



GRAND JUNCTION NEWCOMERS CLUB

NEWSLETTER

WHERE NEWCOMERS BECOME OLD FRIENDS

PRESIDENTS LETTER

Our next meeting is Wednesday, September 9. Come at 9:30 for coffee and fellowship; the meeting begins at 10:00. Our speaker is Curtis Englehart, Director of the GJ Economic Partnership. We hope to see you then.

-- Gary Fitzpatrick, President



As Executive Director of the Grand Junction Economic Partnership (GJEP), Mr. Englehart leads strategic initiatives that drive economic growth, business attraction, and expansion throughout Mesa County and the greater Grand Junction area

With extensive experience in workforce strategy, public policy, and community collaboration, I focus on attracting quality jobs, expanding primary industries, and strengthening regional competitiveness.

Most recently, Mr. Englehart served as director for the Mesa County Workforce Center. Prior to joining the Mesa County Workforce Center in 2015, he served as Human Services Administrator for the Mesa County Department of Human Services. Mr. Englehart has extensive experience in strategic planning, grant writing and management and is an accomplished legislative and labor market expert.

Mr. Englehart holds the Certified Economic Developer (CEcD) designation, an industry-recognized credential that reflects professional excellence and deep expertise in economic development.

MINUTES – Aug. 12, 2026

CLUB BUSINESS

President Gary Fitzpatrick called the meeting to order at 10 am by calling for changes to the July meeting minutes. Hearing none, **Tanya Davis** moved to approve the minutes as is and **Bruce Williams** seconded the motion. Minutes were approved by acclamation.

Treasurer Bill Gates reported that the club's checking account has \$8,414.34, with \$.71 in interest. The reserve account has \$5,516.08. He also mentioned that Newcomers is now offering Zelle, a digital payment methodology that members can use when making payments to Newcomers -- for club events or membership fees. Zelle offers an alternative way to writing and mailing a check. It's available by enrolling with most banks and credit unions, Treasurer Bill said. Information on using Zelle is posted on the Newcomers website. **President Gary** added that Zelle transfers money directly between U.S. bank accounts, so it's exceptionally secure, and there's no fee for sending or receiving money.

President Gary thanked **Tanya Davis** for the array of pre-meeting goodies served. "As always, it's terrific," he said. He also wished happy birthday to a handful of Newcomers in attendance who celebrate August birthdays.

In **Karen Dreher's** absence, **Jean Greenfield** announced cards sent to members through the We Care program. Karen sent a sympathy card to **John Neste**, on the loss of his wife **Judy**, who died following three years of treatment for ovarian cancer. John and Judy were the founders of Newcomers' Movie Club, a group that has been meeting to discuss movies for more than a decade.

In her role on the Membership Committee, **Jean Greenfield** welcomed four visitors to the meeting: **Martha Gregg** from Wichita, Kansas; **DeAnn**



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Baker from Annapolis, Maryland; **Susan DeHart** from Kernersville, North Carolina and **Ruth Martin** from Denver. A warm welcome to you all!

President Gary made a final plea for one or more volunteers to organize this year's Newcomers Holiday Party. "It's always a fun event and people who have organized it in the past are available to offer information and advice," he said. "If no one steps up by our September meeting, we will have to go without a party this year." **Jane Nakkache** said she would co-chair the party if someone else also volunteered to work with her. President Gary said he knew of a possible co-chair, who is currently out of town. He added that, while in recent years the Holiday Party has been held in the dining room at the Masonic Lodge/Grand Valley Event Center, other venues could also be considered by the organizers.

Stacie Hawkins noted that the monthly raffle was suspended over the summer but will resume in September. She reminded members to bring in donations -- new or used items that others might appreciate. Raffle proceeds, she said, pay for the materials and ingredients **Tanya** and her Hospitality Committee use to create the monthly meeting treats.

CLUB EVENTS

Douglas Grodt, who leads hikes for Newcomers members, said the next hike will be Thursday, August 13 -- provided that two more people sign up. If they do, the hike will be on the Grand Mesa's Water Dog trail, where the temperatures are forecast to be in the 60-degree range. If not enough people show interest, he said this week's hike will be cancelled.

