

# An eye for earth



Bulletin photo by Andy Kerstetter

Gary Huber paints a pastel landscape of Clear Creek at the Greenbelt Trail trailhead.

## Buffalo painter wins summer awards

By Andy Kerstetter  
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Buffalo pastel artist Gary Huber knows a thing or two about the landscape scenes he is known for painting.

Huber graduated from Lafayette College in Easton, Pa. in the 1970s

with a degree in earth science. He grew up in rural Pennsylvania learning oil painting with his mother, who was a professional oil painter.

"I was pretty much surrounded by (art), and I didn't think that it was unusual," he said, adding that other than painting with his mother, for most of his life he didn't have artistic aspirations.

After college, he briefly pursued a graduate degree in Missouri

— but left after a year when he decided he was done with schooling and wanted to enter the workforce.

"I worked in the oil business as a geophysicist," he said.

He had decided that he didn't want to stay in the oil business after he turned 35, so in the late 1980s he eventually developed the software for and founded 3D Nature, a company that deals in photorealistic computerized terrain visualization. Eventually, various industries, including the Bureau of Land Management, began using it.

The idea for the company came about after Huber, then working for Questar Production, helped create a documentary for Questar about forestry projects in the mountains of Colorado.

"It got me into thinking how to best create naturalistic landscapes," Huber said.

After Huber moved to Buffalo in 2002 to marry his wife, a Buffalo native, the couple took a trip around the state, including a stop at the Buffalo Bill Center of the West, where he saw a pastel painting of Desert Mountain in Montana — and it deeply affected him.

"It just absolutely stunned me to death that anything could be that gorgeous," he said. "That's when I decided I'm really going to learn how to paint."

He oil painting again, but also began learning pastel painting. Huber, an avid hiker, originally used pastels for quick studies out in the field, later rendering the painting in oils in his studio, because a single kit of pastels was much easier to transport than oils.

But the more he delved into pastels, the more colors he required — and the heavier the pack became when hiking. He eventually realized he enjoyed pastels enough that he switched oils altogether and began to work only

## Pure color

Pastel, unlike acrylic, watercolor or oil paint, is a dry medium. It is made of pure mineral pigments, which are crushed, powdered and formed into rectangular or cylindrical sticks with a binding agent.

Paintings are made with pastel by scraping the pigment sticks on a rough canvas surface. Pastel keeps its color longer than oil. If placed under glass to prevent smudging, it can last for many years.

in pastels.

"I liked the tactile sense of holding the pastel stick," Huber said. "I've always liked to draw."

However, it wasn't until 2005 that he began earnestly pursuing a career in pastel painting, adding that it took a couple of years before his production topped 20 paintings a year — now it's about 100.

"I didn't start out thinking I was going to be a professional painter," he said. "But as things started coming through, I thought this could be a career."

Now Huber is a recognized name in pastel circles, especially in Western landscapes, which he is known for. He also takes numerous trips to the West and East coasts of the U.S. to paint Pacific coast landscapes and pastoral farmland scenes from his home.

His background knowledge of geology and physics helps him understand how best to paint his landscapes, especially his knowledge of how light interacts with the atmosphere.

"You can't be a slave to reality and just paint what you see — you definitely need to understand why things look the way they do," he said.

In the 10 years since he's been painting in earnest, he's garnered a lot of attention for his work.

Some of his pieces hang in the Occidental Hotel as well as Hugh Jennings' Hitching Post art gallery. The attention to his art culminated in several awards he won across the region this summer, including the Landscape Award at the 64th Wind River Valley Artists' Guild national art show in Dubois.

"I'm going to be the judge for their show next year," he said.

Although he is still involved with 3D Nature, he now is able to work about 75 percent of the time just on his art — and he is thankful

every day for the opportunity.

"I feel very fortunate to have gotten where I am," he said.



The Buffalo Theater is back to winter hours:  
Thurs, Fri, Sat, & Sun.

Thur., Oct. 3 will be the last showing of The World's End @ 7:15 pm. Beginning Fri., Oct. 5th is Prisoners @ 7:15 pm and held over, Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs 2 @ 7 pm.

Movie times for each movie are as follows:

## Cloudy With A Chance of Meatballs 2

(PG)

Fri. October 4th @ 7 pm  
Sat. October 5th @ 4 pm & 7 pm  
Sun. October 6th @ 4 pm & 7 pm  
Thurs. October 10th @ 7 pm

## Prisoners

(R)

Fri. October 4th @ 7:15 pm  
Sat. October 5th @ 4:15 pm & 7:15 pm  
Sun. October 6th @ 4:15 pm & 7:15 pm  
Thurs. October 10th @ 7:15 pm

For more information call our 24hr Movie Hotline: (307)684-9950 or visit us on the Web at [www.thebuffalothheater.com](http://www.thebuffalothheater.com)