

CATAWBA COUNTY HONORS EMPLOYEES WITH 25 OR MORE YEARS OF SERVICE

Catawba County Government renewed an annual tradition on March 20, honoring employees with 25 or more years of service at the twenty-fourth annual Quarter Century Club luncheon at the Catawba Country Club. Many current members of the club celebrated with retired County employees who served with the County for 25 or more years, enjoying lunch and a program on “going green” (thinking environmentally). Lynn Lail, Vice-Chair of the Board of Commissioners, gave congratulatory remarks to the group.



Catawba County formed the Quarter Century Club in 1986. A highlight of this year’s program was the recognition of nine new Quarter Century Club members, including one who retired during the last few months after working with the County for over 25 years. They are, in alphabetical order:

Teri L. Cain – Training Coordinator, Social Services. Teri joins the club with 25 years, 9 months of service. She was born and bred in Maiden. Fresh out of college with a teaching degree in hand and a glut of teachers, someone at the Employment Security Commission suggested she take the State Merit Exam. A few weeks after the exam, Teri got a call from Social Services for an interview. She was hired as an Eligibility Specialist. She also worked as a Child Support agent. She took a job with the State for a few years, then returned to Catawba County Social Services as Training Coordinator. Teri won a County Team Award in 1994 along with employees from Social Services, the Sheriff’s Office, and the County Manager’s Office, and was a Team Award nominee in 2006 and 2007. She received a 2007 Best Practices Award from the N.C. Association of County Directors of Social Services. Teri helps lead the County’s United Way campaign and is proud the County won the United Way Spirit Award in 2005, 2006, and 2007. She is married to Steve Cain and has a son, Bill Armstrong, three stepchildren (Kyle, Erich, and Emily) and two grandchildren. Her hobbies are friends and family. She likes to read in her free time.

New members for 2009 in Catawba County’s Quarter Century Club, for employees with 25 years or more service include: Front row, left to right, Vada Nixon, Social Services; Nancy Miller, Cooperative Extension. Back row: Betty Jean Stinson, Library; Rick Cook, Technology; John Whitener, Emergency Services; David Robertson, Emergency Services; Teri Cain, Social Services. (Not pictured: Penny Hunsucker, Public Health and Jean Pope, Social Services.)

Rick L. Cook – Network Administrator, Technology. Rick joins the club with 25 years of service. He is a native of Burke County and came to work for Catawba County after graduating from Catawba Valley Community College. He was named Catawba County Employee of the Year in 2007. Rick and his wife Faye have a daughter, Haley, and three sons Benjamin, James and Tyler. Three are in college and two will graduate in the spring. Faye worked as a school nurse in Burke and Catawba Counties for many years. She got her Master’s degree in Nursing last year and is currently teaching nursing at Western Piedmont Community College. Rick likes to jog when he gets the time.

Penelope S. (Penny) Hunsucker – Nurse Practitioner, Public Health. Penny joins the club with 25 years, 5 months of service. During Penny’s senior year at Lenoir Rhyne, she did a preceptorship with Catawba County Public Health. Nurse Martha Walker, now deceased, shared with Penny her love for and knowledge of Public Health. Penny saw how, through prevention and promotion of healthy behaviors, we can teach others how to live longer and healthier lives. She also saw the impact this has on individuals and their families, and the community as a whole and knew this was the area of health care she wanted to work in. Upon graduation, she made her home in Catawba County and ultimately came to work with Public Health. In 2003, Penny was honored as one of “The Great 100 Registered Nurses” for excellence in practice and commitment to the nursing profession in North Carolina. She is married to Dale Hunsucker. They have two sons—Josh, 29, living in Boone, and Jonathan, 25, living in Greensboro. Penny and Dale have two dogs—a 3-year-old black lab named Mollie and a 13-year-old Shih-tzu named Maddie. Penny loves to read, garden and spend time with family and friends. She attends Tri-City Baptist Church. She and Dale also enjoy spending time on the lake in the summer and Appalachian football games in the fall.

Nancy H. Miller – Secretary, Cooperative Extension. Nancy enters the club with 25 years, 1 month of service. She is a native of Catawba County. Nancy joined 4-H when she was eight years old. Former Agricultural Extension Director Ed Nolley was her 4-H agent. She has many fond memories of her years in 4-H, so when she saw an ad in the paper for a 4-H secretary job and that Mr. Nolley was the person who would be hiring the position, she applied. She was hired part-time and worked for about a year and a half before taking a fulltime job elsewhere. A year and a half later, a full time 4-H secretary position came open. Nancy applied and was rehired and the rest is history. Nancy has received the “Pride of the Wolfpack” award twice from North Carolina State University and received the Secretary of the Year award for the Northwest District from the North Carolina Cooperative Extension. In September 2008, she received the Sue Mills Spirit of Light Award through the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Secretaries’ Association. Throughout her career, she has also served several terms on the County’s Employee Committee.

Vada E. Nixon – Social Worker II, Public Health. Vada joins the QCC with 25 years, 9 months of service. She is a native of Catawba County. Vada has been married for 37 years to Calvin R. Nixon, who works with the Western Youth Institution in Morganton. They have two married adult sons, Collin and Corey, and three grandchildren, Joshua, Noah and Caleb. Vada is active in church and is a Sunday School teacher.

Jean H. Pope – Applications Specialist, Social Services (now retired). Jean retired in 2008 with 25 years, 9 months of service. She is a native of Catawba County. She lived in Hamlet, North Carolina, for a few years in the early 80s. Upon returning to Catawba County, the first application she completed was for a job at Social Services. She got the job and stayed until her retirement. Jean was Social Services Employee of the Month in April 1987 and Catawba County Employee of the Year in 1991. She and her husband Gary have three daughters, Anna, Jennifer and Yolanda, and they have five grandchildren—Ezekiel, Tessa, Sosha, James and Michael. Jean enjoys crossword and jigsaw puzzles, sewing, crafts and flower beds.