Ken and Lisa Seitz reported that the next wine-tasting event also will take place on August 13 and will feature Greek wines. Since the event is imminent, the deadline for reservations has passed. August 13 also will be the final wine-tasting event of the year. "Tentatively, we will resume in January," Ken said. "We'll keep you posted."

Ken Seitz also noted that the Labor Day BBQ will take place on Monday, September 7, from 5-8 pm at Canyon View Park's Grand Shelter. It will cost \$13 per person for members and \$20 per person for non-members. In addition to barbeque food, water will be provided. Those who wish can also bring their own adult beverage as long as it's in a non-glass container.

Lois Leach, part of the Tour and Lunch team, said that tours will resume in September, beginning with a tour of the CareFlight of the Rockies hangar near Grand Junction Regional Airport. It will take place on Thursday, September 17, at 10:30 am. CareFlight of the Rockies is a non-profit critical care medical transport organization that serves western Colorado, including Intermountain Health/St. Mary's Regional Medical Center. The tour will be conducted by CareFlight medical personnel and will include fixed-wing aircraft used to transport patients longer distances. A sign-up sheet will be available at the September 9 coffee meeting.

Stacie Hawkins said that people wishing to join or rejoin Newcomers Dinner Club can make their payments electronically, using Zelle, as soon as the system goes live on Friday, August 14. Current Dinner Club members will receive an email with instructions on making Zelle payments. Paying by check also will be available. The cut-off for final Dinner Club sign-up will be September 1.

Ruth Anna thanked folks for bringing in empty egg cartons and reminded them why it's important to continue: The Community Food Bank needs egg cartons to store eggs, which arrive at the food bank in huge containers and need to be sorted into family-size distributions. After each monthly Newcomers meeting, **Larry Anna** loads the donated cartons into his vehicle and takes them to the food bank -- a contribution that's greatly appreciated. **Ruth** also said that she and Larry have tickets for the Grand Junction Symphony Orchestra's symphonic concert "Spirited Away" at the Avalon Theater at 3 pm on October 4. Anyone interested should contact them.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Susan Fournier is the Newcomers Club representative who works with Mesa County Public Libraries on the Armchair Travel program, a partnership that brings free presentations from domestic and international travelers from September-May. She said that the first presentation of the fall-winter season will take place on Thursday, September 3, at the Mesa County Central Library. Doors open at 6 pm and the presentation runs from 6:30-7:30. **Esther Schneller**, a Newcomers member, will share her experiences exploring "The Dakotas" -- both North and South Dakota. The presentations are free and open to the public. "We often



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have a full house," Susan said, "so it's good to arrive early."

Susan Norton, who volunteers with the Art Center of Western Colorado, announced that the next concert in the Music in the Grapevines summer concert series will take place on Tuesday, August 18, from 7-9 pm at Two Rivers Winery. The Feeding Giants band will perform, featuring the same lead singer who performs with the Queen Bees group. "Feeding Giants was new with us last year, and we got lots of positive feedback," Susan said. Tickets are \$20 in advance -- available online at www.artcenterguild.org or at the Art Center gift shop -- or \$25 at the concert. All proceeds go to support the Art Center's programs.

Stan Zygmunt, who volunteers for New Dimensions Lifelong Learning Institute, said the fall session is "just around the corner." So far, 111 classes on a wide variety of topics are planned. Classes will be listed online on September 2; registration will run from September 9-16, and classes will begin September 28. In the meantime, Midday with New Dimensions will offer a September 9 presentation by Mesa County Clerk Bobbie Gross at the Clifton Branch Library. She will present a virtual tour of the Election Department and voting process.

GUEST SPEAKER

Emilee Powell, Executive Director-Housing Resources of Western Colorado, described the goals of the 50-year-old Housing Resources non-profit. "Whenever we approach the complicated issue of housing and housing programs, we first have to define our target audiences," she said. "Who are we trying to help -- and how?" She said the organization's programs are organized around three key target groups -- existing homeowners, people looking to buy a home, and renters. For those who already own a home, Housing Resources can offer help in fixing their property, making it more energy-efficient and perhaps gaining access to mortgage loan assistance. Specific services for homeowners are available in six Western Colorado counties, including Mesa County. For people who want to purchase a home, there's counseling on how to approach the process, a Savings Booster program, and even assistance in acquiring renewable housing. For renters, actual rental units are available in growing numbers, all at below-market rates. Housing Resources also works directly with other non-profit organizations that try to find

solutions to the housing crisis -- often while constantly trying to get and keep grant money. "It's definitely a big challenge," she said, "but not a hopeless one."

