

This last June I got to experience and compete at the national level at the National Holstein Convention, which this year was held in Knoxville, Tennessee. Rosanna Larson, Brandy Branch, and I created and displayed a display board for the intermediate division. This was a new contest this year and we weren't sure what the competition would be like, but we must have been pretty good to have gotten 2nd place! The convention lasted a total of four days. The first day I got to watch and cheer on Washington State as they competed in Dairy Jeopardy. This competition is very exciting and I enjoyed it a lot. Also, on the first day there was the prepared public speaking contest. Each of the competitors did great. The following day we went on a farm tour. We got to see how a different farm operated and see some of their fancy cows, which I personally enjoyed. After the farm tour we got to go to Dollywood. We were only there for a few hours, but I saw plenty. Most of the rides there involved water, so I was soggy by the end of the day. I was in a group of four and we decided to go on a roller coaster. Not until we got to the front of the line did I see that there were three upside down loops! That was the most terrifying thing I did. On the third day there was the dairy bowl competition. Our Juniors got into an extremely hard bracket, but still did excellent. The Seniors were undefeated by the end of the day, but we will have to wait until the fourth day to see what happens next. The last day of convention was the dairy bowl finals, the awards banquet, and Huddle at the Hall. The Seniors competed in three fierce matches before the opposing state finally won by a smidge. 2nd place isn't too shabby. The awards banquet was where we found out the entire placings to all the competitions. Overall, Washington was

quite successful. The banner, display board, and Senior quiz bowl each walked away with a 2nd place to remember. The last thing of the entire trip was the Huddle at the Hall. Since the Women's basketball Hall of Fame is located in Knoxville, we got to go and tour it. It was quite the learning experience for me, there were so many teams that did so much and I never heard about them. In the end, the convention went very well and will be one to remember.

- Andrea Smaciarz