

# State of the Arts



2006 ANNUAL REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL January 2007

## Grand Junction Commission on Arts and Culture

### Commission Places Public Art Throughout the City

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The Arts Commission selected and installed several new works of art through the City's 1% for the Arts program in 2006, including local artist Pat Olson's five brightly painted cutouts of playing children and a cartoon lion atop tall metal columns at Lincoln Park Moyer Pool and two colorful handcrafted ceramic tile murals by Pueblo artists Tom and Jean Latka on the front of Bookcliff Activity Center (adjacent to Bookcliff Middle School) and the Pear Park Elementary School gymnasium, a facility the City helped fund. Also at the pool is an ever-expanding children's tile mural project composed 300 hand painted tiles which will be added onto annually.



"Handwoven" tile mural at Bookcliff Activity Center

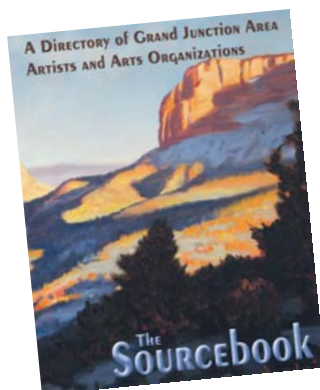
In addition to the percent for art program, which funds artwork for City capital construction projects at buildings and parks, the Commission exhibits art by local artists at City Hall to highlight the amazing diversity and talent of Grand Valley artists. During 2006, 62 artists displayed 164 paintings, contemporary quilts, ceramics, and sculptures.

The Commission selected an artist to create a larger than life-size bronze sculpture of City founder George Crawford, assisted the Trumbo Memorial Committee with funding and selection of a sculptor to create a sculpture of Dalton Trumbo, and worked with the Public Works Dept. to find a sculptor to do two monumental metal sculptures for the new roundabouts at the I-70/24 Road interchange.

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### 9th Edition of the Sourcebook Directory Published



Since the Commission was first formed in 1990, a major project has been to update and publish the popular resource book *The Sourcebook: A Directory of Grand Junction Area Art-*

*ists and Arts Organizations* every two years. Two thousand books are distributed, aiming to promote local artists and cultural groups to potential patrons and people looking for volunteer opportunities, event entertainment, or general information. The directory provides details about 60 arts and cultural organizations and clubs, 16 galleries and fine art retailers, ten dance studios, eight theaters and theatre companies, 210 visual artists, 55 performing artists, bands and entertainers, and 20 writers. (Cover art by Dan Loge)

## Financial Support Awarded to 17 Cultural Events & Projects

Since 1992 the City of Grand Junction, through the Commission, has been providing financial assistance to arts and cultural events and programs in an effort to increase the quantity and quality of local arts activities.

**OVER THE LAST 15 YEARS \$335,000 HAS BEEN DONATED IN CITY AND OTHER FUNDING TO SUPPORT 222 GJ CULTURAL EVENTS & PROJECTS, IMPACTING AN ESTIMATED AUDIENCE OF 460,000 PEOPLE.**

In 2006 the Commission donated \$28,000 to 17 groups for their cultural programming.

The largest number of grants (nine) went to performing

arts events, including the Art & Jazz Festival, the new Two Rivers Chautauqua Festival at Cross Orchards, Cinema at the Avalon Senior Matinees, and concerts by the Grand Junction Symphony, High Desert Opera, Messiah Choral Society, The Schumann Singers, Western Colorado Chorale, and at the Botanical Gardens.

Four visual arts projects were funded, including the inaugural exhibit by the newly organized artists group Artspace & Open Studios and the Western Colorado

Watercolor Society's national watercolor show, plus marketing for the Art Center, and the formation of a new traveling fine art exhibit venture Artmobile of Colorado.

Underwriting was again provided for KAFM Community Radio's "Arts & Entertainment Calendar" and RMPBS-KRMJ's "Western Bounty" segments, as well as several Artists-in-Residence for MCV School District 51 elementary schools. Mesa County Public Library received funds for their "One Book" project.

