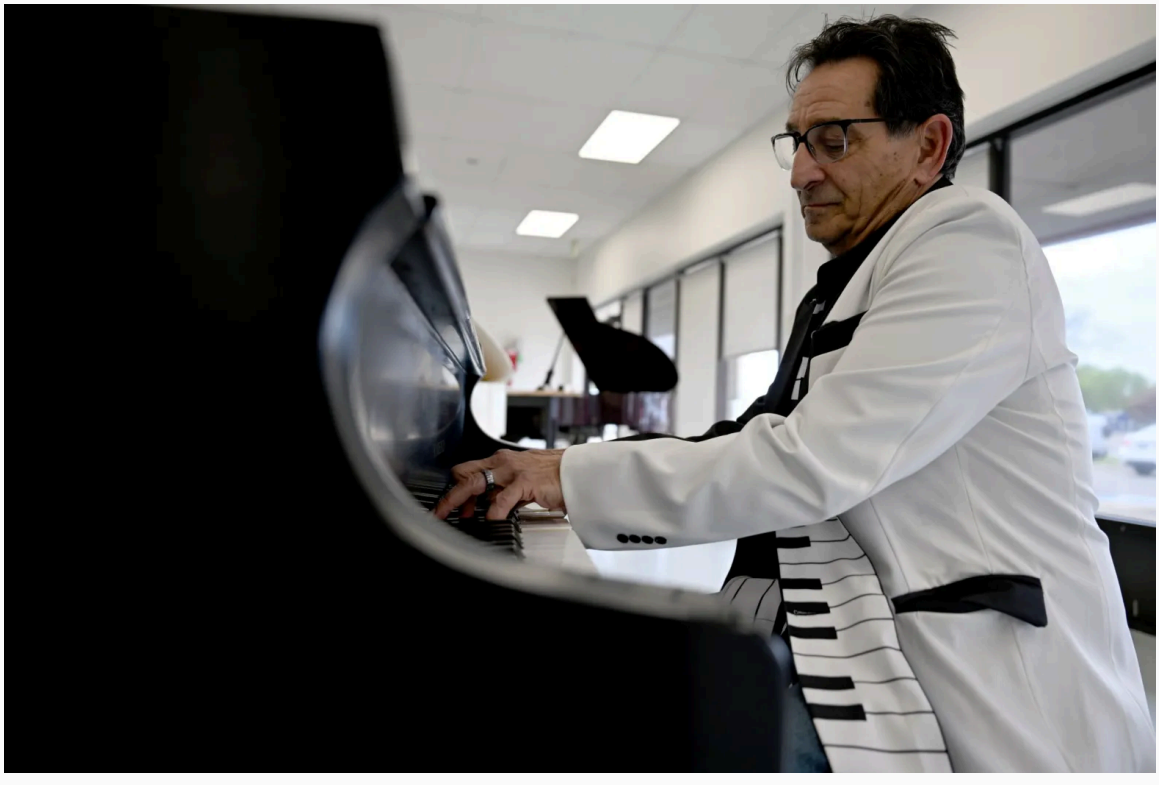
LOCAL NEWS

With Lyons roots, Pianos for Humanity finds new tune in Longmont



Jay Wyshak, owner of Pianos for Humanity, plays a piano for sale in Longmont on April 17. (Joel Solis/Staff Photographer)



By **DANA CADEY** | dcadey@prairiemountainmedia.com | Longmont Times-Call

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Upon entering Pianos for Humanity's new Longmont store, it's clear that the instruments steal the show.

Arranged throughout the building are about 50 pianos of different sizes and colors. There are upright and baby grand varieties in black, white and brown. Featured brands include Steinway & Sons, Yamaha and Baldwin. In one part of the showroom sit pianos that wouldn't look out of place in an Old West saloon.

Whether a customer is a piano prodigy or has never touched a key, the Pianos for Humanity team wants everyone who walks inside to feel comfortable trying the instruments out.

"They want to be played," said Dani Savino, Pianos for Humanity's inventory manager.





Pianos stand next to each other at Pianos for Humanity in Longmont on April 17. (Joel Solis/Staff Photographer)

Pianos for Humanity, a store that refurbishes and sells pre-owned pianos, recently expanded to Longmont. The other property, which is just outside Lyons on Colo. 66, still functions as the cleaning site for newly acquired pianos and will display the store's cheaper instruments. The Longmont building at 1834 Main St. is the showroom for the store's best and most beautiful pianos, each waiting to find a caring owner.

"They always love it, right when they come in," Savino said of the store's visitors. "Even in the old shop, there's something about walking into a room filled with all of this unique music."

Store owner Jay Wyshak, who also goes by “The Piano Man” or “Rockinjay,” shared that the new location has more than twice as much display space. Wyshak said Pianos for Humanity ultimately intends to move out of its Lyons-area warehouse and possibly into another Longmont destination.

The business occasionally buys pianos, but Wyshak explained that most of the pianos come to the store for free. Piano owners who move homes often feel stuck with their instruments and don’t care about selling them, he said.

“People are calling me every day to take their piano,” Wyshak said. “If a day goes by when somebody doesn’t call, the next day four or five people are going to be calling me.”

The store’s website lists available pianos and their prices, which range from a few hundred dollars to more than $6,000. For pianos that cost $1,200 and up, a rent-to-own model splits the price into monthly payments.

“Rather than have interest payments, these are just fair market value,” Wyshak said of his pianos. “A lot of them came to me for free, so I don’t have to charge interest.”

Plenty of work went into making the Longmont store feel like the perfect piano showcase. Store employees wear black-and-white outfits, and there’s a library of piano sheet music books. There’s also a stage for musicians to put on concerts.



Jay Wyshak, owner of Pianos for Humanity, stands in his Longmont store in April. (Joel Solis/Staff Photographer)

Every instrument that comes through Pianos for Humanity’s doors is dusted, cleaned and tuned. The restoration process involves making sure all the keys work and, in some cases, responding to years of neglect. The ready-to-play pianos can be delivered within 50 miles of the Longmont store.

Sometimes, the store donates its pianos, as well. Lyons Community Theater, a local performing arts group, was given a free piano for rehearsals.

Jordan Serpentini, the store’s interior designer, occasionally paints designs on the pianos, turning them into elaborate works of art.

“The community can really feel like this place is another home — another home for their musical expression,” Serpentini said of the Longmont store.

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