-- Lois Leach, Secretary

MEMBER NOTES

Welcome to you all!

Dan and Lori Norcross, from Aurora, CO. 629 Manzanita Dr, GJ 81507. 720-810-4768 (Dan), 720-312-1323 (Lori). dannorcross35@yahoo.com, LAunicorn19@hotmail.com

Julie Montgomery, from Fredericksburg, TX. 2137 Buffalo Dr, GJ 81507. 713-899-4336. juliemontgomery13@gmail.com

Ruth Martin, from Aurora, CO. 587 Rio Grande Dr, GJ 81501. 720-934-8675. ruthie820@centurylink.net

Tammy and Gene Bandelow, from Arizona. 2960 Apollo Dr, GJ 81504. 218-750-7777 (Tammy), 218-348-7777 (Gene). tjband@hotmail.com, genoband@gmail.com

Les and Elena Hixson, from Venezuela. 649 Horizon Dr, GJ 81506. 970-261-2053. LHixson@aol.com

Labor Day BBQ

The date for the annual Labor Day BBQ is **Monday September 7 at 5 pm**. It will be at Canyon View Park Grand Pavilion. The cost is \$13 for members and \$20 for nonmembers. Menu will be chicken, pulled pork, roasted potatoes and coleslaw. There will also be a vegetarian option. To reserve a spot please send in a **check made out to Newcomers Club with the completed form** and send to Ken Seitz, 2675 Autumn Brook Ct, Grand Junction 81506. **Deadline for reservations is August 31**. You cannot show up without a reservation. Any questions, contact **Lisa Seitz** at 303-263-4391 or at lisa.seitz623@gmail.com. See last page of newsletter for sign-up form.



COMMUNITY DOINGS

Food Truck Fridays will be taking place around town all summer. **September 4** at Las Colonias Park, and **September 18** at 29 & D Road. 5-8:30pm. <https://www.grandvalleyfoodtruckfridays.com/>

The **Palisade Historical Society's** monthly history talk will be on **Thursday, September 10**, topic and speaker TBD. 6-7 pm at the Palisade Community Gym at 711 Iowa Ave in Palisade. Free admission (donations welcome).

GJ Parks and Recreation's Horticulture Team will host a **Perennial Plant Identification** class on **Saturday, September 12** at the Lincoln Park Rose Garden (1340 Gunnison Ave). Learn to identify 25 waterwise perennial plants and learn about their origins, care, and bloom time, then take a walk to practice your skills. 10 am-12pm. \$10, register here: <https://www.gjcity.org/>

Dog Days at the Lincoln Park-Moyer Pool on **Sunday, September 13** - The pool will be open for canines ONLY! The pool is open for dogs to paddle, soak, fetch, and dive. 11 am-3 pm (small dogs only 11-10 am). Cost TBD, proceeds benefit the Roice-Hurst Humane Society and the Billy Crawford Memorial Scholarship Fund. <https://www.gjcity.org/>

Join GJ Parks and Recreation for a **Downtown Plant Walk** on **Wednesday, September 16** or **Saturday, September 19**. A member of the city's Horticulture Team will share their knowledge. Walks start at various coffee shops (check your registration) and include a cup of coffee or tea. 9-10:30 am. \$7, register here: <https://www.gjcity.org/>

Family-friendly **Theatre in the Park** returns on **Saturday, September 19** at the Watson Island Amphitheater (near the botanical gardens). The Theatre Project will perform Suesspeare: Much Ado About Everything, a clever one-act play that contemporizes this Shakespeare comedy. Activities and food begin at Noon, show starts at 1 pm. Free.