## Public Art Outreach Activities

In many communities, as in Grand Junction, art in public places continues to be a growing activity, and the Commission and Cultural Arts Coordinator has provided information and assistance to numerous other towns and cities to help get programs like Art on the Corner and GJ's 1% for the Arts purchase program organized in other locations.

During 2006 Coordinator Allison Sarmo, as part of the Colorado Council on the Arts Peer Assistance Net-

work of consultants, facilitated community strategic planning meetings in Montrose, Buena Vista, and Colorado Springs, where temporary sculpture exhibits are being established or enhanced.

Information about how to incorporate public art into the community was requested by and sent to Reno NV, Green River WY (who sent an entire delegation to GJ to watch the Art on the Corner Sculpture Change), Provo UT, Suisun City CA, and Tri-Lakes

Views and Lone Tree CO last year.

Arts Commission members helped out downtown once again with the annual Art on the Corner Sculpture Change by volunteering as artwork polishers and pedestal painters.

The Coordinator had an active role in the search for and selection of an artist and artwork for a new water feature planned at Mesa State College and bronze bas relief signage for locations in the new James M. Robb Colorado River State Park.

## Champion of the Arts Awards

A record number of individuals and businesses were nominated for the 2006 Champion of the Arts Awards, and the Commission selected FCI Constructors, Inc. nominated by the Downtown Development Authority and Art on the Corner as the winner in the Business Category, and artist and arts activist Sara Alyn Oakley, nominated by 16 other artists, as the winner in the Individual Category.

FCI was honored for their many years of much needed assistance with the Art on the Corner Sculpture Change and golf tournament fundraiser. Sara Oakley was recognized for her organization of local artists networking groups and on-going exhibits where artists can show their work, her coordination of arts activities and Farmer's Market and First Friday art demonstrations, and her outstanding and inspiring talents as an art teacher and artist. The awards were presented at the November Symphony Gala.



"George Crawford" statue by Mark C. Wahlberg (ready to be cast in bronze)

## *State of the Arts Around the Grand Valley: News From Other Organizations*

### Art Center

The Western Colorado Center for the Arts hosted 27 different exhibitions in 2006, one of the most popular being the very successful “Contemporary Clay 2006” show which featured invited ceramic artists from eleven states west of the Rockies and filled the galleries with excellent pottery artwork.

There was staff turnover again this

past year (as in 2005) when the Center lost their program and exhibitions director (who moved out of town) as well as their executive director (at the end of the year.) A new program director was hired in November, and the board is still searching for a director and also a newly created position of part time fundraiser.

The Center’s year-round offerings of fine art education classes for children

and adults continued to be filled with students of all ages and abilities. There was record attendance at the annual Spring Art Week with 3,800 elementary children participating.

The Center’s annual February Fine Art Auction continues to be their major fundraising event and the 2006 auction, and 2007 auction which just took place, were outstanding successes. Membership is currently around 1,200.

### Botanical Gardens

The Western Colorado Botanical Gardens continues to be without an executive director, due to lack of funds for that position, and in 2006 lost their experienced operations manager. A new manager came on board last fall. The Gardens reached the

point of having to ask the City for financial assistance and continues to look for ways to stabilize and enhance their struggling funding base.

Fourteen concerts in the Gardens amphitheater continued to draw crowds, and in 2006 the 15th annual Garden Tour, a new Garden Art Sale,

the Bloomin’ Deals Sale and other events, concerts, classes, memberships and admissions helped raise funds for the many planted areas, Butterfly House, and Children’s Secret Garden. A membership drive was launched to more than double their membership numbers, aiming for 2007 in 2007.

### KAFM Radio

KAFM Community Radio’s musical and public affairs programming is broadcast 24/7 on both 88.1 on the FM dial and worldwide via [www.kafmradio.org](http://www.kafmradio.org). The station has a strong commitment to public access programming with over 125 volunteer programmers. KAFM teaches the skills necessary to anyone interested in programming.

