

2005 Annual Report to the City Council

The Year in Review...

*Celebrating 15
years of making
arts and culture
part of the
everyday life of
our community.*

During 2005, the Arts Commission worked hard to bring *more arts to more people* through many activities:

✓ Published and distributed 12,000 bi-monthly community cultural events calendars in the Grand Valley.

✓ Donated \$27,000 through the Commission grant program to fund 18 arts and cultural events and projects, with an estimated 40,000 participants.

✓ Displayed works of art by 70 local artists at the City Hall, and hosted exhibit receptions for 240 attendees.

✓ Commissioned a new kite mobile sculpture for Canyon View Park, as well as a sculpture for the new Lincoln Park Moyer Pool Splash Playground through the 1% for the Arts program.

✓ Encouraged networking and collaboration by organizing monthly meetings of the major cultural organizations, and by hosting an Arts Roundtable for arts staff and board members in October.

✓ Commissioners joined 500 arts supporters statewide at the Colo. Business Committee for the Arts & Colo. Council on the Arts' conference *Culture.Commerce.Community* in Denver, encouraging arts and culture as economic development tools.

✓ Sponsored the first annual Kid's Tile Painting Project at the Lincoln Park Pool – 150 kids of all ages painted 4" tiles for a mural for the bathhouse wall.

✓ Recognized local leadership with Champion of the Arts Awards (formerly

the Business in the Arts Awards) to *The Daily Sentinel* (nominated by the Museum, DDA, and local artists), Kay Ambrose (nominated by the Art Center), and Karen Hildebrandt (nominated by the GJ Symphony.)

✓ Had the Avalon Theatre's historic mural cleaned and restored.

✓ Promoted GJ's dance community statewide by successfully nominating Ann Sanders, retiring director of Mesa State College's Dance Program, for the Colo. Alliance for Arts Education & Colo. Council on the Arts' Gully Stanford Professional Services Distinguished Achievement Award.

"The Community That Plays Together" Gunnar Anderson



State of the Arts

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Lora Quesenberry
Kat Rhein
Allison Sarmo, Cultural
Arts Coordinator

2005 in Review (cont.)

✓ Partnered with other cultural organizations on several major community-wide projects:

- Re-publication of Dalton Trumbo's novel *Eclipse* and the Trumbo 100th Birthday Celebration & Book Release Party with 400 attendees;
- The annual Art on the Corner Sculpture Change;
- A possible artists and arts organizations incubator/association, and as a first step, organizing the *Business Answers for Artists* seminar for 65 eager participants;



Mesa State College Community Education Center - Business Answers for Artists Seminar

- Selection of an artist for the I-70/Horizon Drive Interchange remodel project, and an artist for a water feature/sculpture at Mesa State College

months of meetings, and input from over 500 local citizens.

1992 – Implemented many cultural plan recommendations: Compiled and published *The Sourcebook: A Directory of GJ Area Artists and Arts Organizations*, two information pamphlets, and two reports for City Council including *The Economic Impact of the Arts in the Grand Valley* study; produced a training workshop for local artists; helped organize and fund a major new festival – the **Grand West Performing Arts Festival** – completed a **Comprehensive Cultural Facilities Feasibility Study** (which encouraged the purchase and renovation of the Avalon Theatre). Several Commissioners worked on the unsuccessful campaign to establish a Mesa County Scientific and Cultural Facilities Tax District.

1993 – Presented two training workshops for local artists, sponsored the second **Grand West Performing Arts Festival** and a new artists-in-residence program in the schools, and hosted the third Arts Roundtable for organizations.

1994 – The Commission hired a **half-time staff person** and moved from City Administration to the Parks & Recreation Department; instituted the annual **Business in the Arts Awards** and publication of a **quarterly community cultural events calendar**; and *The Sourcebook* artist directory was extensively expanded and updated. Several Commissioners again helped with another close but ultimately futile cultural tax district election.

1995 – Due to increasing requests for financial assistance,

and because the Commission does not present its own cultural events, the board established a formal **grant program** to support local arts and cultural events and programs and funded 12 projects – mainly children's events and arts education. Did a weekly promotion about "Art Happenings" on KREX-TV. Began hosting quarterly meetings of major cultural organizations, teamed with state and local agencies to do the "**Art Mind/Business Mind**" artists training seminar, and continued to implement cultural plan strategies.

