

# A group of friends puts a new spin on fun in Grand Junction, Colorado

By Connie Evener

It had been 15 years since anyone had done the hokey pokey – or much else on skates – in Grand Junction, Colo. A group of friends, reminiscing about the good times they had at the roller rink when they were kids, decided it was time roller skating made a comeback in western Colorado.

It took roughly five months to transform the 48,000 sq. ft. building that previously housed the GJ Scores bowling alley into the roller rink/laser tag arena/arcade/restaurant/plus “boutique” bowling with six lanes, known as Spin City.

“It was a major undertaking to get the rink floor in, get the laser tag all set up and make all the changes in wiring and plumbing,” said director of operations, Dorri Thompson. Her first impression of the facility was “wow!”

“I thought, ‘What a great place they’ve created!’” Apparently the



people of Grand Junction agree because business, especially on the weekends, has been brisk since the facility opened in October 2013. And Spin City is attracting people from the surrounding area, too, some of whom are driving more than an hour to get there.

With a population of 60,000, Grand Junction rolled out the welcome mat for a new business that will provide jobs, full and part time, for more than 60 of its residents. And, as the “Grand Junction Sen-



Skaters of all ages are having a ball at the new Spin City in Grand Junction, Colo.

tinel” pointed out in an article last August, with only seven commercial building permits issued up to that point in all of Mesa County, Spin City’s renovations provided construction jobs, too.

Spin City is open seven days a week. Although the earlier part of the week has been relatively quiet

thus far, weekends are going “like gang busters,” said Thompson. “We have a teen night on Friday, birthday parties all day Saturday (generally between 15 and 18 a day), then the teens come back on Saturday night. Sunday is Family Day, and it’s very busy. We thought we’d slow down after the holidays, but it’s stayed pretty steady.”

When Thompson talked with The Rinksider, Spin City was approaching its sixth month in business. As with any new venture, the focus was on adjusting and fine tuning, amping up what was working and making changes and experimenting with what wasn’t.

For instance, Spin City wasn’t drawing as many adult skaters as they’d hoped. “We just haven’t found the right message or the right reason for them to come and try it out,” said Thompson. “We’re still working on it.” And they were reaching out to the community to connect with groups or organizations that would like to use the facility during those quieter times early in the week.

On the other hand, the professional deejay they began bringing in

for special nights, like New Year’s Eve and Valentine’s Day, made quite an impression. “The kids really respond and enjoy it, and keep asking when we plan to bring the deejay back,” said Thompson. Later this spring, she said, “We will be adding the inflatables. We’ll be calling it Jump City. We’re working on a web page for that now.”

Although they’ve been talking about making their website more “jazzy,” the current website is doing its job. “We get a lot of hits every day, people are using the website to book parties and to check the schedule,” noted Thompson.

Spin City is the only facility of its kind between Denver and Salt Lake City. “I think it was well planned out. We have a lot to offer that the competition doesn’t have. We’ll see, as time goes on, what we need to do,” said Thompson. “We have a lot of people who skated at the old rink when it was open, and they’ve been bringing their kids to skate. People want to support us because it’s a good place for their children to come.”



Even beginning skaters enjoy the fun at Spin City in Grand Junction, Colo.