In 2006, KAFM’s Beyond Radio Series was started in the Radio Room as a continuing education program promoting interactive lifelong learning.

The programs included a young man who spent a year in Antarctica and a presentation on the Burning Man Festival, with a fire dance performed in the parking lot. These are free events, and in 2007 a presentation every month is being planned.

KAFM also hosted a regular concert series in the Radio Room, to create a viable new off-air income stream, and 2006’s full season of 15 concerts was a great success—most concerts were sell outs. In 2007 there will be at least one concert per month, sometimes two.

KAFM will be purchasing the lots to

the east and west of the station in 2007 for an expansion of space for the cultural community, and 2007 will be a year of fund raising for this project. KAFM enjoys an energetic and dedicated volunteer force and a membership base of 1023.

IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT THE MEMBERSHIP LEVELS OF THE MAJOR ARTS AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS CONTINUE TO BE AROUND 1000 (GIVE OR TAKE A COUPLE HUNDRED) AND HAVE FLUCTUATED LITTLE SINCE THE COMMISSION BEGAN TRACKING THIS IN 1995, EVEN THOUGH THE AREA’S POPULATION HAS GROWN.

### Museum of Western Colorado

The first annual Two Rivers Chautauqua Festival at Cross Orchards was very well attended in 2006 and planning is underway for 2007. The Museum of the West facility downtown is currently closed to complete a major remodeling of their exhibits,

and will reopen in May. The many guided educational trips and outings hosted by Museum staff throughout the state and the world continued to be popular excursions. The 19th annual Dinosaur Days, 27th annual Apple Jubilee, school outreach programs,

classes, lectures, dinosaur digs, Cross Orchards History Farm and Dinosaur Journey, all enjoyed a good year, except for the sad passing of the research library’s long-time director and archivist Judy Prosser-Armstrong.

# Grand Junction Commission on Arts and Culture

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*Making arts and culture part of  
everyday life in our community!*



“Soaring” by Tom & Jean Latka at Pear Park  
Elementary School Gym—1% for the Arts

## ARTS COMMISSION PROGRAMS INCLUDE:

- Financial support for local arts & cultural events & projects
- Development and implementation of the *Grand Junction Strategic Cultural Plan* recommendations
- Administration of the City’s 1% for the Arts program
- *The Sourcebook: A Directory of Grand Junction Area Artists & Arts Organizations*
- Annual Champion of the Arts Awards
- *Community Cultural Events Calendars*
- Slide presentations about community arts activities
- *Economic Impact of the Arts in the Grand Valley* reports
- Annual Arts Roundtable meeting for arts organizations
- Training workshops for local artists and arts organizations
- Technical assistance and networking opportunities, monthly meetings of major arts & cultural organizations
- City Hall art exhibits
- Information clearing house and resource for the community

## Arts & Cultural Groups Collaborate on a Marketing Campaign

An exciting collaboration involving four local organizations, two City agencies, the college art department, the photography store downtown, and sixteen area artists brought about a special six page advertising spread in the widely circulated *Southwest Art* magazine.

The Art Center brought the marketing opportunity to the attention of numerous arts groups, and the Center and the Arts Commission were instrumental in gathering participants, information, and photographs. The special section featured Grand Junction as an “emerging art town” and gave our cultural community and local artists outstanding national attention.

*Southwest Art*’s regional editor is planning a trip to Grand Junction in the spring of 2007 to do a follow up article about the Grand Valley’s art scene and many artists. Several of the artists whose work appeared in the magazine sold their pieces or secured commissions as a result of the promotion.

The groups who put together the *Southwest Art* advertising have continued to meet on a regular basis to coordinate a comprehensive marketing and promotional campaign. The GJ Visitor and Convention Bureau has been working with the organizations and the Commission to collectively promote arts events and major festivals, and increase local media coverage.

“Arches” by Harlan Mosher at City Hall on permanent loan to Art on the Corner