The **80th Anniversary Gem & Mineral Show** will take place on **Saturday, September 19** and **Sunday, September 20**, and will include over 40 vendors displaying rocks, gems, minerals, fossils, geodes, and

handmade jewelry. Free parking, pets on leashes welcome. Saturday 9 am-5 pm, Sunday 10 am-4 pm at the Mesa County Fairgrounds. \$5 or less entry. www.grandjunctionrockclub.org

Pickin' in the Rockies, Sunday, September 20, is an annual western Colorado festival featuring country, bluegrass, and gospel music. Gates open at 10 am at Absolute Prestige Ranch (1351 Q Rd, Loma). <https://pickinintherockies.com/>

Rhythm and Brews is an add-on event to the Market in Main on **Thursday, September 25**. This even will feature multiple bands playing live at 4th and Main Street, and will feature a "Farm to Tap" beer garden. 5:30-10 pm. <https://downtowngj.org/events/rhythm-and-brews-concert-series/>

The 111th **Fruita Fall Festival** will take place from **Friday, September 25** and **Saturday, September 26** in downtown Fruita - a fall tradition with live music, parade, history fair, pet show, and more. Find the full schedule here: <https://www.fruitachamber.org/>.

Some doings at Mesa County Libraries (Mesacountylibraries.org) include:

- Sept. 9, 5-7 pm. Dungeons & Dragons for Adults. Clifton Branch.
- Sept. 9, 6-7:45 pm. Poetry Night. Listen, and if you like, share your poetry. Central Library Mesa Room.
- Sept. 10, 5:30-7 pm. Books on Tap. Meet to discuss books you're currently reading. Colorado Craft Coffee and Beer House.
- Sept. 15, 10:30-11:30 am. Crafting for Adults. Supplies provided. Fruita Branch.
- Sept. 22, 10:30-11:30 am. Crafting for Adults. Supplies provided. Orchard Mesa Branch.
- Sept. 23, 5-7 pm. Dungeons & Dragons for Adults. Clifton Branch
- Sept. 24, 5:30-7:30 pm. Mesa County Libraries Board of Trustees Regular Meeting. Central Library Community Room.
- Sept. 26, 9:30-10:30 am. Discovery Garden Demonstration Days, join the garden coordinator



to participate in seasonal activities (tools and gloves provided). Central Library Discovery Garden.

Weekend Book Sale Friends of the Mesa County Libraries will hold their weekend book sales on **Fridays and Saturdays, September 4, 5, 11, 12, 18, 19, 25, and 26** from **9 am to 2 pm** at the First Congregational Church (Across from Grand Junction High School). Great prices on used books, DVDs, CDs, and more - cash, check, credit card, and Venmo are accepted. Free admission, proceeds benefit Mesa County Libraries programs and projects.

Farmers Markets

The markets are still going strong in September.

Palisade Farmers Market, Sundays June 7 - October 4, 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. Downtown Palisade, Third and Main Streets.

Fruita Farmers & Makers Market, Saturdays June 13 - October 31, 8:30 am to 12:00 pm. Fruita Civic Center Park (325 E. Aspen Ave.).

Farmer's Market at Cross Orchards, Saturdays June 27 - September 19, 8:00 am to 12:00 pm. 3073 F Road.

Market on Main, Thursdays July 10 - September 24, 5:30 - 8:30 pm. Main Street Grand Junction.



The Hiking Group escaped the valley heat by trekking up on The Grand Mesa.



New Dimensions Lifelong Learning, a volunteer nonprofit organization, provides continuing education classes each fall and winter/spring for adults aged 50+. Information is available at www.newdimensionsgj.org.

The New Dimensions fall term is just around the corner. The class list with 110+ classes will be online at the New Dimensions website 8am on September 2. Registration opens September 9 and ends September 16. Classes start on September 28 and end November 13.

Fall term classes include:

- Bathing in Vibrations - The Sound Journey Experience
- Cultivating Energy in the Midst of Uncertainty
- Indigenous People in the Southwest and Their Reverence of Sandhill Cranes
- Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) 101
- Lunar Report - Current US plans for lunar exploration, extraction and exploitation
- Water in the Grand Valley
- Historic Thanksgiving Snowstorm of 1919
- Big Horse Dreams – (at the Clark Family Barn and Arena)

Until the term rolls around, Midday with New Dimensions lectures fill the gap.

Midday with New Dimensions is a partnership between Mesa County Libraries and New Dimensions Lifelong Learning, offering free public lectures based on past New Dimensions classes. Seating is first come, first served. Lecture information can be found on the Mesa County Libraries' event calendar at <https://mesacountylibraries.org/events/>.

