



CATAWBA COUNTY

P.O. BOX 669 Newton, North Carolina 28658-0669 (828) 695-5600

Department of Social Services

PRESS RELEASE/PSA

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Contact: Valerie Huffman at (828) 695-5749 or vhuffman@catawbacountync.gov OR
Bobby Boyd, Social Services Director at (828) 695-5603

CATAWBA COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES DIRECTOR WILL RETIRE ON NOVEMBER 1

Catawba County Social Services Director Bobby Boyd has announced that he plans to retire on November 1, 2008 after almost thirty years as the agency's leader.

Boyd has been recognized on the local, state and national level as a visionary in the field of Social Work. Under his leadership, Catawba County Social Services has historically attracted state and national recognition for innovation and quality. Since 2000, he has steered the agency through a time when the community's dramatic economic downturn has brought about an increased need for the services the agency provides. In the wake of the loss of over 10,000 jobs in the county, food assistance caseloads rose 240% and Medicaid cases rose 122%. Boyd has been credited with leading his staff ably through these difficult times in a focused and steady manner, remaining firm in his commitment to efficiency, respect for customers, and commitment to excellence.

"Catawba County is known for its strong work ethic, innovation, experience and collaboration, and Bobby Boyd has epitomized those qualities during his thirty years of service here," said Catawba County Manager, Tom Lundy. "He has maintained a strong emphasis on customer service and people's dignity and worth. He's presided over dramatic changes in federal and state policies and programs, and has provided an array of services which protect and support children and adults, advocating prevention as well as treatment. He's been extremely active in the community, reflecting his belief in the value of helping others. He's been recognized as a leader and innovator on both the state and national level, and has been a major contributor to Catawba County's reputation for good governance, professionalism and innovation. It's been a real pleasure working with Bobby these past 30 years. We're going to miss him and his leadership, but congratulate him on his retirement."

"Public service is a noble work, and social service is a calling," Boyd said. "I believe my life's work to have been a well-satisfied calling, and the last thirty years in Catawba County to have produced the most satisfaction of all."

During Boyd's tenure, Catawba County Social Services has developed several model programs: including five residential group homes for at-risk children; school social work and teen pregnancy prevention programs; an adoption agency; a Children's Advocacy Center, a Meals on Wheels Program that remains in operation due to the dedication of over 600 community volunteers; an Adult Shelter Program for victims of neglect or abuse; Work and Ride car donation program; a family resource center in subsidized apartments; and numerous partnerships to promote economic self-sufficiency across the county.

"The citizens of Catawba County expect government to perform," Boyd added. "They want to see government that produces results. This is a good community, with wonderful citizens. Their desire that people in need receive help is obvious. I have found these fine citizens as respectful as I could ever have hoped, including their expectations."

During Boyd's years of service, Catawba County has been a leader in the creation of new ways to serve its citizens. In 2004, in response to the North Carolina General Assembly's Mental Health Reform plan, Boyd led the agency to develop Family NET, a therapeutic arm which provides individual and family mental health services, as well as prevention programming, across the county. Most recently, Catawba County was among the first to adopt a Confidential Intermediary program to help adult adoptees find information about their birth parents. Boyd has led Social Services staff to focus on

customer service and efficient responses to the citizens of the county, through state of the art technology, ambitious goals, and qualified, motivated staff.

“I could never have hoped to have more outstanding staff,” Boyd said, “I am blessed with people who are eager to learn, that identify with the citizens of Catawba County, and that truly want life to be better for our citizens. I have seen nothing but the utmost respect and support from very committed citizens who have served on the Board of Social Services from 1978 until today. Different boards have had different strengths but not a better group of people, to have served in this capacity over the years, could have been selected. The Boards of County Commissioners have distinguished themselves over thirty years as a body with a textbook understanding of their role. They understand they make policy and the administrators carry it out. It is the ultimate of respect, and a solid business approach to managing Catawba County.”

Recognized as a strategic planner, Boyd serves on numerous state and local boards. He helped forge the first child protective service standards in the state, the first Job Link Center in Catawba County, and the successful implementation of budget-based outcomes, along with a select group of County departments, a decade ago.

In his role as Chair of the North Carolina Social Service Directors’ Association in 2004, he spearheaded the North Carolina “Leading By Results” Task Force, which promoted standard benchmarks of practice and data collection across North Carolina. Currently, as Chair of the Board of the North Carolina Baptist Children’s Home, he is promoting innovative redesign of many child-caring institutions in response to changes in the child welfare system.

"With regret the Board of Social Services has accepted Mr. Boyd's resignation," stated Anne Wepner, Chair of the Board. "Bobby has successfully led Catawba County Social Services over the past thirty years to become one of the leading agencies in our state. He has provided innovative leadership and a strong presence. He will truly be missed."

Boyd credits the strong and progressive management of Catawba County Government for giving him the ability to create such innovative programs.

“Catawba County is not an organization of 'business as usual'," he said. "There is a commitment to prevention and performance outcomes, as well as meeting mandates with quality. It is a proactive institution interested in solving problems and obtaining results. It is a wise use of taxpayers’ resources to try to prevent problems, rather than simply responding after the fact.”

Boyd has received state and national recognition for his efforts. In 1997, the Child Welfare League of America recognized his management skills through its Regional Outstanding Management Award. He and Catawba County's Mental Health Director, John Hardy, received the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners' Ralph Ketner Productivity Award in 2005 for their leadership in the development of Family N.E.T. In 2007, Boyd was recognized for the second time as Director of the Year by the North Carolina Association of County Directors of Social Services. In the same year, he was the recipient of the National Director’s Award for Individual Achievement by the National Association of County Human Service Administrators.

“Bobby Boyd has spent the last 30 years walking the talk,” said Assistant Director of Social Service, Beth Brandes. “He is highly respected by our staff and his colleagues. He is hardworking, dedicated, incisive and committed to excellence. His legacy is a prototype for human service leaders.”

“This is a good place to live, work, and worship. The community welcomed my family and me with acceptance and open arms. We enjoy deep friendships and view this as home.” Boyd said. “I consider myself well-blessed to have had the opportunity of serving this community and working with the quality people to whom I have been exposed in Boards of Social Services, commissioners, management and staff for the past thirty years.”

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