When I hear the words, “Hall of Fame”, Dan Reeves, Reggie White, and Ned Jarrett come to my mind. Who are these sports Hall of Famers? They are 4-H Alumni who have used the essential skills they built in 4-H to accomplish great things in their lives and careers. However, Hall of Fame is not a term limited to sports; did you know that the 4-H Hall of Fame inductees also include Jim Davis (creator of Garfield), Liberty Hyde Bailey (founder of the College of Agriculture at Cornell University), and Seaman Knapp (the Father of Cooperative Extension), just to name a few.

Faith Hill, Aaron Tippin, and Reba McEntire were also 4-H members! Each day, these singers use the expressive arts, healthy lifestyles, and community involvement they learned in 4-H. Entertainers David Letterman, Johnny Carson, and Florence Henderson were all 4-H members who used(d) the public speaking, personal development, and communication skills they learned in 4-H. The complete list of distinguished 4-H Alumni can be found at http://www.nae4ha.org/4hda.htm

4-H Hall of Fame Inductee 2010

Ellen Elliott was inducted into the National 4-H Hall of Fame just this year. Although nominated by NAE4-HA for her dedication and leadership, she is a native of New York and a life member of the NYSACCE4-HE! Her love of 4-H began in Champaign County, IL, where she was a club member for 10 years and a volunteer leader. Ellen began her professional 4-H career in 1965 in Albany County and spent 38 years making the best better. In 1977 she took the position of Executive Director in Schenectady County and continued to make significant impacts on those around her creating strong bonds to community organizations and county government. Even after her retirement in 2004, Ellen continues to be and active part of the New York State 4-H program as a member of the Board of Directors for the 4-H Foundation and as a co-chair of the retiree/life member track at the NAE4-HE Conference held in Rochester in 2009.

Additional information about her professional accomplishments can be found on the Hall of Fame website http://www.nae4ha.org/hof/ellenott.html but we try to make the “have you met” section of News and Views more informal, an opportunity to really get to know the person in a different light, so here are some things about Ellen that you will not find in her bio on the website:

Hobbies? Avid reader, reads 4-5 books per week! Enjoys golfing, gardening and traveling.
Favorite book? Impossible to pick, has hundreds of favorites!
Reads everything!
Favorite vacation spot? Beach and ocean—she finds it restoring.
Live? About to move to South Carolina, will be about 1/2 hour from the beach all the time! A dream come true!
Lesson learned? No one ever does this kind of thing alone. I was fortunate to have wonderful teams to work with that include family, friends, and co-workers.
Outlook? Ellen is excited about the future and believes in the huge potential that 4-H has to make a difference in people and communities in the future.

Wikipedia says, “A hall of fame is a type of museum established for any a field of endeavor to honor individuals of noteworthy achievement in that field. In some cases, these halls of fame consist of actual halls or museums which enshrine the honorees with sculptures, plaques, and displays of memorabilia. In others, the hall of fame is more figurative and simply consists of a list of noteworthy individuals maintained by an organization or community.”

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4-H creates supportive learning environments in which diverse youth and adults reach their fullest potential as capable, competent, and caring citizens. As an organization, we believe that our 4-H Hall of Fame includes all NYSACCE4-HE members and those who support them. So, kudos to you, Honorary 4-H Hall of Famer, for building skills and making a difference in the lives of youth.

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Ellen is excited about the future and believes in the huge potential that 4-H has to make a difference in people and communities in the future.

Did you know there are 5 other New York State inductees to the National 4-H Hall of Fame? It is true! Inducted in ’02 were Don Stiles and Albert Hoefer, ’03 Liberty Hyde Bailey, ’04 Martha Van Rensselaer, and ’08 V. Joseph McAuliffe.

Q: How do I find out more about the requirements to be in the Hall of Fame?
A: You can learn more about the criteria used to pick 4-H Hall of Famers, and see a complete list of inductees, online at http://www.nae4ha.org/hof.