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**Artists at any age**  
 Balfour showcases residents' artistic talents

By Chalan Harper  
 Colorado Hometown Newspapers

Eighty years ago, Jean Newby got her first taste of what it was like being a shutterbug.

"That was in the good old black and white days, when you could still have a darkroom," Newby said this week.

Now 94 years old, the Lodge at Balfour resident is still taking pictures and this week showed off her hobby by entering three photos into the Lodge's annual residents' art show.



Photographer Jean Newby stands near some of her photos with painter Suzann Decker. Both are residents of the Lodge at Balfour and entered photos and paintings in the facility's annual art show. Chalan Harper/Colorado Hometown Newspapers

Newby was one of about 15 different artists to enter this year's show, which has been going on for about three years, said activities manager Von Fumetti.

This year's event, which took place Saturday, June 21, drew more than 100 people, Fumetti said.

Newby said she most enjoys taking photographs of scenery, and is a stickler for photo composition.

"I'm a frustrated artist, I guess you could say," Newby joked. "I can do things with photos that I can't do with a brush and paint."

Though Newby started out taking photos with film, and developing negatives in a dark room, she said she absolutely loves the digital age.

Newby is proficient in modern photo-editing software, like Photoshop.

"I have about 6,000 pictures on my computer," Newby said.

Over the years, Newby has developed tricks and tips to get the best photos possible.

For example, while taking pictures of a fireworks show, Newby put her camera on a tripod and left the shutter open.

Because the shots were going off one at a time, after each explosion of light and sparks, Newby placed her hand over the lens to wait for the next blast.

The result was a bright fireworks photo with five separate fireworks bursts. The photo was among those she entered for the show this year.

In the past, Newby has also entered photos in contests throughout her college and adult years, though this is the first art show for her since becoming a resident of the Lodge last year.

And, when asked what she likes best about photography, the answer was easy: "Getting a good picture," Newby said.

Though the art show had a wide variety of artistic mediums, such as paintings, pottery and jewelry, Suzann Decker said this week she entered her paintings for another reason.

Fumetti said Decker can be shy and sharing her paintings in the show gave Decker the capability to express herself and open up.

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"I just love doing it," Decker said. "I can paint for five hours straight and be perfectly happy."

At 73, Decker is the Lodge's youngest resident. This year's show marked the third in which she has displayed her paintings, which primarily focus on flowers.

Though she did not take formal art education courses until she went to college, Decker said she has been painting since her grandmother sent her a box of temper paints at the age of 12.

A former art teacher for the Jefferson County school district, Decker said she learned the most about art while she was teaching.

In addition to painting, Decker also does wood-cut prints. Though she has an array of paintings and wood-cut prints in her room at the Lodge, she said her family owns most of her previous work.

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