

Please note: Comments were grouped by category but some comments may include information about more than one issue.

General Comments

Catawba County is wonderful in every way. A beautiful area. Offers much in the way of leisure activities. We just need to improve our economic status (more jobs).

Catawba County is a wonderful place to live. Concentrate on the good things and don't dwell on the bad things. However, those in charge of services should continue to learn new things and improve on them whenever possible.

I think Catawba County is doing a good job for seniors. I think seniors should help themselves more.

I am so grateful to have had a very busy life through 84 years, 10 months! Even now I am almost completely independent-well I am. I just can't "run my races anymore" and I'm slower accomplishing some tasks. I can completely take care of my personal needs, cooking and cleaning and driving. An example of one's adjustment, once a month, I used to walk up and down one side of a table assembling our church's newsletter. Now I sit at a table and tape the newsletter for mailing.

Caring for our senior citizens is a very important job. I care for my 88 year old mother who is still in her home. I appreciate what Social Services does for others who do not have relatives who can look in on them, take them to the doctor's and cook food for them. I have a caring heart and hope your program receives funds and personnel to keep up the good work for Catawba County.

Some of my answers were based on the fact that I was a caregiver in the past, my information is therefore not current with the budget crunch but formerly I thought the county offered a lot to its citizens. I can only hope this safety net is still strong...

We can answer positively to questions on health, quality of life, and knowledge of what is available to us or where to get the information. Our major concern for Catawba County is that no one had the vision 10-15 years ago to build more than one retirement facility that offers independent living to the stage leading to death, we build "walkable" villages that would have been better land use had this been done. Hopefully and with planning, we can manage this in our home so we are fortunate. We regret seeing friends move away in order to have this type of facility.

We feel that Catawba County offers many services for senior citizens.

I am fortunate to have funds for assisted living plus a very concerned family who keeps tabs on me. I realize many are not as fortunate.

I think Catawba County is doing a good job for the seniors.

If it would not be for God and friend and church family and the senior citizen friend helping me out, I would not be able to come here. May god bless each and every one.

The services provided in Catawba County are as good as you will find anywhere.

I get CAP/DA services and am very pleased with my caregiver. Since I moved to my new apartment I am so much more independent. Thank you for allowing me my independence.

We feel that Catawba County offers many services for seniors.

I at this time can take care of myself. I have no relatives or family here but one knows not when I will need help. My health has been very bad this past year. I really lean on Medicare and Medicaid and they have always been there when I needed them. Like I said, things are changing and who knows when that will happen. I moved here in NC in 2003. Catawba County has been very nice taking care of seniors.

I have been a caretaker for 2 family members and I do believe Catawba County does have a lot to offer the elderly. I try to encourage my friends who are now in the caretaker role to check out what is available. Needless to say the need will become greater as the baby boomers begin to enter that stage of their life. I think publicity is one key area to help people to be more knowledgeable about the services.

Do not re-elect Obama

I know what I know primarily because of Senior's Morning Out.

There is very little help in this country for the sick or aging. I am very disappointed.

I think teachers and cops are underpaid, very underpaid. I think Catawba Children's Services should get my grandchildren and children back from Florida.

I know about Senior Services because I volunteer, there are so many who do not know of services such as Senior Health Insurance Information program.

Not having need for medical assistance, nursing care or assisted living help for my husband or myself, I have not researched available programs in the county. If present circumstances change, I will do so and hope they will be available. We prefer to remain in our own home and not in a nursing home or assisted living facility.

Concerns/Needs/Suggestions

I think the services in Catawba County are LOWSY!

Take better care and check on the assistance given to our elderly adults, the care of health and food is still a heavy burden for some of the time. It's only by the Grace of God that they are able to make it from one day to another. "God be with us all".

Please make available to churches when the Energy Assistance Program is going to be open for registration.

I feel there are little programs and discounts for the disabled in Catawba County.