On Tuesday, September 8, noon, **Midday with New Dimensions** offers a one-hour lecture titled **A Virtual Tour of the Mesa County Elections Department** presented by Bobbie Gross at the Mesa County **Clifton Library**, 3270 D 1/2 Rd. Bobbie is the current Mesa County Clerk and Recorder and has worked in the Elections Department for nine years. With the help of video, Bobbie will give a virtual tour of the Elections Department Facility. (Continued next page.)



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Topics covered include:

- The bipartisan teams that collect ballots from drop boxes scattered throughout the county, security involved, and the chain of custody.
- The process of verifying the signatures on the ballot envelopes with voter registration records from ballots received from in-person voting, mail-in ballots, and those collected from drop boxes.
- The scanning, tabulation, and verification of ballots cast and storing the ballots.



Please contact **Karen Dreher** if you know of someone in the club who needs a card: 303-475-5776 (text preferred), niagaraway@comcast.net

MEMBER CLASSIFIED ADS

Free text-only space is available for member non-commercial and personal ads. They will run until forbid or a maximum of three months both in the newsletter and on our website. Send your request to gjnewcomers@gmail.com by the 20th of the preceding month.



Scan to access gjnewcomers.org

Executive Board 2025-2026

President – Gary Fitzpatrick, 419-450-9438,
gfitzpatrick77@gmail.com

1st Vice President – Tom Politzer, 303-888-5437,
tpolitzer@msn.com

2nd Vice President – Stacie Hawkins, 206-501-1523,
shawkins5594@gmail.com

Treasurer – Bill Gates, 541-613-4390,
whgates.62@gmail.com

Secretary – Lois Leach, 303-748-5203,
decsaj12948@gmail.com

Grand Junction Newcomers Club

PO Box 3222

Grand Junction, CO 81502

gjnewcomers@gmail.com

gjnewcomers.org

Submissions for general club news and ads are due the 20th of the preceding month.

You don't have to be new to the area to join Newcomers. Annual dues are \$15, \$30 for a couple. Download the membership form at gjnewcomers.org, and mail the completed form with a check. Or come to a monthly coffee (2nd Wednesday of the month, 9:30 am, at the Masonic Lodge/Grand Valley Event Center (2400 Consistory Ct) to get to know us a bit and sign up then. You'll meet great people, receive our member directory, get our newsletter and timely email alerts, can join any of our regular activity groups, and participate in special events.



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September Activities

	COFFEE (Monthly Meeting) Everyone is welcome at our monthly coffee, held the 2nd Wednesday of each month at the Masonic Lodge/Grand Valley Event Center (2400 Consistory Ct). We meet at 9:30 am to enjoy a bit of coffee and socializing before our business meeting. We usually have a guest speaker from a local non-profit or other organization. Meetings conclude around 11 am. The next meeting is Wednesday, Sept. 9. Our speaker is Curtis Englehart, Executive Director of Grand Junction Economic Partnership.
	ARMCHAIR TRAVEL Armchair traveler is starting up soon! Our first presentation is at Central Library on Thursday, Sept. 3, at 6:30 pm. Newcomers member Esther Schneller will speak on both North and South Dakota, states where she both lived and traveled extensively.
	BOOK CLUB On September 8 at 10 am, the 2026-2027 session of the Book Club starts off with the true story of a determined woman who travels across the country on horseback--in 1954! <i>The Ride of Her Life</i> by Elizabeth Letts should give us plenty to discuss. We'll gather at the home of Nancy Wissler and Gail Carravetta will lead the discussion. Reach out to DJ Clancy at djclancy68@gmail.com with any questions."
	BOWLING Strikes! Spares! Gutter Balls! Whatever your skill level, you are welcome to join up with other Newcomers every Friday at 9:15 am at the Orchard Mesa Lanes, 295 27 Rd. It's only \$9 for three games. Shoes are available for rental. For information, phone or text Michael Shea at 970-663-3238, 970-213-4859, or dakotah1001@msn.com.



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DINNER CLUB

Dinner Club resumes in September with an all-group dinner at St. Matthew's church on **September 18** in the evening. A comfort dinner theme has been chosen, and the committee will contact members with their food assignments. We're expecting a good group gathering!



HAPPY HOUR

Mark your calendars for the **1st, 3rd and 5th Wednesdays** of the month, usually from **5 to 7 pm**. Look for an email with the location.