1996 – Gathered data for the 4th edition of *The Sourcebook*; **doubled the grant program to \$14,000** with funding from the Colorado Council on the Arts and Public Service Company and underwrote 14 cultural projects, including three new festivals; purchased two Art on the Corner sculptures for the new Canyon View Park. Assisted the Mt. Garfield Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution with artist selection and planning for "The Spirit of Pioneer Women" memorial; and expanded the annual **Arts Roundtable** into an all day technical development seminar for arts groups and board members.

1997 – At the Commission's urging, the City Council adopted the **1% for the Arts program** to provide funding to acquire works of art for City capital improvement projects involving buildings, structures, and parks, and the first 1% artwork was purchased – "Play Ball" a leaping bronze dog by the Riverfront Trail. Gathered data for and compiled another **Economic Impact of the Arts in the Grand Valley** study; organized and hosted the **Colorado Arts Consortium annual state conference** with 90 attendees; donated \$22,000 in financial assistance to 22 cultural events and projects.

Historical Highlights – First 15 Years...

1990 – The Arts Commission was appointed by the City Council to assess the state of the arts in GJ, prioritize cultural needs, promote partnerships, and maximize public and private resources; first year spent writing by-laws and surveying local arts and cultural organizations.

1991 – Developed the **Grand Junction Strategic Cultural Plan** using a broad-based community steering committee, a random sample telephone survey, six

1998 – In an effort to promote GJ's cultural community as a whole, the Commission organized the first



Arts Expo at Two Rivers Convention Center, a day-long showcase with 44 cultural organizations and artists' exhibit booths, live entertainment by 20 performing groups, and 2500 attendees. Increased the Commission grant program to \$25,000 (almost half of the Commission's total budget) and supported 17 arts and cultural events and projects. Partnered with the Downtown Development Authority and Western Colorado Business Development Center to complete the **Public Service Steam Plant Re-use Feasibility Study** and began promoting renovation of the building as an artist business incubator. The Commission was active on state boards and in activities with the Colorado Arts Consortium and the Colorado Council on the Arts new Peer Assistance Network.

1999 – Donated \$25,000 (about 40% of Commission's budget) to 19 cultural events and arts education programs reaching about 25,000 participants; helped put together and fund another major promotion – the **"Pride of the Valley Arts Festival"** at Cross Orchards Historic Farm. Hosted the second **Arts Expo Showcase of the Arts** for 2000 attendees; presented three training workshops for arts and cultural organizations.

2000 – Commissioned **three works of art** for the new City Hall through the 1% for the Arts program; expanded the **Arts Expo** to include free admission that same day to all GJ cultural facilities. Sponsored a Univ. of Colo. at Colorado Springs troupe's **"Shakespeare in Lincoln Park"**; donated \$23,500 to 19 organizations who leveraged another \$50,000 in private funding; hosted a second **"Art Mind/Business Mind"** artists training. Completed the 6th update of *The Sourcebook*, and began publishing the cultural events calendars every two months rather than every three to accommodate increased activity.

2001 – Revised and updated the 1991 **Grand Junction Strategic Cultural Plan** with a 50 member citizen advisory committee to address issues ranging from arts education to cultural facilities to the local arts industry to public art; donated \$25,000 to support 18 cultural events and projects with an estimated audience of 25,500. Produced the 4th (and final) **Arts Expo** showcasing local artists, organizations, and performers;



began doing quarterly **rotating art exhibits at City Hall** to display artwork by area artists and guilds; commissioned a large sculptural water feature for the renovation of Two Rivers Convention Center through the 1% for the Arts program.

2002 – Continued to implement recommendations from the cultural plan: Compiled the third **Economic Impact of the Arts in the Grand Valley** study which documented an amazing 69% increase in the total expenditures of all nonprofit arts and cultural organizations over the previous four years, with a direct \$6.7 million annual impact to the local economy. **Updated The Sourcebook**; donated \$29,000 to 21 organizations and educational institutions (about 1/3 of the Commission's budget); and began hosting monthly networking meetings of major arts organizations. The Commission joined the board of the Colorado Alliance for Arts Education.

2003 – Participated in the first **Colorado Arts Expo** at the Denver Convention Center to promote GJ's artists and cultural amenities to the 4000 attendees; began hosting **opening receptions** for the City Hall art exhibits; designed and launched the **Commission's own website** – www.gjarts.org. Selected tile art by local artists for two new park restrooms, and donated \$26,400 to 15 organizations.