Need exercise program in the community for seniors only.

There are several people I know of that are feeling "trapped" being the only ones who take care of their senior at church or with friends, keeps them frustrated. They need desperately to have someone to allow them time off in days and evenings to attend church or shop or just visit friends without feeling guilt!

Just make sure younger people know us older people are a great source of information about common sense ways to fix many problems.

I would like to see more activities, such as bus trips for seniors, if they are already available, I am not aware of such programming.

Let seniors know how to get info about senior activities.

Schools need more support for working with children with special needs and also those who refuse to obey the rules.

Retired for 5 years, continue to volunteer in the community, active in Rotary, tutoring and soup kitchen. We are not affluent with an income of \$40,000 for 2 but we have "enough".

Areas of concern: Adult Day care affordability and Meals on Wheels

I am 86 years old and I have COPD and it's very hard to do a lot of things. My washer and dryer is downstairs. I would like to know how much it would cost me to get some help. I live on Social Security so I can't pay much. I would appreciate anything you can do for me.

Need thermostat

Need for household repair database for seniors.

Need Newcomers welcome packet to let us know what is available.

Would like to see more caregivers available to help the older population stay in their own homes.

Local media is sketchy at best and many seniors have trouble hearing over the phone. Community relays of vital information needs to state that first, we are very used to hanging up on rotary dialed calls because they usually come from telemarketers.

I live in housing complex and would like to see speakers come here and tell us what we need to know and our rights as a renter. My rent keeps going up every year and why? No improvements on our apartment. My yard needs a sidewalk. The yard is washing away every time it rains. My food stamps should go up if my rent does. I hear we won't get a raise in January 2010. I'm on housing. I'm grateful

Need more fairs for blood pressure, sugar tests, and cholesterol tests in area churches or convenient locations.

I think English classes should be provided for those who don't speak English.

Senior's Morning out meals should be available menus for diabetics and vegetarians.

Seniors should have discounts on attractions in North Carolina and discount for North Carolina citizens.

We need a power back up in case power goes off. Outside security cameras in parking lot needed at West Hickory housing complex.

No questions concerning the lesbian and gay community, like those of us who are partnered, that's not a choice in the single, married, divorced sections or the caregiver sections. We are a significant portion of the population and aging just like the rest of the population. As far as this survey is concerned, we do not exist.

A place for sleep study if available.

My main concern is for senior citizens driving down the highways at a speed limit set by the state and younger people whipping around them and sometimes get in the wrong lanes just to cut in front of them. They sure make it unsafe for us.

Need sidewalks!

A senior "roundtable" to discuss issues and concerns and to network for ideas and suggestions and recommendations. The local AARP seems to exist to sing and go on day trips and dinner theaters. The COA does good things but their newsletter is bi-monthly. Perhaps the County could have a more current up to date web page for seniors. Prime Life Ed-Ventures is great, let's not lose it.

I've had trouble all summer getting my lawn moved. My neighbor is _____ annex and they have let a huge growth of bushes and weeds grow up next to my property and refuse to cut them down. I've been afraid of rats and snakes. I saw a groundhog come out of the mess. I don't know what else is in there. I told the town manager but they didn't do anything. I also have tree branches growing over power lines hanging out over the road.

Seniors now have to pay for some exercise services that were free. That may mean that some may not get much needed exercise or services.

Caregivers need more assistance.

Accessibility in Catawba County for parking and in stores, doctor's office, etc. It's horrible and not monitored much at all! I feel extremely discriminated against in this area.

There are services out there but I have no idea how to access them.

Do you have home security? It has proven to have saved my life, many seniors can't afford this. Are the calls for help concerning the fire department and police department legitimate?

I would like to see qualifications for services such as Home Health, Meals on Wheels, include some who presently do not qualify. Also adults with no children living in a home qualify for health care when necessary.

I would like to see more affordable one level senior housing communities.

