

My 4-H Plants and Animals Story and Photo Portfolio

{ from a dog's eye view }

I lay shocked and limp on the hard ground. All around me, I could hear the furious sounds of my mother as she fought to defend me against my attackers. Finally, our enemies retreated and my friends rushed to help me. As Elizabeth knelt beside me, one thought raced around my head. "Was I about to die?"

No, I didn't die, and that is mostly because of Elizabeth and 4-H!

Hi! My name is Bandie the Border Collie and I'm here to tell you all about my best friend, Elizabeth Kiesle. Yes, I know that dogs don't usually write recordbook essays, but I wanted to write a glowing recommendation for her! Oh, by the way, I have experience writing her 4-H scholarship essay!



Administering heartworm medication

Elizabeth and I recently moved from the country to a Temple home surrounded by beautiful trees. She lives with her dad, mom, her older sister, Angie, who works at Scott and White Hospital, and her younger brother, Andrew. Her oldest sister, Jamie, is a nurse at Scott and White and lives in a Temple apartment with her husband. Her dad is a business man and loves working with numbers, while one of her mom's main jobs is

home-schooling Elizabeth and Andrew.

This has been Elizabeth's final year as a high school student and as a 4-H member. At the beginning of the year, she decided that she wanted this last year to be her

greatest year, one that she will remember for the rest of her life. With state contests, scholarships, and many other activities, she has certainly achieved her goal!

Ever since Elizabeth was little, watching her older sisters go to 4-H, she wanted to be a part of 4-H, too. Finally, when she was 10 years old, her brother, Andrew, was old enough and they could join the fun together! It didn't take her long



Promoting 4-H at a museum

to discover the thrill of a Dog Care and Training project! Whew! I am sure glad she did! If it wasn't for her knowledge in the 4-H dog project, I probably would not be alive. 4-H teaches the skill of knowing which people to contact with specific questions. Who would have thought it could influence life and death? When I was sick soon after being born, Elizabeth had to know who to contact for a diagnosis and treatment. Besides the obvious



**Practicing weave poles at
Agility class**

choice of a veterinarian, her aunt, a professional dog-trainer, helped her many times. Then, later on, my mom and I were assaulted by ferocious coyotes. Elizabeth, her mom, and brother chased off the coyotes, but I was still, lying in shock on the ground. In learning about her 4-H Dog Project, Elizabeth knew what to do in an emergency. She carried me to the car in a stretcher made of a sheet and rushed to the veterinarian. I insisted that a trip to the vet was not required, but no one listened to me. (I hate going to the vet!)

After the coyote attack, Elizabeth realized how much of a difference people can make in medicine, whether the patients are animals or humans. Because of that, now she

wants to be a nurse when she graduates. Although she seriously considered becoming a veterinarian, she has determined that nursing will fulfill her needs the best. Through nursing, she can help to heal people, just like the veterinarian helped heal me.



Cleaning up after a 4-H meeting

Of course, her dog project is the most significant example of how 4-H has impacted Elizabeth's life! However, it's far from the only one. 4-H also develops goal-making skills. One day at Elizabeth's club meeting, her club manager announced everyone

should think through and write down project goals. When she told me about it, I exclaimed, "What! How in the world will you think of goals for all your project areas?" Although it was hard at first, she was able to do it with my help. Now that skill comes much easier to her. Sometimes she makes goals without even intending to, like when she decided to give me obedience-training so that we can compete in agility contests.

In all modesty, one of Elizabeth's favorite activities is being with me and my mom, Cuddles! Despite this obvious first choice, Elizabeth also has a myriad of other interests! They include crafts, sewing, public speaking, cooking, food garnishing, reading, volunteer-work and art. She has been

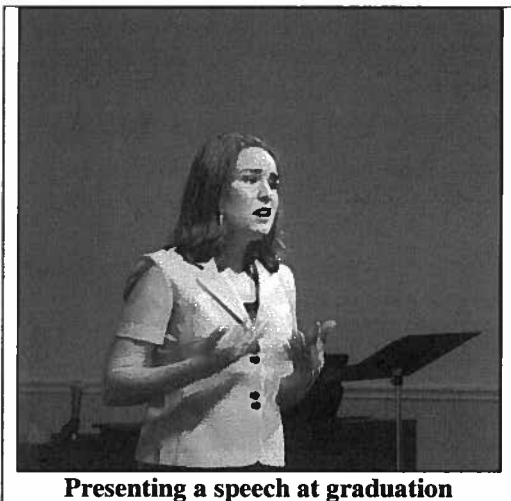


Making fleece blankets for traumatized children

taking art lessons for seven years. Her studies have included oil pastels, tempera, dry pastels, watercolor painting, drawing in black and white, drawing in color, acrylics, collage, and oil painting. Elizabeth loves to visit the public library and search for books

on anything from dog training to garnishing to cross-stitching! She enjoys turning whatever she creates into a beautiful work of art, whether it is a painting, a complex cross-stitching, or a Grand Champion apple pie.

Elizabeth's first officer position was the photographer and historian of her 4-H club. She was terrified of this job because it required her to stand in front of the group to take the pictures! All she could think of was the dozens of eyes watching her, examining her every move. Wow! What a change from how she is today! Now she not only stands in



front of the club, but leads the meetings as president. No longer afraid to be the center of attention, she loves to speak in public.

