

Geoff Reed

Oral History Report

Stefan Knudson was born on September 10, 1963 in Kornberg, West Germany. Stefan's family moved to the United States after he was born. They lived in Vernal, Utah, where his father had come from. Living in Vernal he had a normal childhood until in the mid-seventies Stefan's parents divorced and forced him to make a major decision between which of his parents he wished to stay with. Stefan stayed with his father up until 1978 when he choose to move to Rock Springs to live with his mother. This chain of events have led Stefan to a very exciting and memorable life.

When Stefan first moved to Rock Springs the first problem he encountered was with the kids in the high school. Stefan was rejected his first year because he had moved in from out of state and invaded the Rock Springs students territory. Another reason the students rejected outsiders was because the boom was happening in Rock Springs and had flooded the town with new people. The first year at Rock Springs High School brought Stefan to be in anywhere from twenty to thirty fist fights because the kids were not accepting outsiders and they wanted to see where he would fit in. The occurrence of students testing new kids to see what they are is not uncommon, but during the boom the problem was amplified because of the large jump in population. The violence in the schools was only part of the problem in Rock Springs at the time that Stefan, or anybody else

who moved in had to deal with. Stefan learned how to cope with the hassles of the school and made it to his senior year until an unfortunate incident led to him not graduating. With Stefan's personality it did not take him long to make friends and many of them being very close friends. Some of the memories that Stefan expresses are very fond memories of his friends and the good times he had with them. One memory that he shared was when him and a friend were out driving around and decided to go to K street. When they arrived they found one of the local, "ladies of the night'" and began talking to her. When his friend was about to ask her a price Stefan noticed that the lady had a police wanting trouble decided to leave. When Stefan remembered his best times in Rock Springs it led to the memories of great friends and great times with those friends. ?

When Stefan first got a job it was at a fast food place in the White Mountain Mall and that was a short lived experience in his life. Soon after that he went to work for Sunset Sporting Goods in the Plaza Mall and he really enjoyed that job. Part of the reason for him liking the job so well was because his father had worked for Sunset in Vernal for a long time. Another job Stefan had was when he was self-employed for a summer in Salt Lake City. At this job he mowed people's lawns who lived in the rich part of town. Stefan had, had odd jobs for a few years until he got hired on at Bridger Coal as a coal hauler. This job gave Stefan a lot of security and the option to do what he wants to do when he wants to do it.

Stefan will soon be married to Ellen Reed his fiance'. The two of them met when they lived in the same apartment building. Stefan was acquainted with Ellen's best friend and because of her Ellen and Stefan are together. They have a special kind of relationship where each is very independent and like to express their own views on subjects and this is an interesting quality in their relationship.

The independence Stefan shows in his relationship also makes him very opinionated. Stefan likes to give his opinion on anything from politics to the people he is associated with. On politics Stefan believes that the system of political parties is not sound and that no individual should say they belong to any one party. Stefan believes that a person should vote for who they think is the best candidate, not who is the party representative. Stefan also believes that the president should not be allowed to spend more money than he is allowed. The idea of giving foreign aid to countries to help them better themselves when we in America have millions of homeless living on the street is an idea that does not go over easily with Stefan. Another subject that Stefan express an opinion on is the contract talks the union has at Bridger Coal. When a contract was proposed at the mine Stefan voted no because he didn't think the contract was being fair to the workers and the mine was getting the better end of the renegotiations. Although the contract did pass. Stefan took a stand and stuck to his point of view. This quality is a very strong one is Stefan's personality and during his life will

lead him in and out of conflicts with others.

When Stefan joined the union at Bridger Coal he had been an employee for six months. Stefan likes the union because the company can take advantage of the workers.[?] Stefan believes that the union makes the lives of the employees better by giving them raises every few years and providing benefits for them. The union has provided Stefan with a very good life and until something better comes along he will remain an employee of the mine. One way the union has provided Stefan with a good life is by giving the employees a recent raise and bonuses that add up to well over \$9,000. However, the union also took away the full insurance that had been provided for nothing to the workers. This point in the contract is what caused Stefan to turn the contract down. Another part of the union that is positive for Stefan is that they support the United Way and support the workers of the mine by helping them out in the community. This is how Stefan has a tendency to find both the good and the bad in a situation.

Therefore, Stefan is a very opinionated person with very good qualities that stand out in his character. When Stefan is remembered by his friends and relatives the memories will be of a very high spirited individual and that he is a good man. With Stefan having a full life ahead of himself he will leave everyone he has been associated with a fond memory of the type of guy he is. So if anyone wanted to ever see the perfect example of how well rounded a person is and that if they wish to have a role

model to live like Stefan would be a very good example to anyone.