Closer check on elderly. Children go to work leaving their parents alone who are not able to care for themselves and they wander off or cannot feed themselves during the day.

The most confusing thing about this community as a newcomer is the street names in Hickory, very confusing, always getting lost.

It is disturbing to me about cuts in school funding and how stimulus money is being used. How are jobless families surviving?

I would like to receive information on Senior Citizen activities and where to go to get help financially and physically.

More educational seminars, clinics, etc. for seniors involving medical issues.

I feel that seniors and children are getting the blunt end of our failing economy.

The economy has affected our community so that children/families that took care of their parents can no longer do so. Medicine and transportation is probably the greatest need. Low income seniors do not participate in much of the activities.

Also would like to receive information from my church.

I am more concerned for those less fortunate than I. Those without a pension, adequate savings, under educated and no responsible relatives in the area to check on them and see their needs are being met. I feel this is a growing problem as families become more spread out and have less contact with their elderly members.

When going to the ER I have to wait for hours to be seen. I lost all savings from annuity at insurance company. I do not agree that illegal aliens be eligible to get social security benefits if they do not pay any money into it. They are here against the law, working here, taking jobs from the ones who live and have paid for benefits in this county. They work and can afford to pay for their own healthcare. They instead send their monies back to their own countries and use our welfare system, using our ER's free of charge as well as get food stamps and many benefits that we Americans are not eligible for. They are making fools of this Country. Our government needs to keep their hands off of Social Security monies and stop taking it out and not pay it back. There would be plenty for all seniors and disabled if they wouldn't take it and use it for other things. Also it is illegal for them to not give those on Social Security and disability and veterans a cost of living raise. The senators and congressman get their raises and they don't do without. Why should they live so much better than us? They work for us as Americans, we don't work for them. Are the American people getting their salaries for the rest of their lives and that of their spouses as well? Why should they have better health care and benefits than the rest of us? Why should they get paid better than their bosses (us)? Our local services in this county are giving us good help and take care of their own. I appreciate that. But I do not believe that our President has our interest at heart. It is all about money and power with him, not the people.

Rural or Geographic Specific

In the Cooksville area we do not have anything for seniors, other than some things we have at our churches.

I would like to see more medical help in the rural community. More shopping places not so far to drive.

I live in SE Catawba County and use Iredell County physicians and hospital.

I will be glad when Hospice facility is finished in Sherrills Ford. Library needs to be bigger with a community center.

You do not offer much for those living outside the Hickory/Newton area; need to branch out to other parts of the community, Sherrills Ford/Terrell.

We need services in the Terrell/Sherrills Ford area. We are the forgotten area of Catawba County yet we are growing in population and tax revenue. We could use a senior mini—bus for elderly who cannot drive. That bus could access Mooresville, where we shop and have our medical services/doctors. There should be a gov't satellite building to make services accessible.

Anxiety in waiting for Hospice Care in Sherrills Ford- Terrell area and new development for future use for this area such as library, school, YMCA, mall etc. People in this area have a long way to go for health care but the fire dept and rescue have been wonderful.

Since we are in the SE corner of Catawba County, it's easier to go to Iredell Co for doctors, hospitals, etc. I get the Charlotte Observer and there is very little news about the happenings in Catawba County There was more when they had a "Catawba" addition –now the "Lake Norman" paper on Sunday has a little. What I'm trying to say I guess, is that I don't feel a part of Catawba County.

More things for senior/disabled in St Stephens area.

I enjoy the Senior Citizens meeting once a month in Claremont. The programs and the food are both good.

Community College Classes

Community colleges cut free audit courses for seniors, how did that help their bottom line, it didn't cost for 1 or 2 seniors to sit in on a class and we can't pay for them.

I am sorry the state did not keep up the free classes at CVCC. I enjoyed art but don't feel I can pay for it. Also, other classes looked interesting.

Employment

I am only 61 years old and I believe that my age has affected my ability to get a job.

