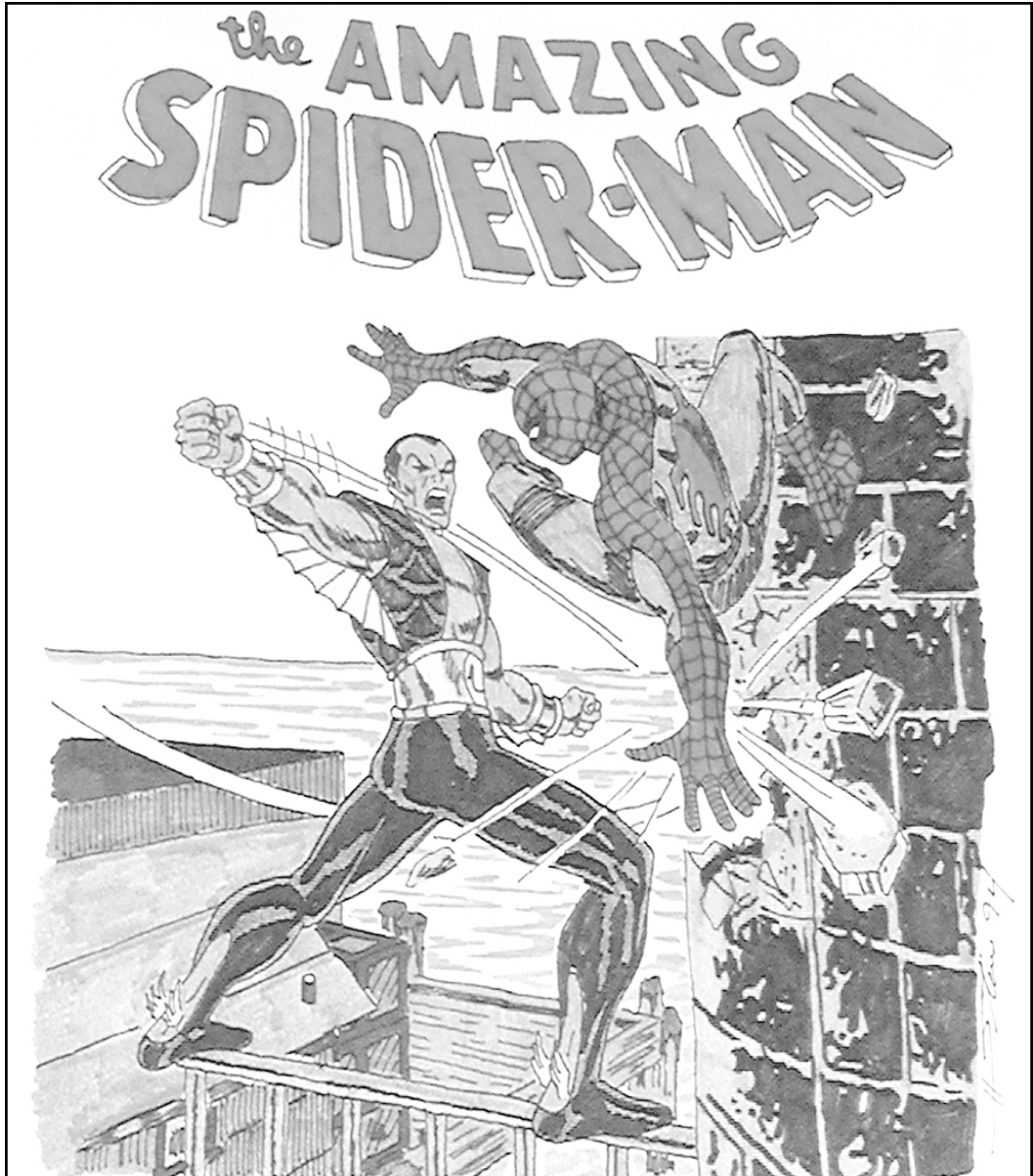




Steven Guenther, Goodland, kept a portfolio of his art which includes comic book covers, comics, T-shirts and posters for rock concerts and ads. One of his comic book covers was for the Spiderman series in 1981. Photos by Sharon Corcoran/The Goodland Star-News



Artist's work graces shirts, posters, comics

By Sharon Corcoran

The Goodland Star-News

You may have seen his work and not even known it.

If you're a fan of Ozzy Osborne, Alice Cooper or Van Halen, you may have seen Steven Guenther's work on T-shirts or concert posters.

If you enjoy comic books, his covers have likely influenced some of your purchases.

Now a maintenance man at Wendy's in Goodland, the artist was born Steven Ebenezer Guenther 46 years ago, grew up in Denver, quit school to take care of his grandmother and began selling his art to help pay the bills.

