

**News from the North Dakota Department of Human Services  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
August 8, 2007**

**Dickey County residents named outstanding foster parents**

BISMARCK, N.D. –The North Dakota Department of Human Services presented Dickey County residents Bernie and Brenda Rall with the 2007 Outstanding Foster Parents award at the Children and Family Services Conference held in Bismarck in late July. The Ralls and 10 other individuals were honored for their efforts on behalf of foster children and families.

“The award recipients exemplify the best of the best and are nominated by their peers in the child welfare system,” said Dawn Pearson of the department’s Children and Family Services Division. “The Ralls represent what foster parenting is all about. They selflessly provide a safe, loving home for the children in their care.”

The Ralls have been foster parents since 1992 and have cared for 14 children. They actively work to help the parents of the children in their care and serve as role models, teachers, and supporters. Their commitment and compassion for the children they care for continues after each placement ends. The Ralls often keep in contact with foster children into adulthood.

Dickey County Social Services staff nominated the Ralls.

On any given day, about 1,400 children ranging in age from infants to 18 are in foster care in North Dakota, most as a result of neglect or abuse situations. The Department of Human Services, the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitations – Division of Juvenile Services, counties, private agencies, the Tribes, and foster parents provide child welfare services with the goal of keeping children safe, while also addressing permanency needs and child well-being.

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