Help seniors get work, I've been looking 2 years, offer unpaid interim programs in every department which might lead to paid employment.

Need for employment (jobs).

Financial

Do no eliminate cost of living increase on Social Security for 2 years. If there is any way possible to get more help for seniors that are living below the average of \$600 a month, are still able to live at home if someone can live with them, but sometime they will not allow this. There are some people that are trying to cut back on their medication and eating, also seeing the doctor. I think it could be very nice if they would consider more for the elderly that worked long time ago for \$3 a week and when they become of age to stay home, their income was very limited. "God be with us all".

There are a large number of those in our community who need in home assistance but live on a limited budget and cannot afford to pay for in home aide/sitter services but do not qualify for Medicaid either. They are often at home alone, which is often unsafe, but don't have any other option.

Taxes and utilities are too high for those of us with little money.

Although I live in a good area, apartment rent is constantly rising. With several health conditions such as arthritis and diabetes. I would like to start looking into senior housing which is rent controlled to help seniors on Social Security

There is a growing concern for seniors age 62-65. When a senior retires at age 62 and feels as though they can make it financially but has no insurance and finds themselves in a financial situation due to medical bills.

Some of us need food stamps also. Especially if you don't make much on Social Security. Some can't afford Part D medicine plan and need help. But people from other lands can get anything they want, money for children, older parents, but just let an American who doesn't make much go to Social Services and the first thing they say is you make too much. It's a shame for America. Do something to help seniors. Make it so we can get Food Stamps under \$15,000 a year, especially widows, we just can't make it alone.

Our property tax is the only bill I have trouble with. It is too much to pay at one time and keeps going up. I know it takes money to run the town and County but I think when people get old they should be exempt from this bill. I am 72 years old and my property tax runs about \$1,500 a year. This is ridiculous.

There is no way to have enough money to care for one's self. The banks are closing and one cannot trust the government to do right for our citizens.

I wish there was affordable living arrangements away from home situation with my relatives. They depend on me and I'm using up my funds (for my long term care) for their present needs. Sometimes it's voluntarily but often it's because of their needs (or wants) for which they pressure me.

I am helping Mr. _____ with getting some help with Medicaid (SSI). His mother passed away in July 09. She would help him as much as she could. Mother had cancer and could not help him anymore. We don't know if he will qualify yet. He goes to SSI doctor in October to see if he can get help.

Hospital Services

I feel the hospitals in Hickory are not adequate. There are those of us who do not like to drive to Winston-Salem or Charlotte because of distance and traffic.

ER services are poor.

ER waiting needs to improve

A need for heart services at Catawba Memorial Hospital

Medicare/Health Care

I am a veteran and I get medical care and medications through the VA although I do have Medicare Part A and B.

It is so disturbing to me about the battle over health care

Do not support President's health care reform bill.

Leave Medicare alone.

The donut hole in Medicare must be fixed. Universal health care is a top priority. Transportation and long term care assistance are top priorities. We need better quality nursing homes. We should stop warehousing consumers with developmental disabilities and/or mental illness in assisted living centers.

Because of high medical cost many of us senior citizens are unable to live on Social Security and have used up most of our savings. We desperately need assisted living facilities for us lower income people. If one makes \$1,500 per month we do not qualify for Medicaid but we are unable to pay \$4000 to \$5000 per month for assisted living. This needs to be addressed. We do have assisted living facilities, however, they are for the very wealthy that can afford to pay. Most of us can not afford \$4000-\$5000.

I need to attend a SHIP program, as my long term health care has increased twice since 2002. So much is invested now I don't want to lose my investment.

Concerned about insurance coverage for people who have lost their jobs. My son lost his job, married with 4 children. Was denied insurance coverage because he owned a business. Our Senate and House of Representatives are treated differently than average working. Vote themselves raises when many are without jobs. CEO's of businesses receive bonuses when others have hard time making regular payments for their needs.