2004 – Public art was a major focus as **four new works of art** were commissioned through the 1% for the Arts program for four City capital projects – Redlands Fire Station, Canyon View East, Westlake and Wingate Parks. Donated \$31,000 (\$26,000 City funds and \$5,000 Colorado Council on the Arts funds) to support 13 cultural projects and arts education in the schools, with an audience of 42,000; sponsored the four-day **Dalton Trumbo Tribute Festival** which featured the play "TRUMBO: Red, White, & Blacklisted" by Chris Trumbo, plus films and exhibits.

State of the Arts in the Grand Valley

News from Other Community Arts & Cultural Organizations

Art Center

In 2005 the Western Colorado Center for the Arts had 29 unique exhibitions, including the very successful *Private Collections IV: Charles Partridge Adams*. The Adams exhibition set new attendance records daily during the exhibit and the Board underwrote the Center's \$3 admission fee so the public could enjoy the exhibit free of charge.

The Art Center continued their well-attended year-round education programs, offering many creative art classes for children and adults. The Center had record attendance at the annual May Art Week (which is being renamed Spring Art Week in April 2006) with 3,800 elementary children participating.

The Center (founded in 1953 and opened in 1960) turned over half their staff, with three new staff members coming on board since the summer. The Center's annual February Fine Art Auction continues to be their major fundraising event and the 2005 auction was another record-breaker. Membership is currently around 1,000.

Grand Jct. Musical Arts Assoc.

The Grand Junction Symphony Orchestra has 1,174 season ticket holders for its 2005-2006 symphony season, which is 81% of the Grand Junction High School Auditorium seating capacity, and most concerts easily sell-out the remaining seats. The GJSO is a dynamic, growing organization in need of future expansion capability. The Symphony launched its new logo in 2005, which is representative of that growth, and reflects the fluidity of music combined with the fluidity of the rivers in the Grand Valley. The GJSO is exploring expansion options in order to deliver an exciting line-up of concert performances in 2006. The Grand Junction Musical Arts Association (founded in 1978) includes the GJ Symphony Orchestra, the Centennial Band, the Grand Valley Children's Choir, the Western Colorado Chorale, and the Western Colorado Jazz Orchestra.

Museum of Western Colorado

The Museum recently launched a new name and identity for the downtown Regional History Museum – it's now the Museum of the West. The Museum continues to offer extensive educational programs, exciting guided trips and tours, lectures and classes, dinosaur digs, and other adventures in history, archaeology, genealogy, and paleontology at its many facilities. A new department – the Western Investigators

Team – was added in 2005 in collaboration with Mesa State College and other partners. Membership has increased significantly to around 1750. The Museum (established in 1965) includes the main Museum of the West, Dinosaur Journey in Fruita, Cross Orchards History Farm, Riggs Hill, Dinosaur Hill, Rabbit Valley Research Area, and Whitman Education Center.

Western CO Botanic Gardens

The Botanical Gardens hosts approximately 21,000 visitors per year and currently has a membership of about 750. Both membership and visitorship have increased due to the successful Summer Music at the Gardens Concert Series, hosting well-attended concerts on Wednesday and Friday nights over the summer.

The Botanical Gardens (founded in 1986 and opened in 1997) is excited to move forward with continued work on the Japanese Garden, and is currently getting bids for the construction of the bridge over the pond in that garden. They recently received a \$10,000.00 grant from El Pomar for their Celebration Plaza. The sculpture in the center of its interactive fountain will be completed in collaboration with the Lynette Jennings Foundation "Leaves 4 Life" project.

The Children's Secret Garden is now open limited hours, and will be open more hours in the summer, with a Grand Opening this summer. The castle has been completed, and is available for rentals (birthday parties, etc.). The Gardens has been without an executive director since mid-2004 due to lack of sufficient funding but is working toward regaining a stronger financial foundation.

KAFM Community Radio

KAFM (founded in 1993, on air in 1999) enjoys an energetic and dedicated volunteer force and a membership base of 1010. The station started regular monthly concerts in the Radio Room, to create a viable new off-air income stream, with a full season of 12 concerts for 2006. Season tickets are nearly sold out.

KAFM is purchasing the lots to the east and west of the station, currently held by investors on their behalf, for an expansion of space for the arts and community called the KAFM campus. In an attempt to increase their range, they have approached Mesa State with an offer to swap radio frequencies with KMSA plus a cash payment for the difference in value. They will hear whether this is a viable prospect in mid-March. A capital campaign for these acquisitions, renovations, and debt reduction will get underway in 2006.