When living in Denver became "too dangerous," Guenther said, he moved to Goodland, arriving at noon on the Fourth of July, 1990.

He has drawn ads for a candy store in Goodland and painted the store, where Picnic in the Park is now.

He recently did the art for an ad at the Sherman County Convention and Visitors Bureau plans to run in a AAA travel magazine.

Guenther said he had lived in many areas of Denver. When you have limited resources, he said, you do what you have to do.

There are a lot of opportunities there, Guenther said — in the '70s, there were was music, and it is a major college town.

The phone poles were plastered with posters, he said, and you could just call to see if they needed you.

He began selling his art around the neighborhood in 1973, when he was 14, and then got a break when

Experiences shaped man and his art

Experts argue about which is more influential to a child, nature or nurture.

Steven Guenther's combination of nature and nurture without a doubt created an interesting person, a man of contrasts, not easily defined by but easily frustrated by stereotypes.

Guenther was born in 1962, the son of a Cheyenne Indian woman and a German. He was a witness to his mother's death, was entrusted with the care of his grandmother from age 14 and has been knocked around by a world that just isn't fair.

But, he says, he has developed a certain "stick-to-it-iveness" that he recommends to others. He practiced drawing for two hours a night for 12 years and can now produce intricate drawings in 15 minutes. Neither his skill nor his talent brings him fame or fortune or even a steady paycheck, but his advice to budding artists is upbeat. "Don't let anyone tell you you

can't do it," Guenther said. "Don't let anyone tell you it doesn't look good. If it came from your mind, it's as good as it's gonna be."

Though he has done artwork for heavy metal bands and for "Heavy Metal" magazine covers, his musical interests are not limited to that loud and rebellious genre.

"One of my favorite musical interests is Dean Martin," Guenther said. "I listen to classical, opera and big band."

He describes himself as "deeply spiritual," one who was involved with the youth group at a Baptist church in Denver and who listens to KGCR, a Christian radio station in Brewster.

The artist doesn't like to be thought of as a "hippie," a label often imposed on him because of his long hair.

"One of the main reasons I have long hair," he said, "is that I'm half Indian. My mom was a full-blooded Cheyenne, and my Dad was a German. When they met,

neither spoke English. I'm not sure how they worked that out."

Apparently they were not able to work everything out, since Guenther's parents divorced when he was young. He said he never really knew his father, just that he lives in the Denver area but has an unlisted number. He has never been able to get in touch with him.

"It was just me and mom and grandma and grandpa," he said.

His mother died in 1974, and Guenther, 12, saw the whole thing. "She was killed in Denver by a gang of thugs right in front of me," he said. "There was nothing I could do."

There was a water fight in front of their house, he said, and she fell and broke her arm. The others jumped around and laughed. She was taken to the hospital, Guenther said, and had a bone taken from her hip to repair her arm. A blood clot formed in her hip, he said, and went to her heart, killing her right there on the table, as she was having

stitches removed from her arm.

Two years later, Guenther said, his Grandpa died of pneumonia. He took on the care of his grandmother and had to pay her Blue Cross and Blue Shield bills and deal with paperwork for her medical care. Though able to handle college-level classes when he was in high school, he ended up quitting school to work and pay the bills.

Over the years, he said, he held several steady jobs, several in food service, but others ranging from maintenance to security guard and even making funeral arrangements. And he sold art when he could. Having moved from Denver to Goodland 16 years ago, Guenther said he would like to have grown up in a small town.

"Maybe then I wouldn't be so paranoid," he said.

But then what would have happened to his art?

In Goodland, he and roommate Michele Hartman tried to start a business, Spirit Designs, he doing the art, she being the manager.

But business has mostly been slow, he said, with what work there was coming in waves.

When he was a cook at China Gardens, a candy store was soon to open in the building where Picnic in the Park is now.

Guenther drew artwork for the store's advertising and painted the store, including a giant Betty Boop in the men's room.

On opening day, Guenther drew caricatures of people who came in. But then the attention went away.

He painted a three-dimensional piece for a room at Golden West Skills Center, now Golden West Community Services.

It was a life-sized picture of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, Guenther said; a blind woman would touch it and stop having fits. The room was demolished in renovation, he said.

Guenther said he attended Lincoln High School in Denver and took college-level classes in commercial art, free-hand drawing and drafting basics.

In 1979, he responded to an advertisement for Walt Disney Studios and was placed on their list for job interviews, at number 512. Guenther said he checked the list three years ago and he had climbed to number 75.

In January, he said, Disney joined with Pixar Studios, and it looks like they are not going to do hand-drawn animation anymore. So much for that.

matters of record

Real Estate

The following real estate transactions were reported by the Sherman County Register of Deeds:

John C. McCoy and Tracy E. McCoy to Richard K. Romine and Diana L. Romaine, a tract of land in W/2 Sec. 29, T6S R38W containing 15 acres.

