

State of the Arts



GRAND JUNCTION COMMISSION ON ARTS AND CULTURE 2007 ANNUAL REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

City Receives 2007 Governor's Arts Award

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Gov. Bill Ritter came to Grand Junction in August to present the 2007 Governor's Arts Award to Mayor Jim Doody and the citizens of Grand Junction at a lunch at the Art Center. Grand Junction is the first municipality to receive this award, given to recognize a Colorado city or town for effectively employing the arts to improve their community's quality of life and economic vitality.

The Colorado Council on the Arts, Arts for Colorado, and the Governor's office applauded Grand Junction for:

~ The city's financial commitment to the arts through the Commission on Arts and Culture, the 1% for the Arts Program, artist exhibits at City Hall and the Convention Center, grants to cultural organizations, support for artist-in-residence

programs in the schools, and the *Economic Impact of the Arts* report.

~ The breadth of populations served by the variety of arts activities offered by city agencies—from Art on the Corner to the Art & Jazz Festival—as well as by the 64 local arts and cultural organizations.

~ The vision and commitment to using the arts as a tool for community enhancement as reflected in the *Grand Junction Strategic Cultural Plan*.

~ The diversity of groups that support and participate in the arts, including the Downtown Development Authority, the city's economic development and tourism agencies, Mesa State College, arts organizations, and individual artists.

"I am convinced that the arts can play an integral role in enhancing the vitality of a town or city. Grand Junction has demonstrated their creative use of the arts to enhance quality of life, build economic prosperity, improve educational achievement, and grow tourism."

Governor Bill Ritter



Gov. Bill Ritter, CO Council on the Arts Ex. Dir. Elaine Mariner & GJ Mayor Jim Doody

Economic Importance of the Arts in the Grand Valley

*Making
arts and
culture part
of everyday
life in our
community
since 1990!*

In June the Commission released their *Economic Impact of the Arts study*, compiled from questionnaires to local arts and cultural organizations and agencies. Highlights:

~ Grand Valley arts & cultural organizations & agencies spent **\$10 million in total operating expenditures**, plus

invested almost **\$1 million in capital project spending**.

~ This direct arts & cultural spending of \$11 million generated another \$16 million in indirect spending—totaling a **\$27 million impact to the community**.

~ **Over half a million peo-**

ple attended or visited arts & cultural events & facilities in 2006 (a 55% increase over year 2000).

~ Arts & cultural organizations & agencies offered or presented almost **2,000 events & activities** during 2006.

(continued on page 2)

Commission Supports 24 Art & Cultural Projects



Young artists at the Art Center Summer Art Camp—supported in part by a grant from the Arts Commission

Commission funded arts and cultural activities reached an audience of 40,000 people in Mesa County.

Grand Junction nonprofit organizations and government agencies which provide cultural activities received \$36,600 from the Arts Commission to support arts and cultural events and projects in 2007. The Commission's annual grant program helps underwrite all types of local arts and cultural activities, ranging from festivals to art exhibits to concerts to art education.

With a generous donation from the Colorado Council on the Arts, in addition to City of Grand Junction funds, the Commission fully funded the top 11 grant requests:

- Two Chairs Theater Company's Play
- Sweetwater Shakespeare Company's Shakespeare Play
- "An Evening of Celtic Entertainment"
- Artspace & Open Studios Artists Business Management Classes
- Art Mobile of Colorado Traveling Art Exhibits and Classes
- KAFM Arts & Entertainment Calendar
- Center for Independence Art Classes
- Messiah Choral Society Concert
- The Schumann Singers Concerts
- Western Slope Chamber Music Series
- Hilltop Community Resources/Mesa State College's play

Other performing arts grants went to:

- The Grand Junction Symphony
- High Desert Opera New Year's Gala
- The Centennial Band
- Bookcliff Barbershop Harmony Chorus
- The Art & Jazz Festival
- Cinema at the Avalon's marketing efforts
- Western Colorado Chorale
- Western Colorado Botanical Garden Summer Concert Series

Other visual arts grant beneficiaries include:

- The Art Center Summer Art Camp
- Western Colorado Watercolor Society
- COPMOBA/Brown Cycles downtown bike festival and bike sculptures
- Rocky Mountain Public Television KRMJ's "Western Bounty" arts programs

The largest grant supported art education:

- Mesa County Valley School District 51's Artists-in-Residence and teacher art training programs

These activities and events reached an audience of around 40,000 people in Mesa County.

Economic Importance of the Arts in the Grand Valley

Continued from page 1—more interesting findings from the economic impact report:

~ Nonprofit arts & cultural organizations support **137 full time equivalent jobs at 18 different organizations or agencies—199 people** work at full time or part-time jobs in the cultural industry

~ Mesa County has **255 for profit arts-related businesses that employ 883 people**—local "creative industries" based on artistic or creative endeavors, from artists,

designers, galleries, and musicians, to radio and television and audio/video/movie production/sales/rentals

~ Cultural activities attracted an estimated **98,000 attendees from outside Mesa County**, bringing new money into the community

~ **3099 volunteers donated 144,795 hours** to arts and cultural organizations in 2006

~ Arts & cultural organizations boast over **15,000 paid members** throughout Western Colorado



"Sunworks" art exhibit at City Hall, art by Alejandro Leyva, grade 5, Montrose

City Completes Several Public Art Projects

A larger than life-sized bronze statue of City founder George Crawford was unveiled in front of City Hall at the end of June, as part of the celebration of the city's 125th anniversary. The sculpture was funded by the City Council and created by artist and former Grand Junction resident Mark Wahlberg. The Arts Commission selected Wahlberg from a group of highly qualified bronze portraiture sculptors.

