



### Grand Junction Kiwanian recognized for service to music, community

The Women's Foundation of Colorado recognized a familiar face for Grand Junction Kiwanians when the organization honored Jeanie Thomas for her contributions to the Mesa County community.

Jeanie was honored for her service as the pianist for the Kiwanis Club of Grand Junction and the Downtown Rotary Club. She plays music prior to and during the meetings for the two service clubs each week, and she is an honorary member of the Kiwanis Club. In addition, Thomas performs at local nightclubs with her husband, Chuck Thomas. Jeannie plays the piano and organ during the couple's performances. Chuck plays accordion and saxophone.

"I never felt so honored," said Thomas in an interview following the ceremony. "I feel like there are so many women who do so much and aren't recognized."

Thomas said she met her husband in Denver, and the two bought a house in then-rural Grand Junction—on 29 Road—in 1970. They owned ten acres and raised cows while pursuing their love of performing music together. They performed gigs in and outside of western Colorado.

"We were not good cow raisers," she said, so they gave up that sideline and continued to perform.

By 1977, the Chuck and Jeanie chose to remain in Grand Junction, and perform outside of town only for special occasions in Montrose and nearby towns. She

supplemented their income by teaching dance and music for the Grand Junction Parks and Recreation Department. Chuck tuned pianos for extra income.

“Being here and being a part of this community is the most wonderful thing,” said Jeanie.

The foundation also recognized former State Representative Gayle Berry of Grand Junction, and nurse and volunteer Susan Maclean. The event was April 23 at Two Rivers Convention Center in Grand Junction.

The Women’s Foundation of Colorado is headquartered in the Denver area. It’s currently raising money through its Red Purse Campaign to help combat the girls’ dropout rate in Colorado schools. The organization says 8,000 girls in grades 7 through 12 dropped out in the 2006-07 school year. The campaign is designed to raise awareness of the dropout rate, and to work on educational efforts, including establishment of an endowment to help with the efforts.

The foundation seeks to raise \$1 million across Colorado this year in an effort to support a \$15 million endowment.

For more information about the organization, log on to [WFCO.org](http://WFCO.org)