Richard Walter, trustee under like-kind exchange trust agreement to Max Linin and Brenda Linin, SW/4 Sec. 17, T9S R39W; NE/4

corrections

In the Tuesday, March 21, issue of *The Goodland Star-News* under matters of record, a real estate transaction should have read, Light Enterprises to Bobbie Jo McKnight, all of Lots 10, 11 and 12, Block 11, Second Addition to the City of Goodland. This was due to improper filing with a name wrong.

The Goodland Star-News will correct any mistake or misunderstanding in a news story.

Please call our office at (785) 899-2338 to report errors.

We believe that news should be fair and factual.

We want to keep an accurate record and appreciate you calling to our attention any failure to live up to this standard.

Sec. 19, T9S R39W and NW/4 Sec. 19, T9S R39W.

Kevin Pettay and Linda Petty to Jim G. Neal and Tammy L. Neal, the W100' of Lots 9 and 10, Block 41, Beahm's Addition to the City of Goodland.

Connie S. Emig to Ken Eland, as Qualified 1031 Intermediary for James M. Kreiger, E/2 Sec. 17, T9S

R40W.

G & H Pork, LLC by Gary D. Helmer and Stephen Glahn to Thomas J. Cassidy, a tract of land in SW/4 Sec. 19, T8S R41W.

C. T. Farr and Dennice D. Farr to C. T. Farr and Dennice D. Farr, as trustees of the Farr Family Trust, Lots 1, 2 and 3, Block 13, Third Addition to the City of Goodland.

Sherman County Household Hazardous Waste Collection

Saturday, April 1, 2006

7 a.m. to 11 a.m. Mountain time

HHW Facility

1820 Cherry Street

Goodland, Kansas

For more information please contact Kenny Griffith at 821-1024.

No early drop off or no drop offs without personnel present.

There will be no Used Oil collected at this time.

For Sherman County Residents Only!

Bedrock RV/Trailer Park

Spaces & Rentals Available by the day, week or month

Contact Mike at (785) 821-1509

TRUCK, FARM MACHINERY & IMPLEMENT AUCTION

Saturday, April 8 1:00 p.m. CT

Sale Site: Brethower Farm - Rd. 31 2.5 E. & 2.5 N. of Bird City, KS

Leon & Shirley Brethower, Sellers



'89 Case Tractor 7130, 3 pt., 18 speed hi-low, 18.4 R 2



'84 John Deere MaxEmerge 2 Planter, 7200 w/fertilizer attachment, 8 row, finger row cleaners, 250 monitor



'68 Chevy Truck, 15 ft. steel box & hoist, new tires, 4x2 trans., V8, 10 R 22.5 triple hydraulics

IMPLEMENTS: 1984 Bush Hog Disc, 24 ft., 9 in. space; 1996 Crust Buster Drill, 3400 all plant, dual markers, DD 36x10, 30 ft.; 2000 Wylie Sprayer, 60 ft. boom, Raven monitor; Case Chisel, 15 ft.; John Deere Ripper, 9 shank; Lilliston Melroe 284, 12 ft. Drill with 12 in. spacing; Melroe Farm Hand Viber Coil 5 Section Harrow; Miller Rod, 32 ft.; Miller Sweep Plow, 5x7 with pickers; Noble Sweep, 4x6 with fertilizer attachment, with pickers; Schaffer 2-way Disc, 24 in. blades, 9 in. spacing; Stanhoist Harrow with drag Harrows, 40 ft.

BAILER & AUGER: New Holland 268 Bailer with stacker; 2002 Mayrath Auger, 60 ft. 10 in. (used very little); Drag Auger; Old Speed King Auger, 32 ft. 6 in. with motor; Speed King Auger, 48 ft. 8 in., power take-off drive; Speed King Drill Fill Auger.

ANTIQUE & MISCELLANEOUS: 100 gal. Propane Tank on wheels; 110 gal. Fuel Tank; 120 gal. Fertilizer Tank; 3-File Cabinets; Chain Boomers; Ford Post Hole Digger, 3 pt.; Jacks; Old International Cream Separator; Old Wood Burning Stove; Parmac Electric Fencer, 12 volt; Seed Cleaner (Drum) complete w/electric motors; Small Propane Bottles; Steel Fence Posts; Tokiem Hand Fuel Pump; White Kitchen Stools.

TRAILERS: 1000 gallon Water Tank on Trailer; Dual-Wheel Trailer, 8x20 ft.

Vehicles are clean & have always been shedded. Please be on time as there are few trailer items!

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Ryan W. Shay, Auctioneer

Reese W. Shay, Auctioneer

Diana Argabright, Auctioneer

More info. @ www.shayrealty.com