The Commission also continued their annual kids' tile painting project with a booth at the 125th celebration in Lincoln Park for children to hand paint their own four inch tile. All of the tiles will become part of an ever-expanding ceramic tile mural on the side of the Lincoln Park Moyer Pool bathhouse.

The new downtown parking garage which was completed the end of 2007 features artist designed entryway canopies

over the two pedestrian entrances and the vehicular entrance (*photo at right*). Artist Rafe Ropek designed the stainless steel, acrylic, and LED lit awnings, which are programmable to change lighting colors and sequences. The grillwork on the awnings depicts stylized cars, turtles, and horses.



In addition to the permanent art, during 2007 the Commission showcased artwork at the City Hall by 36 local artists, 18 national/international artists in the "Sunworks" exhibit, and School District 51 Art Heritage students.

Commission Gives Champion of the Arts Awards



Champion of the Arts Award winner Connie Robbins-Brady, coordinator of the MCV School District Art Heritage Program

Winners of the Commission's annual Champion of the Arts Awards in 2007 were **Arlene Baker/U. S. Bank** in the Business Category and **Connie Robbins-Brady/Mesa Co. Valley School District 51 Art Heritage Program** in the Individual Category.

Arlene Baker and U.S. Bank were nominated by the Grand Junction Musical Arts Association and the Western Colo-

rado Center for the Arts.

Connie Robbins-Brady and the Mesa County Valley School District 51 Art Heritage Program were nominated by Deborah K. Snider and seven other artists, teachers, and volunteers.

Robbins-Brady and U. S. Bank received artwork by local artists George Callison and Terry Shepherd as the awards.



Champion of the Arts Award winner Arlene Baker, formerly U.S. Bank's Market President, nominated by the GJ Symphony and the Art Center

Collaborations and Outreach Activities

Requests for information continue to come from communities all over the country about the Art on the Corner program, the city's 1% for the Arts program, and the Commission's *Grand Junction Strategic Cultural Plan*. In July of 2007, the Cultural Arts Coordinator, as part of the Colorado Council on the Arts Peer Assistant Network of consultants, spoke at a community meeting in Durango about the cultural planning process, and provided workbooks and information about strategic planning to Durango, Cortez, and Holyoke, CO.

Locally the Commission has been instrumental in helping get a new membership association of arts, cultural, and scientific organizations off the ground—the Grand Valley Scientific and Cultural Alliance. The mission of the Alliance is to collectively promote the healthy sustainability of a dynamic scientific and cultural community. Working closely with other major cultural and scientific groups, the Commission hopes this association will build on the foundation which the Commission has laid to promote the benefits of the cultural and scientific community to the public.

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The City of Grand Junction Commission on Arts and Culture was established in 1990 by the Grand Junction City Council to advance and promote the growth and development of the city's arts and cultural community and activities. The mission of the nine member volunteer board is to create a climate where arts and culture can thrive and grow in the community.

The Arts Commission and Cultural Arts Coordinator administer a grants program, the 1% for the Arts program, and the city's public art collection; conduct research and provide information and assistance to area arts organizations and artists; assist in marketing cultural events and promoting local artists; and act as a clearinghouse of information on arts and culture.

For additional information about Commission programs and projects, contact the Commission at 254-3865, allisons@gjcity.org, or visit the Commission's website at www.gjarts.org or the city's website at www.gjcity.org.

Arts Community Successes and Financial Impact Voted #3 Story in *The Daily Sentinel's* Top Ten Stories of 2007

Readers voted the financial impact of the arts in the Grand Valley and the overall success of the cultural community the number three story in *The Daily Sentinel's* on-line survey of the Top Ten Stories of 2007.

Under the headline "Arts Community 'reached a new level' in 2007", the newspaper cited several factors which demonstrated the viability, progress, and accomplishments of local arts and culture:

~ The City's receiving the 2007 Governor's Arts Award (see related story on page 1).

~ The statistics in the *Economic Impact of the Arts in the Grand Valley* report researched and released by the Arts Commission which illustrate the cultural community's many economic benefits (see related story on page 1).

~ Formation of the Grand Valley Scientific & Cultural Alliance, a new membership association which will market and promote the scientific, art, and cultural community.

~ Art on the Corner and other public art projects, including the Crawford statue and Trumbo memorial, art included in the two I-70 inter-

change projects, and the artist designed entryway awnings on the new downtown parking garage (see related story on page 3).

~The opening of The Blue Pig Gallery in Palisade which carries work by more than 30 local professional artists.



City Hall art exhibit by members of the Mesa County School District Employees Association