Although Elizabeth did not realize it at the time, there was a reason she had such difficulty with public speaking and self-confidence. Two summers ago, Elizabeth was

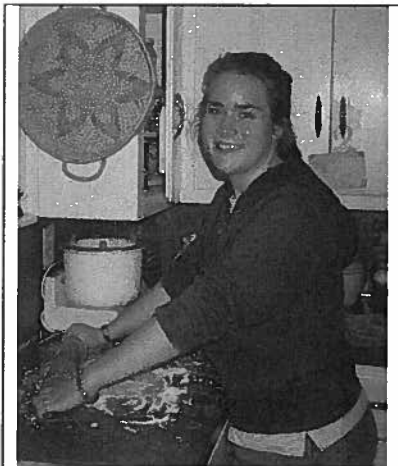
diagnosed with Auditory Processing Disorder (APD), a learning disability that affects the brain's ability to process verbal information. Because of this disorder, she has fought a life-long battle to become the confident, friendly individual she is now. I credit 4-H with bringing out the bold determination hidden deep inside her quietness. As she took on harder officer positions with more responsibilities, she was required to speak in public. Her confidence grew with each successful presentation, culminating in several awards in state public speaking competitions. 4-H contests have helped Elizabeth to strive for high goals, to plan ahead and to meet deadlines. Her public speaking skills will give her a distinct advantage over other job applicants.

This year, Elizabeth combined her interest in Auditory Processing Disorder with her talent for public speaking. She researched in depth about APD so that she could give a speech about APD at a State Roundup contest. She was thrilled to advance to the final round in that competition, receiving tenth place out of twenty-seven speeches! In addition to that speech, she also gave a dramatic interpretation for Share-the-Fun in the Poetry/Prose category. She adapted her presentation from Lois Lowry's book Number the Stars.



Practicing a dramatic interpretation

Elizabeth has also used her public speaking skills in her Food and Nutrition project area. She participated in the county and district Food Show, which is judged based on speaking skills and food presentation. Entering in the Food Show has encouraged Elizabeth to develop her artistic flair through garnishing. This year, she



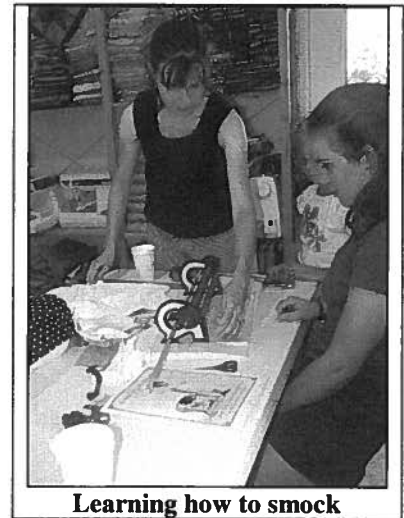
Baking a Grand Champion apple pie for the Fair

created a delicious Indian dish and garnished it with herbs. She wore an Indian sari to accompany her dish. She won fourth place at the district contest!

Besides competing in the Food Show, Elizabeth also participated in the district Nutrition Quiz Bowl. Her team received second place, allowing them to go on to State! She met her team-mates weekly for practice and studied at home as well. However, because of schedule

conflicts, her team could not compete at State. Still, Elizabeth is grateful for the knowledge she gained during studying. Now she can use the information she learned so that she can be a safer cook!

Elizabeth has enjoyed hand-stitching ever since she was eight years old when her mom taught her how to cross-stitch. This year, she completed an embroidery project that was so arduous it required several years to complete! She entered it in the Bell County Youth Fair, winning Grand Champion! She also made a beautiful cross-stitching that won Reserve Grand Champion! Winning Grand Champion and Reserve Grand Champion of Textile Crafts was a fantastic way to end her youth fair career!



Several years ago, her 4-H club volunteered at Alterra Assisted Living Home. They had a great time playing games and singing with the residents. Before then, she had never known how much she enjoys talking with and being around elderly people. Soon after that, her church started leading a service there every other week. Of course, she was delighted to go! She has loved getting to know all of the residents there, making an impact on their lives.

Since Elizabeth was a senior in high school, she has been busy all year getting ready for college! Of course, that preparation includes the question, "How do I pay for college?" Elizabeth has diligently applied for scholarships, many of them through 4-H. The first exciting news came over the email; she had been selected as a Texas 4-H Opportunity Scholar! A flurry of activity followed, as Elizabeth prepared for the

upcoming interview in early May, studying interview questions and finding the perfect outfit.

Finally the big day arrived. Elizabeth's heart pounded as she waited for the scholarship results. And the results were completely worth the wait! Elizabeth received two scholarships from 4-H that together will pay for her entire expenses at college!



There is more to school than what is contained in textbooks. There is more to learning than following directions. Elizabeth took advantage of these facts through the non-traditional learning style of home-schooling. Through home-schooling, Elizabeth has



Enjoying time together

learned to take leadership in her own education. She has learned the art of curiosity and learned how to research information, to discover everyday.

As you can see, 4-H has influenced Elizabeth's life in many ways. I'm glad that both of us have had the opportunity to benefit from 4-H. I know that Elizabeth's experiences in 4-H will help her to be successful as she ventures into exciting world of nursing!

