



ELI MEADOR
San Juan County
Junior Essay Winner

MY 4-H STORY
2019

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This has been an awesome year. I never imagined that I would ever win 16 belt buckles. I am Eli Meador and I am 12 years old, and I have six brothers and sisters. I am in the 6th grade. I have been in 4-H for four years. In 4-H I judge livestock, shoot archery, show horses, goats, and chickens, leather craft, and judge horses. This year I tried a couple of new projects including Welding and New Mexico Flavor. This year I went to Horse School at the beginning of the summer. I also went to Youth Get Away for the first time. I went to District Contest and participated in County Contests. Other places I competed in were County and State Fair, the Navajo Nation 4-H Horse Series, and a couple of Jackpots. Our club made a goal to do lots of community service this year, so I spent a lot of time doing community service this year also. It was an epic year.

This is my second year doing livestock judging. We got a new teacher this year and I learned a lot from him. I got second at county contest and second at district as well and the team took third. At county contest we judged two classes of pigs and I scored 48 out of 50 in both of them. We judged a set of lambs and a set of steers. In the steer class they did not walk the steers around so they were being lazy, as the steers were walking away I realized I had

judged the class backwards. I had already turned in my card. I was bummed, because I would have gotten first place, because I was only five points behind the first place kid. Then at district we had to judge goats, and we had never practiced them. So when I placed the goats I got a 38 out of 50 which was really bad. I am pretty positive I could have gotten first at district if I had practiced more. I lost to a kid from another county. This year I discovered I love judging because it is something I am good at. After I learned all the basics it came pretty easily to me. I didn't have a hard time with reasons, once I learned all the terms. I plan on judging next year and look forward to learning more from the new teacher from Arizona.

In archery this year I kept all my equipment the same, except for a new stabilizer. I went to league this year where we learned all the basics again and then we had a competition over the weeks, and they declare a winner at the end in each division. Then throughout the year we had practices for everyone that was doing archery. At the end of the year when we had County Contest, I placed fourth out of 10 people. I shot from 20 yards and competed in sighted compound bow. Then we prepared for District Contest by shooting at Xpert Archery to get ready for an indoor contest. At District I did not shoot very well, so I did not place in the top five, but our team got first. My goals for next year are to place in the top five at District.

This year I had two market goats and two dairy goats. My meat goats took a lot more preparation for fair. Every day I would walk them, run them, work with them, and grain them, and then both of my goats were born within two days of each other at the beginning of January, first and third days. So by the time we picked them up they were already past the minimum weight for fair. Ten days before fair we shaved all the goats, and the county fair came around and the goat show was on Monday. We showed the Nigerian Goats in the morning and I got Grand Champion Nigerian out of lots of people. I also won the San Juan County Bred for the whole Dairy Show and Junior Dairy Showmanship. In the Market Goat Show my goats were in the medium heavy and the heavy weight classes. My lighter goat got fourth out of 15 people, and my heavy goat got fifth out of 11. Since they did not go to sale I sent the wether to the packer and I am keeping the doe to breed her. Right now I am fighting a fungus she picked up at fair on her hind quarters, so she will not be bred as early as I wanted her to. I got second in Showmanship with her in the market goat show. Later that week I went to Round Robin with my Nigerian Goat. In Round Robin you show all the different species of animals, and I got first place.

This year I got a wild mustang and I trained it up to show it at the fair in the Wild Horse Challenge. I got fourth place with it. At the County Fair Horse

Show I won Showmanship and High Point individual. So when I was showing in the Showmanship class, the pattern was pretty complicated. When we completed the pattern the judge said it was really close because I had forgotten one rotation, if I had done that it would have been better. I worked really hard this year getting him to trot with me and he did it well that day. So that was the second animal that qualified me for Round Robin. Usually we have to pick one animal to take to Round Robin, but this year they let me take both animals. I showed my Nigerian Goat, then we rotated to boar goats, rabbits, chickens, pigs, lambs, steers, and outside to the horses. At every rotation they would ask a question about the animals. All week my sister and I had been learning how to show each animal. My sister also qualified for Round Robin as a Senior. My club actually had made it a goal to study for Round Robin all year, so we didn't have to learn it all during fair. We traveled around to different club member's homes that had different animals, and learned about them. So all of our hard work paid off. My sister Noelani got third. Showing and judging animals is one of my favorite things to do. I like being able to travel around and go to different places to compete.

Another thing I enjoyed this year was going to YGA, Youth Get Away, with all of my friends. At YGA, this was my first time going, we got placed into groups, and my group was "Frozen" as part of the "Wonderful World of

4-H” theme! We went and got put in our rooms, and after that we went and ate dinner with our groups, and then we played games that night. One of the games we played was Gaga Ball. We learned things about 4-H throughout the week. It was lots of fun and I learned a lot.

So our club this year had 19 community service projects. One of the service projects we did was put up luminaries at the College. We started at the west side. We put up a ton of them. We got to ride on the back of the truck and get more bags. We also made a 40 to celebrate the 40 years they have been doing it. The coolest part was seeing all the pictures when they were done and all lit. Then we went and cleaned up our lake, Navajo Dam. We went and picked up trash. There was lots of glass. The lake had come up and gone down so there was lots of trash. We had 10 people and collected 10 bags of trash. It took us about 2 hours. Then at the end we went kayaking in the lake.

So this year I did a lot, and I won a lot, and I had lots of fun in 4- H this year. And I will most likely be doing it again next year.