

# Cowgirl Up!

Salutations! My name is Jaime Flora. I am 13 years old and an Honor Roll student at Alhambra Traditional School. I live on a small farm in Laveen and have many different kinds of animals that keep me very busy. I belong to the Laveen Pathfinders 4-H Horse Club and the Laveen Lamb Lovers 4-H Sheep Club. This year at school I was a member of the Yearbook Staff and was inducted as a member of the National Junior Honor Society. Now that I have told you a little bit about myself, I would like to take the time to tell you about my 4-H year. This is my fourth year in 4-H as a Junior member (I was a Cloverkid for four years before I turned nine) and my projects this year are Horse, Sheep, Vet Science, Photography, and Safety. I have been enrolled in Horse and Sheep for four years, and Vet Science, Photography, and Safety for three years. I added the last three projects because I have had so much fun with them these past few years and they really help me with my main projects and other pastimes.

For the past four years, my main project has been Horse. In my Horse club this year, I held the office of President and was also in charge of the Community Service Committee and the Scrap Book Committee. My club, the Laveen Pathfinders, is small, having only four members. I really like being in a small club because it feels like we're a family. We are always supportive of each other and we are closer than most members in larger groups. As a club, we always help each other with any difficult task, as well as help in our community. While we help others, we always remember to have a good time, even if it's hard work! This year we cleaned trails on South Mountain, purchased gifts for needy children through the Christmas Angels program, and participated in Trick or Treat So Others Can Eat. We try to help as many people as we can because we enjoy helping them. At our meetings, we usually have an educational program where we learn about and discuss horsemanship, safety, vet science, and photography. We also plan clinics and workshops where we learn new skills and improve old ones with the aid of our leaders. We don't always work though. We try to plan as many fun and recreational activities as possible. In the past we have gone on trips to corn mazes, had annual

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Christmas parties, gone on bowling outings, held summer swimming parties, and gone goofy golfing. We try to combine educational with recreational activities by taking trips to horse shows, horse racetracks, and touring various horse and agriculture related businesses. Our club also had many workshops this year that were really great learning experiences for us all. At one workshop we reviewed how to clean tack, and to top it off, we put our skills to the test by cleaning our own tack. Several clinics and workshops covering ground handling basics were “hands on” and we all practiced with my old pony, Cinders. In other clinics we learned about horse judging, breeds of horses, and different types of show classes, such as showmanship at halter, rail classes, and performance classes. We were also able to get in practice for Hippology and Quiz Bowl competitions.

This year in 4-H, I went door to door with my club gathering canned and non-perishable foods for Trick or Treat So Others Can Eat. In mid February, I went to County Communications Day where I gave a demonstration on the different types of bits called “Bit of Magic.” I received a blue ribbon and a very high score. I also participated in Hippology where I received a blue award. My favorite part was when I participated in Quiz Bowl and won the Junior competition! I really had a lot of fun!!!

I learned many new things in 4-H this year. I was able to improve my horsemanship skills by perfecting my balance, working on riding on the correct leads, and learning new John Lyons training techniques that will help me better communicate and work with my horses. This year I was unable to compete in 4-H riding events because I needed to work with my horses some more. The weather also didn't help. I spent a lot of time training in the stalls, because that's where the horses spent their winter! I have learned how to balance basic rations so I can study the science behind feeding.

In the Laveen Lamb Lovers 4-H Sheep Club, I have lots of fun which is really surprising because there is only one member...yours truly! I raise Natural Colored Hampshire and Suffolk cross sheep. Some of these I show as breeders, while others I show as market lambs. When I can, I sell lambs to other 4-H kids so that they can use

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them as market lambs. I currently have twenty head of sheep, including five Southdowns and three little lambs. Next year, I plan on continuing my Natural Colored breeding, as well as breeding my new Southdowns. In the future, I would also like to include Oxfords in my breeding project.

I have accomplished many things in Vet Science, Photography, and safety this year. In Vet Science, I learned about different types of feeds, how to identify certain feeds, and how certain feeds should be fed. In Photography, I learned about taking night shots and what film speeds are required for these shots. I was able to take some night shots although they didn't turn out too well. I entered my photos in the Maricopa County Fair for the first time, earning blue ribbons on all but one of them! I have learned a lot about Safety this year, as well as reviewing previously learned things. I learned many things that will keep my horses and I safe around others, such as horses with red ribbons tied in their tails kick and that you can ride two horses together even if they don't get along.

Next year in Horse, I would like to learn how to ride on the correct leads, learn the skeletal and the muscular systems of the horse, and the parts of the lower leg and hoof. I would also like to pass my Level 3 Progressive Riding Test, prepare for my Level 5 Progressive Written Test, participate in 4-H riding events, and even try Team Penning. I will continue to give Demonstrations at County Communications Day, as well as compete in Hippology and Quiz Bowl because I really enjoy doing it and also I am quite successful at it. In Vet Science, I would like to learn even more about feeds; learn how to take a horse's pulse, temperature, and respiration rate; learn more about parasites; diseases; unsoundness and blemishes. I also hope to go on a tour with my club to an animal hospital and see a surgery again, like we have in previous years. In Photography, I would like to learn more about the parts of the camera, how to take low-light, night scene, portrait, and close-up shots, and how to know whether you have enough light. I would also like to perfect my focus technique and maybe get a digital camera. I will continue to

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enter my photographs in Maricopa County Fair and I may even enter some in Arizona State Fair. In Safety, I would like to learn more about trailer safety and how to stay safe around stray dogs. I will continue to execute proper safety procedures on and around my horses to prevent accidents.

4-H is really a great role model in my life. 4-H is fun and has taught me many new skills that I will use later in life at school and jobs. Skills such as business management, note/minute taking, handling money, assessing profit/loss, analyzing business practices to improve profitability, and keeping important records will be of great help to me in anything I choose to do. Through 4-H I have made many new friends that share the same interests that I do. 4-H has given me goals to work on and many opportunities to do things that most kids don't have the chance to do. I feel very fortunate to have all that I have and do all that I do. I really can't imagine my life without 4-H!

Finally, I titled my story for this year "Cowgirl Up!". This is a slogan I have heard many times throughout the years. I remember this every time I have a problem with my projects or other things in my life. "Cowgirl Up!" means that when you fall off your horse, or face some other problem, that instead of giving up, you dust yourself off, put on a smile, and continue to try. I think it's a great motto for both 4-H and other areas of life.

That's it for this year! Tune in next year...same 4-H time, same 4-H channel!