David H. Robertson – EMT-Paramedic, Emergency Medical Services, Emergency Services. David joins the QCC with 25 years, 9 months of service. He was born and reared in Rockingham County, NC. He liked the EMS System in Catawba County and enjoyed living in Hickory. Throughout his career, he has received several distinguished service awards for EMS-related projects. David is single. He has two adult stepsons—Captain Andy Blanton who is in the US Army, and Jesse, who lives in Hickory. David’s mother and sister live in Eden. He has a retired Irish Setter named Buck. He enjoys fishing and boating on Lake Hickory and spending time at his farm near Eden, left to him by his father.

Betty Jean Stinson – Librarian, Library. Betty Jean comes to the Quarter Century Club with 25 years, 6 months of service. Betty Jean is a native of Lincoln County but attended Catawba Valley Community College where she received an Associates Degree in Accounting. Though not in her field, she applied for a Library Clerk position at the Main Library in Newton. Her plan had been to continue searching for a job in the accounting field, but says that, after working in the Library for only two weeks, she knew it was the job God had chosen for her. The library setting offered all the things she loved—a love for people, books, gaining valuable knowledge and assisting others. Betty Jean furthered her education and received a Bachelor of Science from Gardner-Webb University in 2001 and a Masters in Library Science from Appalachian State University in 2006. She received the student “Women of Influence” award from Appalachian State in 2005-2006. Betty Jean is married to the Rev. Vernon Stinson, Sr. She has five children, Angela Davis, Alanna Stinson, Veronica McMillan, Frank Stinson, and Prince Christopher. They have 12 grandchildren. Betty Jean describes herself as a wife, mother, grandmother, minister, employee and lover of God’s people. She enjoys reading, cooking, working in the church, and spending quality time with her family.

John A. Whitener – Paramedic and Crew Chief, Emergency Medical Services, Emergency Services. John comes to the QCC with 25 years, 11 months of service. He lived in the Mountain View community of Catawba County for most of his life, but currently lives in Mountain City, Tennessee. He was interested in becoming a paramedic, CVCC had the training program, and Catawba County was the only place locally that provided paramedic service. He also wanted to be employed where he grew up. John is married to his wife of 23 years, Darlene. Son Tyler is married, has two children, and is presently in the Navy stationed in Groton, Connecticut, and teaching at the basic submarine warfare school. Daughter Brandy is married, a college graduate, and working at Hickory Orthopaedic. John and Darlene also enjoy the company of their two Yorkies. John likes outdoor activities such as snow skiing,

hiking, mountain biking, and rafting.

Current members of the Quarter Century Club include: (service indicated through March 31, 2009).

Lucille Pitts, Register of Deeds	65 years, 3 months
Bill Little, Tax	38 years, 4 months
Doug Bumgarner, Technology	37 years, 5 months
Polly Pearson, DSS	36 years, 10 months
Tom Lundy, County Manager	36 years, 8 months
Tommy London, U&E	36 years, 8 months
Jo Sloan, Social Services	36 years, 5 months
Kathy Johnson, Tax	35 years, 8 months
Kay Bowman, Tax	34 years, 9 months
Dean Brooks, Maintenance	34 years, 2 months
Rita Beaver, Register of Deeds	32 years, 10 months
Rodney Fulbright, U&E	31 years, 9 months
L. David Huffman, Sheriff	30 years, 10 months
Lynn Baker, Sheriff's Office	30 years, 9 months
Ray Lemmond, Jr., Technology	30 years, 8 months
Rhonda Ross, DSS	30 years, 5 months
Karen Kustesky, Finance	30 years
Patricia Holloway, Human Resources	29 years, 7 months
Judy Foster, Library	29 years, 8 months
Coy Reid, Sheriff's Office	29 years, 6 months
Chris Patton, DSS	29 years, 1 month
Jenny Glass, DSS	28 years, 11 months
Tanya Daye, Emergency Services	28 years, 8 months
Shirley Sipe, Library	28 years, 5 months
Freddy Smith, Emergency Services	28 years, 4 months
Mark Sigmon, Emergency Services	28 years, 2 months
Kathy Lail, Tax	28 years, 3 months
Barbara Laney, Library	28 years, 1 month
Connie Killian, Planning	27 years, 7 months
Phyllis Watson, Emergency Services	27 years, 2 months
Pamela Brooks, DSS	26 years, 11 months
Terry Shull, Sheriff's Office	26 years, 6 months
Donna Stikeleather, Technology	26 years, 4 months
David Sheets, Emergency Services	26 years
John Whitener, Emergency Services	25 years, 11 months
Teri Cain, DSS	25 years, 9 months
Vada Nixon, Public Health	25 years, 9 months
Jean Pope, DSS	25 years, 9 months(reached that level in 2008, then retired)
David Robertson Emergency Services	25 years, 9 months
Betty Jean Stinson, Library	25 years, 6 months
Penelope Hunsucker, Public Health	25 years, 5 months
Nancy Miller, Coop. Ext.	25 years, 1 month
Rick Cook, Technology	25 years

The club heard remarks on "Living Green in Catawba County", from Glennie Daniels of Cooperative Extension, who talked with the group about ways to think more environmentally and the County's "green initiatives", programs and practices based on environmental stewardship.

The Quarter Century Club's gift to active members This year's gift was a variety of kinds of pottery made those working with the CONNECTIONS program. The Connections Clubhouse is a rehabilitation program of Catawba

Valley Behavioral Healthcare that promotes and provides opportunities for adults with mental illness to lead meaningful and productive lives.

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