

# Alora Zimiga

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Project Year: 2023-2024  
Around the Clover

Junior Exhibitor  
Weston County, WY

## My 4-H Story Year

Thank God for 4-H! I have had an awful year. My family broke up. My mom moved me and my sister to Hot Springs, South Dakota, with her after Christmas. I got to come home on some weekends to work with my animals so it was because of 4-H that my life had something good in it. I participated in five projects: Breeding Beef, Market Beef, Foods and Nutrition, Fabric and Fashion, Photography, and Visual Arts.

The year started out great. It began with celebrating National 4-H week. I made and decorated 4-H emblem cookies. I put them in the teacher's lounge at school to thank the teachers for all they do for their students and to share why and what 4-H is all about. Many of the staff members thanked me and said the cookies were delicious.

October was also the month that I started working with my steer, "Socks" and "Ruby," my heifer. The first task was halter breaking. What a job! Ruby was relatively easy but Socks was another story. He was a bit frisky. Next was the challenge of gaining weight. Daily feeding and working the hair taught me responsibility. Up until December I thought the chore was not always fun, but after having to leave, I missed my time with my animals. It was because of my animals that I got to come home for fair. I was so thankful for the Livestock Committee for letting me show, even though the State of South Dakota wouldn't let me come to Wyoming for the whole fair. I was grateful that I got to sell Socks at the auction to add to my college fund.

We artificially inseminated Ruby in June. That was an amazing experience, I got to pick the bull that we bred her to. I helped put the heat tape on and watched and learned the process of getting straws of semen out of the nitrogen tank, heating it up and then putting it into the cow. I think that I want to learn how to do it all myself as I get older. She never came back into heat so I am sure she will have an amazing calf next fall. I enjoy working the cows. I get to help with running the cows up the chute and herding the cows when we move them from pasture to pasture.

What is most enjoyable with the Beef Project is doing it with my cousin, Ashlynn. We do chores together, give bathes, clean stalls, and just hang out together. We want to go to more shows and jackpots together. Hopefully, I can live full time with my grandma and grandpa so I can continue to raise my own cattle and work on the ranch.

Last fall I was also busy with the Foods and Nutrition project. Together with my Grandma V we made jelly, pickled cucumbers, and made pasta sauce and salsa from the tomatoes from the garden. I learned the correct way to measure head space. I learned how to follow the recipe exactly or your jelly and jam won't set. I also learned how to stir the jam/jelly without getting burned from the popping fruit. I had never made jelly before, only jam. I learned how to make juice by boiling the chokecherries and then using this sieve and round wooden mallet to squeeze out the juice. Next, I followed the recipe for berry jelly because I couldn't find one in the Ball Book for Chokecherry Jam.

Chokecherry jelly is delicious, much better than the berries. I had to taste them and boy were they sour! I had fun going to Moskee to pick chokecherries.

I also learned that the Native Americans used chokecherries to make pemmican or jerky. I used this knowledge when I made my Plains Indian Village which I entered under Visual Arts and won Grand Champion at both County Fair and State Fair. That was exciting!

Unfortunately, I didn't get to exhibit my prepared foods at county fair. The State of South Dakota would not let me come before Thursday of Fair Week. My preserved foods did well. I got all blues and purples. My strawberry jam went to State and got blue. My pickles got blue at State Fair even though the fair office thought they were my cousin's.

My goals for the Fabrics and Fashion project was to get to model at State Fair, that didn't happen. However, I started my jean jacket project early and had it ready before fair. Last year I got a purple for modeling my embroidered apron and had so much fun that I wanted to decorate a jean jacket using my skills of embroidery.

I purchased a Levi's jean jacket from Macys.com for \$29.99 (On sale). I looked in magazines and catalogs for a design. I wanted it to be about the love I had for my first steer, "Clover" and something country. I finally found the Floral Cowboy Boot Vinyl Decal on Etsy. I paid \$4.21.

I learned that embroidering on jean jacket material is hard. I had to use a thimble to push the needle through. My fingers hurt after a while. I used a fill in stitch to outline the design on the back. I used the back stitch to outline the steers that I traced on the front. I used an outline/stem stitch to write the names of all my animals I have shown. These I put on the sleeves. This was hard because there is not much room.

It will be fun to wear it to school and show off my hard work. It is also an item I can wear to remember all the animals I have shown. I was super excited because I was Grand Champion Recycled/Embellished garment at County Fair and Reserve Grand Champion at State Fair.

I love the Disney character, Stitch so I got the idea to make a pillow from my pillow last fall. First, I found the cross-stitch kit on Amazon. It cost \$8.97. It was so cute. It took forever because there were more colors and the background was also to be filled in and that took a long time. Next, I searched for the right fabric to put the picture on. I also found it on Amazon. It cost \$14.99 for one yard. I also bought lace to outline my picture, it was .27 cents per foot; I used about 1 yard. My grandma gave me the zipper. My grandma showed me how to measure the material to make a 16" pillow. You have to really cut it to a 17" piece of material to allow for the seams. She showed me how to cut the fabric by using a sewing mat and rotary cutter. Sewing the sides together was easy. The zipper was hard. I had to re sew it several times. My grandma finally got it to lay right and not show when zipped.

I was happy with how my pillow turned out. I got a purple at both county and state fair. I use it on my bed.

My last project that I participated in was Photography. I have loved cats since I was a very small child. They are so soft and cuddly. My goal for photography this year was to capture the love I have for cats. I learned that you have to be quick to capture their attitudes and stealth. The hardest part was getting the cats to cooperate. Also editing each photo for sharpness and detail was difficult. I won a blue ribbon at county fair for my three 5x7 photos of my friends.

In conclusion, I thank God for the 4-H program. It is the only part of my life that seems normal. I had a lot of fun and success with my projects and my animals. I hope that I get to move back to Wyoming and live with my grandparents at the ranch. I look forward to starting my third year in the 4-H program.





Lokie and Me



Showing Ruby at County Fair



Showing Socks at County Fair



Washing Cattle with Ashlynn

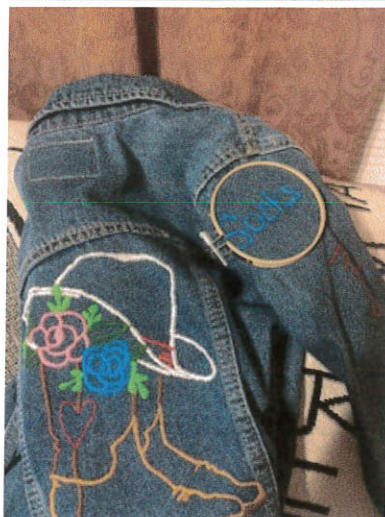
Champion Visual Arts  
State Fair Indian Village



Reserve Champion  
State Fair  
Recycle/Embellished



Purple Ribbon  
“Stitch” Pillow



Thank You Ad in New Letter Journal