A suggestion: With so many new members and guests at happy hours, wear your name tag to facilitate introductions and lighten the load on our memories.



KNITTING

Knitting group will meet at Sherwood Park on **Monday**, Sept. 21, at 10:30 am. Bring a chair and some fun knitting/crochet projects.



MAH JONGG

The **Thursday** morning Newcomers Mahjongg group plays from **9 to 11 am** each week. Interested players can contact **Nancy H.** for details.



MOVIE CLUB

Movie Club will resume meeting after summer break on **Tuesday, Sept. 1**, with a what-did-you-watch-during-the-summer discussion. Each member will briefly summarize their favorite summer movie — maybe even dress like a main character. The club also will toast the memory of Judy Neste, who co-founded the group in 2016 with her husband John. **Ann Repka** and **Tony Weadock** will host.



NEEDLECRAFTERS

Newcomer Club Needle Crafters meet the **second Monday** of the month to work on their projects. September location and RSVP details will be sent to participating group members to allow the hostess to prepare for the month. Interested club members can contact **Nancy Hollmaier** for more information.



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SINGULAR DINERS

Singular Diners is for those who want to experience the various restaurants in the Grand Valley but hesitate to dine alone. Our next lunch will be on **Monday, Sept. 16 at noon** at Rockslide Brew Pub, 401 Main St, Grand Junction. Please confirm your attendance to **Lina Palomo** bluetopaz1129@yahoo.com or (626) 993-7046.



TENNIS

Drop in any **Monday, Wednesday or Friday** at Canyon View Park for mixed doubles play. Court time is **1 pm to 3 pm**. Everyone welcome. Questions? Call **Lorene Ramirez**, 702-985-1891, or Mikerzlv@yahoo.com.



TOUR AND LUNCH

Following its summer break, the Tour and Lunch group will resume on **Thursday, Sept. 17, at 10:30 am** with a tour of the CareFlight of the Rockies hangar at 2849 Aviators Way near the GJ airport terminal. CareFlight of the Rockies is a non-profit medical transport service that carries critical care patients to medical facilities in western Colorado, including to Intermountain Health/St. Mary's Hospital. Members of CareFlight's medical staff will lead us through the hangar, where fixed-wing aircraft (not the helicopters we've all seen landing on St. Mary's roof) are based. For more details or to sign up, email **Lois Leach** at decsaj12948@gmail.com. You can also sign up at the September 9 Newcomers coffee meeting.



WINE CLUB

We held our last wine tasting for the year on August 13, sampling wines from Greece. Wine club will return in January 2027. Stayed tuned for future information. Any questions, please contact **Lisa** at lisa.seitz623@gmail.com or at 303-263-4391.



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FREE AND FUN NEXT MONTH

Date	What	Where	Time	More Information
3	Armchair Travel	Central Library	6:30 – 7:30 pm	https://mesacountylibraries.org
4	First Friday	The GJ Art Center	6:30 – 9 pm	Gjartcenter.org
4	Free Admission at Museum of the West	Museum of the West	10 am – 4 pm	https://www.museumsofwesternco.org/
9	A Little Noon Music	First Methodist Church	12:15 pm	https://www.gjartcenter.org/



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Grand Junction Newcomers Club 2026 Labor Day Barbeque Reservation Form

Event Date: Monday, September 7, 2026
 Event Time: 5 pm to 8 pm
 Location: Canyon View Park, Grand Shelter Event
 Cost: \$13 per member, \$20 for non-members

Member Name(s): _____

Member Phone #: _____

Member Email Address: _____

No. of Members Attending: _____

Number of Meat Meals: _____

Number of Vegetarian Meals: _____

PLEASE KEEP THIS BOTTOM PORTION FOR YOUR RECORDS

Event details: Food menu will be: pulled pork and chicken, roasted potatoes, cole slaw, and cookies. We will provide a vegetarian option upon request. Beverages provided: water (you may bring your own alcohol in plastic containers—no glass). Pavilion seating is limited to 112, so reservations will be on a **first come, first serve basis**. Cutoff for reservations will be Monday, August 31.

Make check payable to: **Grand Junction Newcomers Club** and mail to: Ken Seitz, 2675 Autumn Brook Ct., Grand Junction, CO 81506.