



## News Release

Communication Services

5334 South Prince Street  
Littleton, Colorado 80166-0001  
Phone: 303-795-4284  
Fax: 303-738-7894  
[www.co.arapahoe.co.us](http://www.co.arapahoe.co.us)

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Contact:

**LISA TAYLOR**

CSU Extension Office

Direct: 303-738-7945

E-mail: [ltaylor@co.arapahoe.co.us](mailto:ltaylor@co.arapahoe.co.us)

**NICHOLE PARMELLY**

Communication Services Specialist

Direct: 303-636-1945

Mobile: 303-710-7893

E-mail: [nparmelly@co.arapahoe.co.us](mailto:nparmelly@co.arapahoe.co.us)

### **4-H volunteers touch the lives of our youth** *Arapahoe County's volunteers receive appreciation awards for their dedication to community's youth*

**Littleton, Colo.** --- Earlier this year, five women of various ages decided to raise their hand and donate their time and talents to the Arapahoe County 4-H Adventures summer program. Last Tuesday, Jean Nelson, Marilyn Wentz, Rana Van Leeuwen, Judy Kunz, and Pat Propp were recognized for their impact on today's youth.

The 4-H Adventures summer program - the non-traditional segment of 4-H - provides youth development programs in the schools. The County works with Aurora, Cherry Creek and Littleton Public Schools to design a variety of programs and activities that build youth resiliency and life skills.

"These volunteers enrich the lives of children in such a short period of time," said Lisa Taylor, Youth Development and Enrichment Coordinator. "Each volunteer offers something unique to the youth."

Jean Nelson's energy and determination proved invaluable in the making of the 100<sup>th</sup> Arapahoe County Fair anniversary quilt. The quilt is large to say the least, measuring 114 inches wide and 128 inches tall. It took her less almost a month to sew the 80 squares together, which were created in 2006 by 4-H members (ages 5-18) and depict something that symbolized what the Fair and 4-H meant to them.

"It's a wonderful way to tribute everyone's hard work," said Nelson. "I enjoyed every minute of this project. The artwork is adorable and each square holds very special meaning."

The quilt will be on display at this year's Arapahoe County Fair, July 18-22.

Marilyn Wentz offered to be an educator along with Renee Papazian for the 4-H Adventures Wonderwise Science program at North Middle School in Aurora. Wentz's agricultural background provided the children with opportunities to learn in great detail what life is like on a farm and to get up close and personal with animals they don't see in the city such as horses, sheep and goats.

Judy Kunz is a CSU Master Gardener who volunteered her time at Littleton's Peabody Elementary where she and the students built a garden using the Three Sisters Concept (planting beans, squash and corn - a combination of vegetables that actually support the growth of each other). Pat Propp, Judy's partner, although unable to attend the ceremony, was recognized as inspiration for the children

with her boundless optimism and practical ideas. Their natural talents in the garden make it easy for children to learn how to grow food.

Rana Van Leeuwen is a bee keeper and cultivates earthworms. Her expertise provides children with a unique opportunity to learn about how animals are a key component to the growth of plants, fruits and vegetables. She has partnered with Pat Loula, School Age Childcare Director at Littleton's Field Elementary to grow a vibrant garden in the ground and in shopping carts making the garden transportable to any location around their school. The shopping carts hold potato plants, carrots and other root vegetables.

If you are interested in making a difference in the lives of children, call Lisa Taylor at 303-738-7945 to learn more about 4-H Adventures.

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Photo captions – Jean Walton holds up her impressive 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Arapahoe County Fair quilt. Volunteer Leader Marilyn Wentz invites Daniel Villa (in wheel chair) along with classmates at North Middle School to get to know her horse Tai.

Group Shot: Judy Kunz, Lisa Taylor, Jean Nelson, Marilyn Wentz and Rana Van Leeuwen are the talented women who have a huge impact on today's youth

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