

State of the Arts

Grand Junction Commission on Arts & Culture 2009 Annual Report to the City Council

Another Milestone Year...

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► *The National Recreation & Park Association's Midwest Regional Arts & Humanities Award* was presented to the Commission on Arts and Culture in 2009 in recognition of the **Commission's innovative grant program**, which helps fund local arts and cultural events, education, and projects. As part of the city's Parks and Recreation Department, the Arts Commission provides vital support for the city's high quality of life, the arts and cultural community and the goals of the City's Comprehensive Plan.

► During 2009 the Commission awarded

\$46,500 to 23 arts and cultural organizations through the grant program, supporting a wide range of arts activities and reaching the largest estimated audience ever—about a quarter of a million people (see the list on page 2).

► Last summer the Commission launched its redesigned and vastly improved website **gjarts.org**, to better showcase local artists and arts organizations, the City's excellent civic art collection, and other Commission projects.



The Commission's gjarts.org website, designed by Monument Graphics

► During the year four new public art projects that the Commission either assisted with or directly commissioned were completed.

► The Commission featured artwork by 50 local artists at City Hall, and played a part in reviving First Fridays art openings throughout Grand Junction every month.

Public Art Projects Around Grand Junction in 2009

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



"Aspen Trees" by Reven Swanson at 4th Street & Riverside Parkway (1% for Art)



"The Gate Keepers" by Harlan Mosher at 24 Road and I-70 roundabouts (City Public Works project with Arts Commission collaboration)

(See the Legends sculpture on page 2)



"Local Motion" by William Mueller at Grand Valley Transit's new Bus Transfer Station (GVT 1% for Art project which the Arts Commission coordinated)

Commission Grants Animate Community Arts Activities

The local arts and cultural community received \$46,500 in financial support from the City, Commission on Arts and Culture, and the Colorado Council on the Arts in 2009.

Donations went to 23 non-profit cultural organizations to help underwrite all types of local arts and cultural events and projects ranging from festivals to art exhibits to concerts to art education, which will reach a wide variety of interests and ages.

The highest award funded a large mural by Denver artist Tony Ortega and students at the

Dual Immersion Academy.

Underwriting for **KAFM Community Radio's "Arts & Entertainment Calendar"** and **Rocky Mountain PBS KRMJ's "Western Bounty"** arts segments promoted countless community cultural activities and many local artists.

With a generous contribution from the Colorado Council on the Arts in addition to City money, the Commission was able to fully fund the top eight ranked requests, including those listed above plus:

- **Grand Junction Symphony's Classical Mystery Tour Concert**
- **Artspace's Open Studios Tours**
- **the Art & Jazz Festival**
- **Mesa County Public Library's "One Book, One Mesa County"**
- **"Acts of Brevity" by Two Chairs Theater Company**

The Commission likes to encourage new cultural activities so several awards went to help underwrite first year or second year projects:

- **Hilltop Community Resources' Opportunity School art classes**



"William Moyer" Legends Historic Sculpture project

City financial support reaches an audience of 60,000 —260,000 people and helps support employment, performing, exhibition, or educational opportunities for 1,500 artists or art students in Grand Junction!



Western Slope Music Series
Celtica Sinfonia Concert

- **Legends Historic Sculpture of William Moyer**

- **West. CO Chorale African concert**

Numerous grants helped finance performing arts events and projects, including:

- **Museum of Western Colorado's Two Rivers Chautauqua Festival**

- **High Desert Opera's "Man of La-Mancha" production**

- **Grand Junction Centennial Band**

- **Bookcliff Barbershop Harmony Chorus "Youth in Harmony"**

- **Messiah Choral Society concert**

- **Western Slope Concert Series**

- **Sweetwater Shakespeare Company**

- **Graham Celtic Productions music**

Other beneficiaries were:

- **The Art Center's Summer Art Camp**
- **Western Colorado Watercolor Society's National Invitational Exhibit**
- **The Reader's Festival**
- **Super Rad Art Jam**

In addition to their grant requests, these organizations **leveraged another \$180,000 in donations from other sources**— foundations, businesses, individuals, and other agencies.

The 23 events and projects **reached a total audience of about 260,000 people**, particularly through the media exposure – KAFM Radio (an estimated 12,000) and KRMJ TV (another estimated 12,000) – the very popular Art & Jazz Festival (an estimated 11,000), and the Legends sculpture which is now part of **Art on the Corner's** permanent collection (viewed by an estimated 200,000 people annually).

GJArts.org Gets a Professional Redesign

Looking for an artist who can paint a portrait of your pet? Looking for a pottery teacher? Looking for a great rock & roll band? Now you can find information and images of local artists' work not just in *The Sourcebook: A Directory of Grand Junction Area Artists and Arts Organizations*, which the Commission publishes, but also online at gjarts.org.

