January is the perfect time to talk about recognition. “There is probably no leadership strategy that produces a higher return on investment than employee recognition”, from Walk the Talk, 4-H Educators are the best at recognizing the performance of members and volunteers. But what about co-workers? Recognition is all about acknowledging good results and reinforcing positive performance; it’s about shaping an environment in which contributions are noticed and appreciated. There are also personal benefits to be gained by recognizing others; there IS something in it for each of us. Not only do we get that “warm and fuzzy feeling” by making others feel good, but we also improve our own lot by encouraging the positive attitudes and behaviors of our fellow educators. So….. the problem is not that we don’t appreciate the importance of recognition, but rather we often forget to turn our good intentions into actual behaviors.

NOW is the time to take action, go to the Professional Development section on our state website and take a look at the award and recognition opportunities available. Then, take a look around — maybe your own office, or to other educators in your district, or beyond — and make the decision today to nominate someone for an award. The Member Recognition Award Nomination Form is due January 27 and is used only to verify eligibility. It is short and easy to complete — maybe 10 minutes tops! The application portfolio, due on March 2, is prepared jointly by the nominator and nominee. Nomination and application procedures for the various awards differ, so please read carefully.

Not only is it important to acknowledge our co-workers and their outstanding performance, it’s just as important to recognize the good “documents” that each of us produce on a regular basis. Communicator Awards recognize outstanding pieces in categories like, Educational Package, Educational Piece, Exhibit, Feature Story, Periodical Publication, Promotional Package, Published Photograph, Radio/Video Program and others. Often these categories are overlooked, and yet, we all have award-winning items sitting on our desktop!

The deadline for Communicator Award entries is March 1, 2012! We are up to the challenge put forth by the Marketing and Information Committee - every county to have at least one entry! I would like to thank the Awards and Recognition Committee, under the leadership of Mary Fairley, and the Marketing and Information Committee, under the leadership of Roxanne Dueppengeiser and Jessica Spence for their efforts in making these opportunities available. They have revised the award categories this year, based on some changes at the national level. Make sure you check them out. DO IT TODAY!

JoAnne Baldini, Retired

What award meant the most to you? The DSA award helped me realize that I was valued and appreciated.

Favorite Movie? Breaking Dawn

Vacation? Tuscany Cooking School; Seattle to see my son’s and Twin Brother; Ft. Lauderdale to see daughter and grandkids.

Update! Found retirement a little too much so began volunteering at the local library at Cameron Village—which lead to a job offer! So many books and so little time. Working part time lets me find time to quilt, exercise, cook and hang with other retired folks. Making lots of friends here in Raleigh. love the weather. Dan and I take little trips here and there and enjoy doing whatever, whenever.

Contact? jb61@cornell.edu

Karen Soule, Jefferson County

Why did you join NYSACCE4-HE? To be better connected.

4-H Fact? Was a member of the AC Hoobeats 4-H Horse Club in Jefferson County. Joined at age 16 when she got her first horse.

Favorite Food? Steak or Prime Rib

Birthday? March 5

Color? Purple

Quote? “Life is too short to be miserable!”

Contact? kes68@cornell.edu, CCE Jefferson, 315-788-8450

History/Lesson/Question of the Month:

Who was the first New Yorker to be president of NAE4-HA?

Robert Dyer—1949-50. There have been a total of 5, most recent Elon Elder in 1978-79.

Q: How can I apply for a Communicator Award or nominate a peer for a Service Award?

A: Easy! Visit: http://nys4h.cce.cornell.edu/staff/Pages/NYSACCE4-HE.aspx