

## MCGREGOR: Artist is working on a book of images

*Continued from page 3*

a dove. This dove – of course – is a turtledove. It’s looking askance at the turtle as if to say, “Who are you and where did you come from?”

McGregor realized he was onto something. He painted a bull and a frog, staring at each other, and called it “Bullfrog.” Now, three years and 20 dual-animal paintings after “Turtledove,” there will be a show of his work starting this week, and a book, called “You Stole My Name,” as in “said the bull to the bullfrog.”

“You Stole My Name,” the book, is nearing completion. The final few paintings are done, signed and being framed. The first half of this series of paintings has been hanging on the walls of the Cottonwood Café for two years, since Jen McCrystal reopened her eatery. Over their egg breakfasts and seasonal luncheon salads, diners contemplated the humorous animal combinations and came up with their own ideas for bonded birds, fish, insects and mammals. Using some of their ideas, McGregor continued to paint.

His juxtaposed animals include the bull trout, chicken hawk, cow bird, dog fish, elephant seal, mule deer, owl monkey and spider monkey, zebra finch, cat fish, dog fish and parrot fish, tiger shrimp, turkey vulture, rhinoceros beetle, and so on. You may notice that a lot of these creatures combine an avian or a fish with another critter.

The final eight paintings will be unveiled during the Fourth Friday Art Stroll on August 25 at Sisters Gallery and Frame Shop. Then, on September 1, all 21 paintings will go on display for the entire month of September at Sisters Library, in the Community Room. This will be a platform for McGregor’s new Kickstarter campaign, and an opportunity for his friends and fans to pre-order the book and/or individual

prints. Original paintings will also be available for sale.

The original medium is gouache (opaque watercolor). Sometimes, the two creatures are painted in symbiosis, and other times they are looking quizzically at each other as if to say “How did this happen?” The book will contain just 18 of the 21 final paintings, so McGregor is giving the public a brochure (and possibly a web option) to vote on their favorites.

Each of the final paintings will be paired with a verse.

Kangaroo Rat

You stole my name,

But I really don’t mind.

After all, we’re two of a kind.

You like to jump, and I do too.

They say I even look like you.

McGregor’s sharp wit comes across through this his paintings. Sometimes the humor or message is right on the surface, and other times it’s subtler. It’s always been that way. When he painted the “Quilting Bee,” he inserted his most popular Quilt Show poster, the Conestoga wagon, as art on the wall behind the bee, who is busy using a “Stinger” sewing machine. Last year, he turned his bandmates into musical dogs for the “Hot Dogs” Sisters Folk Festival poster. This year’s festival poster depicts the Statue of Liberty playing a parlor guitar and raising a strong arm.

A San Diego native, McGregor graduated from high school in the class of ’68 and started college as an art major. “I’ve been doing these things (art and music) since I was a young child ... as opposed to sports and academics.” After three semesters, he dropped out to join a band, and never looked back. He moved to Sisters in his 40s, and that’s when he started painting. He didn’t play music for 10 years, and then one day, he picked up his guitar and started writing and singing again.

“You Stole My Name” is McGregor’s second book. The many posters he designed for the Sisters Outdoor Quilt

Show inspired his first book, “Dream Again,” which came out in 2013. That book was inspired by the many quilt posters, especially the Conestoga wagon, which led McGregor to write and illustrate the story of a young girl traveling west on the Oregon Trail with her precious family quilt.

When McGregor moved to Sisters, some 30 years ago, he rented studio space from Jean Wells, above The Stitchin’ Post. One day, he offered to carry some boxes of quilts for her, and spotted a poster. “Hey, I can do that,” he said ... and offered to design a Quilt Show poster, the first in a series of 14.

“At the time, Jean didn’t know that was my very first poster,” he quipped.

But the popularity of these collectable posters leaves no doubt that he’d found his niche.

McGregor has also designed Sisters Folk Festival posters since the early 2000s, and many Sisters Rodeo posters, in addition to scores of commercial and fine art projects. He’s donated countless works of art to the annual My Own Two Hands fundraiser for Sisters Folk Festival’s Americana Project.

Some days find him hard at work, painting in his home



PHOTO PROVIDED

Dennis McGregor’s “Turtledove.”

studio. Other times, he can be found playing a gig with his band, The Spoilers. He has released three CDs, and even though he’s not contemplating a fourth, he continues to write songs.

“CDs are really expensive (to make) and people can get their music for free,” he said.

His musical inspiration – and his playlist when he paints – includes the classics of jazz, folk and blues: Jimmie Rodgers, Bob Wills, Howlin’ Wolf, Lightnin’ Hopkins, Louis Armstrong, Miles Davis, Nat King Cole and Ray Charles.

And, if getting the book published and launching a Kickstarter project isn’t enough to do in September, look for Dennis emceeding during the folk festival at the Sisters Art Works tent on Friday, and playing with The Spoilers at Angeline’s on Saturday evening, followed

by the late-night jam, where he invites other musicians up to join the band.

Asked, “Are you an artist who is also a musician, or a musician who is also an artist?” he replied “Yup. That’s right. I make my living with my artwork, but I have arrived at a nice balance of art, music and life, and working the land. And I’m so grateful that I’ve been able to make a living doing that here in Sisters.”

McGregor’s dual-animal paintings will be shown throughout September at Sisters Library, open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. (5 p.m. Saturdays). Other art, prints and note cards are on display at Sisters Gallery and Frame Shop on Hood Avenue, and his website, dennismcgregor.com. The Art Stroll is August 25, and every Fourth Friday, from 4 to 7 p.m.

## DON'T MISS OUT

on this week’s inserts in the Nugget:

**Ray’s Food Place:** The *Fantastic Friday One-day Deal* on August 25 is **Corn on the Cob: 4 for just \$1!** (For the first 12. Additional are 2 for \$1.)

**Bi-Mart:** It’s a Bi-Mart Best Deal for **Seattle’s Best Coffee!** The 12-oz. packages of ground beans, in a variety of roasts, are just **\$3.99!**

## The fix is... **FREE** to Spay/Neuter Your Dog or Cat



### Easy as 1-2-3

- 1 Stop by to fill out a simple form
- 2 Call Bend Spay & Neuter for the appointment
- 3 Take your pet — Furry Friends pays. Done!

*Ask about our vaccination sponsorships, too!*

**Furry Friends Foundation - 442 E. Main Ave. (The Nugget office)**