

## Ex-Cardinals QB Jake Plummer speaks at Gallup Rotary event

Written by By Bernie Dotson Sun Correspondent  
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### **‘An underrated superstar’**

In Jake Plummer’s playing days, you just didn’t drop a pass during practice. Of course, it was Plummer’s job to make sure that balls were thrown accurately and with precision.

Jason Steven “Jake the Snake” Plummer played quarterback for the Arizona Cardinals, the Denver Broncos and the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in a career that spanned from 1997 to 2007. A Boise, Idaho, native, Plummer played collegiately at Arizona State University where, during his senior season, he led the Sun Devils to an undefeated regular season, a PAC-10 championship, and the Rose Bowl where the team lost to Ohio State 20-17.

Plummer was the guest speaker Feb. 10 at a banquet at Red Rock Park in Gallup that was sponsored by the Gallup Rotary Club. Several dozen area Rotarians attended the event.

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"It's really nice to be here and an honor to be here," Plummer, 42, said. "I've never been to Gallup before so that make this visit extra special."

Plummer, who now resides in Boulder, Colo., spoke about his college and NFL playing days and what he's does in retirement. He said he was a multi-sport athlete in high school in Boise, playing football, basketball and baseball. He said growing up he admired the late Jackson State University Chicago Bears running back Walter Payton and former University of Southern California and Oakland Raiders running back Marcus Allen.

When in the NFL, Plummer was known for his throwing and scrambling abilities. He played with the Cardinals from 1997 to 2002 and with the Broncos from 2003 to 2006. Plummer was a Cardinals and Sun Devils teammate of safety Pat Tillman. Tillman gained fame when he joined the U.S. Army Rangers after 9/11 and died three years later on the battlefield in Afghanistan.

"I had two older brothers, so each of us was really into sports," Plummer said. "The Rose Bowl year at ASU was very memorable."

These days, Plummer said he still follows the game at the college and pro levels. He said the game has changed over the years, noting rule changes and the faster pace of the game. His advice for young players learning the game was "to follow your heart and not let the game consume you."

A second-round draft pick of the Cardinals and a father of three, Plummer left a definite impression with those who attended.

"I think we all remember 'Jake' when he was a quarterback with both the Cardinals and the Broncos," Sammy Chioda, a Gallup Rotarian, said. "He was a very good pro player and a good college player."

Plummer said he's part of a group called *Athletes 4 Care*, which seeks to assist football players after their playing days are over. He said he's gotten interest from around the country from various ex-football players. Speaking engagements occupy a good portion of his retirement

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time, he said.

Katrina Samuels, 45, was jogging at Red Rock Park as the speaking event was going on. Samuels is a traveling nurse who works around the Four Corners.

"I remember him. He was an underrated superstar. I am an ASU grad, so he's still pretty popular in Tempe," Samuels, 27, said. "I have heard that ASU ruled college football back in those days."

Plummer threw for 2,575 yards and 23 touchdowns when a senior at ASU. He finished his NFL career with a 74.6 passer rating.

***By Bernie Dotson  
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