I would like for the doctors to believe me.

I don't want to be on Carolina ACCESS. I feel picked on, belittled. Why can't I have regular Medicaid. I lost Dr. _____ after 9 years because of Carolina ACCESS on my Medicaid card. I'm more depressed losing Dr. _____ because I felt she believed me

I care for my husband who has Alzheimer's Disease. Where can I obtain at a reasonable cost a folding wheelchair? Is there a Part D insurance that is cheaper than \$36.80 per month. I now have Wellcare for myself at this cost. Training for caregivers is well and good but who takes care of my patient while I attend.

Need help paying for medications when in the donut hole.

No to Obamacare

Something should be done about the cost of drugs. Also the high costs of nursing homes etc. My mother is at Abernethy Laurels and receives excellent care but the cost is \$6000-\$7000 a month.

Senior Center

I think the Council on Aging and Senior Center does a great job.

West Hickory Senior Citizens offers wonderful services to seniors.

Senior Centers are so far apart and old in Catawba County. Most cities I have traveled have modern central facility.

Mary and Rose is a lot of help to all Senior Center. They are so nice to me and others.

Need Senior Center central location.

I wish there was a Senior Center near us (between Claremont and Conover) I would like to attend some classes and activities and feel that the Newton Center is too far away.

I am very concerned about the cut in services to the Council on Aging and older adults. We vote, pay taxes, maintain our homes. All the young do is have babies by several different men. They are unmarried and unsupervised by family. They continue to have baby after baby for welfare, WIC, etc. Parents enjoy the Food Stamps and benefits. They think they are entitled.

It is of the utmost importance that the West Hickory Senior Center is supported and remains open for the benefit of seniors and others in this community

Transportation

I am healthy and mobile enough to drive a car at this time but I sometimes think about the time when public transportation will be my best choice. I live very close to a bus route but when I have tried online to find bus route and schedule information I have been unsuccessful.

Bus services would be nice.

Transportation services for the elderly are needed to maintain adequate care from their doctors because more family members are at work and cannot transport them.

I have my two parents living with me. Neither of them is able to drive anymore. I work full time and have a hard time getting them to their doctor's appointments, to the store, bank, etc. I either have to take time off from work to help them get to these places or I do ask friends if they can take them for me at times. They do not qualify for Medicaid so there are no "cheap" alternatives in Catawba County to help get them to the doctors. I could handle the stores and banks if I could get a reliable source to take them to the doctors without charging an arm and a leg. They may make too much money for Medicaid but they are far from rich and I just spoke with one healthcare agency about taking my mom to the doctor and it was going to cost approximately \$45 to get her there and back. That is not the doctor's visits but just the transportation. My folks can't afford that. They got to the doctor up-teen hundred times a month. Doctors truly make their money off the elderly. All they have to say is "come back in a week and let me check your blood count" and the elderly think God has spoken to them and they HAVE to go. It's ridiculous. Ok, I'm getting off the subject but it has been a huge eye opener having my parents live with me and my spouse (who has bone cancer) and seeing what the elderly go through in their day to day lives.

I have volunteered to take many senior citizens to the doctor, hospital and to rehab so there is probably a need for transportation. I am fortunate to have family in town that are willing to help me.

Better public van transportation for shopping for seniors. Twice a month is not enough.

Public transportation is very limited in this county. There is not an intercity system so a senior unable to drive or without a car is at the mercy of friends and relatives.

We are a married couple, having lived here 9 years. We are not familiar with what all is available for we haven't needed the services. I think we are in trouble if we can't drive.

85 years old, no license, needs transportation, has Meals on Wheels, relocated here in June 2009.

Transportation is the biggest problem. I used to be very independent but now have to rely on family.

Would like to see better transportation for seniors in outlying areas.

I wish they had a better or a faster way to get to doctor appointments except by the Green Bus line. You have to give them an arm and a leg to get there.