted by Buzzy and Veda Giles, appeared in the front yard.

ALS Staff Changes

The Fairbanks office of Alaska Legal Services last week announced extensive recent staff changes.

For the last year and a half David Wolfe has headed the Fairbanks office. Since April 1, Wolfe also has been deputy director for the statewide legal services program. Until September 1 he continued also to serve as supervising attorney in Fairbanks.

On September 1, Dickerson Reagan, formerly director of the Juneau Legal Services office, arrived in Fairbanks to take over the job of supervising attorney here.

Brian Shortell is staff attorney in the Fairbanks office, living and working in Fairbanks and traveling out from Fairbanks to serve persons in northern villages. Shortell is a lawyer admitted to practice in California and recently took the bar exam in Alaska.

The Fairbanks office is gaining and losing a VISTA volunteer lawyer. Rick Rogers, whose wife Stephanie is on the staff of the Fairbanks Native Welcome Center, is leaving for a position with a legal services program in Florida as of October 15.

The new VISTA volunteer lawyer to work out of the Fairbanks office is John Athens, a recent graduate of Notre Dame law school who is admitted to the practice of law in Oklahoma. It is expected that Athens will divide his time between Fairbanks and Fort Yukon.

Each day, hundreds of Fairbanks motorists drive by the busy intersection. Hopefully, after the grand opening around October 1, many will stop to browse or buy.

Next to the sign is a large metal sculptor donated by Ted Ito, a local Fairbanks sculptor.

Teknh hopes to open in October with a full range of arts and crafts—painting, sculpture, photographs—and all types of native crafts. They are already accepting work on consign-

ment. For each sale, Teknh will retain 25 per cent for operating expenses—perhaps part time salaries.

"Our major principle is that nobody can make a profit out of this," explained Hanauer. "Our big problem will be finding art. Customers are no problem."

Right now, Teknh plans to begin contacting village artists and craftsmen to offer their services. The coop already has about 20 active members—each contributing five dollars.

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