In an effort to market and promote area artists and local creative industries, Grand Valley artists (visual and performing) and arts businesses have their own page on the site. There's room for much more information than in the printed *Sourcebook*.

Slideshows, an interactive map, and a downloadable brochure highlight facts and photos of the

City's public art collection.

Everything from grant application forms to news and events to economic impact studies to board member profiles make the revamped site much more informative, definitely eye-catching, and user friendly.



City of Grand Junction Civic Art Collection Interactive Map

Commission Projects and Programs

- ▶ Development and implementation of the **Grand Junction Strategic Cultural Plan** and the plan's extensive recommendations
- ▶ Financial support for local arts and cultural events and projects
- ▶ *The Sourcebook: A Directory of Grand Junction Area Artists and Arts Organizations*
- ▶ *Community Cultural Events Calendars*
- ▶ Administration and supervision of the City's **1% for Art** Public Art Program which acquires works of art for City capital projects
- ▶ Rotating art exhibits at City Hall
- ▶ Champion of the Arts Awards
- ▶ *State of the Arts* annual report
- ▶ Development, daily maintenance, and promotion of the Commission's website – gjarts.org
- ▶ *Economic Impact of the Arts in the Grand Valley* reports (compiled every five years)
- ▶ Annual Arts Roundtable meetings of arts and cultural organizations
- ▶ Support, promotion, networking, and training for local artists and organizations
- ▶ A resource and leader for other agencies regarding public art selection and other collaborations and opportunities

2009 Champion of the Arts Awards

St. Mary's Hospital & Medical Center, **Pamela Blythe** of Blythe Group + Co., and **Krystyn Hartman** and *Grand Valley Magazine* were all recognized by the Commission as Champions of the Arts. Cultural organizations nominate Grand Junction businesses and individuals for these awards to

honor generosity, dedication, and support of the arts.

St. Mary's Hospital was nominated by The Art Center for their purchase of \$375,000 in artwork by Colorado artists for the new Century Project.

Pamela Blythe, the designer behind much of St.

Mary's art collection including the Century Project, was also nominated by The Art Center.

Krystyn Hartman and her publication *Grand Valley Magazine* were nominated by Mesa State Art Professor Deborah Snider for her activism and arts promotion.



John Lintott painting "Ouray Pasture" given to St. Mary's Hospital as their award

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

**We're on the web at
www.gjarts.org**

Grand Junction Strategic Cultural Plan Vision:

"Grand Junction is recognized as a place where people live and visit because arts and culture are a major attraction and an important element to the quality of life of the community."

The mission of the Commission on Arts and Culture is to create a climate in Grand Junction in which the arts and culture can thrive and grow. The Commission is dedicated to developing and improving the quality, quantity, accessibility, and affordability of arts and culture for Grand Valley citizens.

News from Other Cultural Organizations

The Western Colorado Center for the Arts spent 2009 coordinating a huge project—the solicitation, selection, purchase, and installation of almost \$400,000 in artwork by Colorado artists, most of them local, for the St. Mary's Hospital Century Project. Over 1,000 work of art were submitted and over 300 were selected. The artwork and the new building were just unveiled at an open house in January.

In addition to their excellent annual art exhibits and their extensive art classes, last September The Art Center exhibited a landmark retrospective of artwork by Dave Davis—local artist, Art on the Corner founder, and former Art Center executive director.

Mesa County Libraries had a record year in 2009:

- check-outs up 25% (1,133,865 total)
- library visits up 27%

- new library cards up 21%
- computer use up 23%
- volunteer hours up 24%

The Museum of Western Colorado received their fourth consecutive reaccreditation from the American Association of Museums, a distinction only 1% of museums in the U.S. earn. But the Museum is facing a substantial reduction in Mesa County funding support for 2010 and the downturn in the economy in 2009 negatively affected both visitation and revenue.

The Museum, like other organizations, is doing more with less and just opened a major new exhibit in December and completed several very necessary facility repairs to some of their aging buildings and did several exhibit upgrades in 2009.

The Western Colorado Botanical Gardens saw visitorship go up in 2009, but like other non-profits, continued to do more with less financially—planted 4,000

new native plant (nearly doubling the plant materials from 2008), plus added lighting to the parking lot and greenhouses. The Downtown Development Authority and Art on the Corner donated "Flutterby", Terry Burnett's large, dynamic butterfly sculpture, to the gardens.

The **Grand Junction Symphony** continues to discuss the idea of presenting their concerts at the Avalon Theater with the City and the Downtown Development Authority, and what facility issues and renovations that will entail.

First Friday art openings each month around Grand Junction have been steadily gaining momentum since The Art Center, FrameWorks and other galleries, the Arts Commission, and Planet Wines got together last spring to launch the idea. With shared advertising and joint planning, the monthly art openings have taken off and now include up to a dozen locations.