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# News Release

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## **4-H disabled youth teaches compassion and acceptance**

*Just in time for the 2014 Arapahoe County Fair, teen with Cerebral Palsy wows peers with six competition entries.*

**Littleton, Colo.** – Fifteen-year-old Stephen Walton is in it to win it. He isn't letting his disability get in the way of his success this year at the Arapahoe County Fair, July 24-27.

Walton was diagnosed with mild Cerebral Palsy at age 2. He is a little behind his peers developmentally and intellectually. He can speak clearly sometimes, but still attends speech therapy. His physical strength, while getting stronger all the time, is probably not at the same level as his peers. His balance will be an issue for the rest of his life.

It's not easy being 15 for any teen and Walton has some added struggles in life. But, he isn't letting any of that get in the way of his success.

This is Walton's 10<sup>th</sup> year participating in CSU-Extension's 4-H program. He's entering a tie-dyed T-shirt for Decorate Your Duds, a handmade wooden car and glitter globe for Expressive Arts projects and three mouthwatering baked creations: biscuits, coffee cake, and a chocolate butter cake.

Walton's mother and 4-H Secretary, Jean, is certain 4-H has improved not only his technical skills but confidence over the years. "He really feels like he is a part of the group and loves being included," she added.

4-H is a youth development program that brings together members, ages 5-18, to learn life skills, build friendships and have fun. Arapahoe County 4-H clubs rely on the help of caring volunteers who guide hands-on learning in 64 project areas.

As much as Walton has benefited from 4-H, his peers continue to learn from him too, said CSU-Extension Director, Tim Aston. "Kids who otherwise may not have met someone with special needs are getting to know the person behind the disability by getting to know Stephen," said Aston. "They are learning compassion, acceptance, inclusion and they can have the opportunity to mentor him."

Many of the Livestock 4-H members will also participate in the Youth Livestock Auction, July 26.

This year, there are 285 4-H members throughout Arapahoe County. Next year, we anticipate that number to grow.

“At the Arapahoe County Fair, we are proud to present the work of all our 4-H members involved in Open Class and 4-H projects,” said Arapahoe County Commissioner Rod Bockenfeld.

Enrollment for the 2014/2015 4-H program begins in October. Parents who are interested in finding out more about 4-H for their kids can do one of several things:

- Call the 4-H office at CSU-Extension at 303-730-1920.
- Go online and fill out a form: <http://arapahoe.wufoo.com/forms/request-more-information-from-arapahoe-county-4h/>
- Fill out a 4-H inquiry card available at the 4-H information table during the Fair.

If you are attending, remember, pre-sale daily admission tickets are available if you buy online at [www.arapahoecountyfair.com](http://www.arapahoecountyfair.com) right now for \$10, that’s \$5 cheaper than at the gate.

Ticket prices include unlimited carnival rides, plus admission to all rodeos, concerts, the demolition derby, fireworks, mutton bustin, petting farm and more.

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**To download photos click the link:**

<ftp://ftp.arapahoegov.com/Pub/Communication%20Services/Photos/4-H%20Stephen%20Walton/>

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