

My 4-H Story

By Elisa Davidson

Doña Ana County

Novice

City Slickers 4-H Club

I am a seamstress. I am a public speaker. I am a baker. I am a knitter. I am an electrician. I am an ice cream maker. I am a New Mexico historian and culturist. I am all of this because of 4-H. My name is Elisa Davidson. I'm 10 years old, and I'm in City Slickers 4-H club. This is my second year in 4-H. I have one older sister, Elena, who also is in 4-H. My parents have active roles in 4-H as leaders and volunteers. For school, I attend part-time at Mesilla Elementary, and I am part-time home schooled. This year was a great year full of 4-H projects and competitions. My projects were sewing, public speaking, baking, knitting, electricity, and ice cream.

This year I was a seamstress. I chose Sewing 2 as one of my projects because last year I took Sewing 1, and enjoyed it very much. I chose to sew the apron pattern this year to keep my clothes clean when I complete another baking project next 4-H year. While choosing fabric, I decided to match the apron pocket with a peasant blouse I also was sewing. I chose blue denim for the apron, and pink and white polka-dots for the blouse and pocket. I also chose white buttons for the apron. I enjoy choosing my fabric because it makes me feel as though I'm a fashion designer, not just a seamstress. In my second year in 4-H sewing, I became a more focused seamstress. I like to focus on my work. Some new things I learned in sewing were: blind stitching and hand sewing buttons. These were fun even though they were challenging. I also have been able to make up my own sewing patterns, outside my sewing project. I've made doll clothing to match mine so I could model with my doll, Eliza, and I've sewn little pillows and blankets for my dollhouse.

I am a public speaker. This was my first year in the 4-H public speaking project. I chose to do public speaking to improve my confidence in speaking in front of groups; to know how to come up with a speech if I'm put on the spot; and how to improve my speaking voice. One of my challenges in public speaking was that I have been in speech therapy since kindergarten. Through 4-H public speaking, I improved on my "s" sound, and became more confident with speaking in front of groups. At the beginning of the project, we did paired speeches or speeches in groups, but later on we began doing speeches by ourselves. I have improved greatly with my speaking. Once I even spoke on an impromptu topic for five minutes! At the end of the 4-H year, I had improved in my confidence, speaking voice, and overall public speaking. During county contest, my mom who is our project leader for public speaking heard that other clubs were wanting more instruction in public speaking. She decided that this would be a great project for our City Slickers Public Speakers. When she told us her idea, we were excited to take the challenge. During the summer, we got together and planned a public speaking workshop for

Novice and Junior 4-H members focusing on impromptu speech, and I think we accomplished our goal.

I have become a more accomplished baker this year. I completed my second year in 4-H baking. I chose to do the Baking 2 project to learn more in the area of skillful baking and to just enjoy being in the kitchen with new recipes. During our meeting, we learned how to make coffee cake, and jam thumbprint cookies. I learned how to separate eggs and became better at measuring liquids and packing brown sugar. At home I learned the brownie recipe and made it for my friends and for church fundraisers. Because of the baking project, I have become a more independent baker and can now make more recipes on my own. My parents have told me they are proud that I can bake most anything from start to finish all on my own.

In the knitting project I learned to knit, purl, stockinette stitch, and read knitting abbreviations. In our first meeting, I learned to cast on and knit. Later I learned the purl stitch and stockinette stitch. One of my favorite things in the knitting project was just coming together as a group and talking, knitting, and joking.

This year I also was an electrician. The Electricity Project was a stretch from my usual projects, but I decided to try it because it was science oriented, and I would like to improve my science skills. In the electricity project, we learned how to make electro magnets, simple switches, and small motors. We also learned about the different kinds of electricity; tools you need to stay safe around electricity; and how electricity affects our everyday lives. During the project we were taught the dangers of electricity and how electricity works.

I am an ice cream maker. In our first meeting we made vanilla bag ice cream, and we were asked to find the nutrition facts of four different kinds of ice cream. I found out that the nutrition of ice cream varies by the brand of ice cream. At our second meeting we did demos on how to make dishes using ice cream and how to read nutritional labels. Then at our third and final meeting, we learned how to make sorbet, and we had delicious, professionally-made vanilla ice cream, blueberry ice cream, blueberry sorbet, and tangerine sorbet. All around, I enjoyed the ice cream project, and I wish there was another Ice Cream project I could take next year.

I am a New Mexico historian and culturist. This year was my first year in the New Mexico Flavor 4-H project, and I really enjoyed this project. We learned how to make ristras, and also learned a little bit about New Mexico. We had tons of fun making salsa and tortillas, and both tasted really, really good. Then in our last meeting we made New Mexico hot chocolate and recipe holders. We also took a little oral quiz about New Mexico. Now I know a lot more about New Mexico, and I see how much fun it is to live in New Mexico.

One thing I enjoy in 4-H are the competitions. I like competitions because it's a great time to show your skills and meet other people from other clubs. This year I was very successful in the competitions.

Overall I think 2008-2009 has been a successful 4-H year. Next year I still hope to participate in many 4-H projects and hope 2010 is as successful as this year. I am a seamstress. I am a public speaker. I am a baker. I am a knitter. I am an electrician. I am an ice cream maker. I am all of this because of 4-H.