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County Board Chair Report

C. Pius Weibel, County Board Chair

Today (December 5, 2011) is the last day to file petitions to run in next year's elections for the County Board. I am not filing to run again. Why? Because it is time.... Time to take a break. Time to spend more time with my family. Time to spend more time with my spouse. Time to spend more time with my daughters (especially before one departs the household after completing high school). I probably could list a dozen more "time to..." but I will not. I think that I listed enough. I have few regrets about being County Board Chair for the past 5

years or so, but it has taken its toll. When my sixth year as Chair is over, I shall not miss all the meetings. I have missed too many school concerts and other events that my children have participated in, a few events that my spouse has been involved in. My spouse has been a single parent/household head too often. I look forward to making her less a single parent. I look forward to working with my spouse on household projects long-term instead of short-term. Believe me; the project list has not decreased in length these past few years. Maybe I

will fix the leaking window on the west side of the house. Maybe I will get the thermostat changed in my car this year (or maybe not—I made it through last winter with the current malfunctioning thermostat). I have spent many weekends trying to solve one county problem or another. It is time to let someone else to be the chief worrier for the County and for me to spend my weekends working at home with my family.



NOTICE TO EMPLOYEES

CHANGE IN 2012 SOCIAL SECURITY WITHHOLDING

The 2011 temporary reduction (from 6.2% to 4.2%) in the FICA OASDI rate is set to expire on December 31, 2011. The withholding rate will return to 6.2% in 2012 and employees will first see this effect on the January 13, 2012 paycheck.

THE NEXT PUBLICATION DATE IS MARCH 2012.
 THE SUBMISSION DEADLINE IS FEBRUARY 17, 2012.
 PLEASE SEND ARTICLES & COMMENTS TO Krhodes@co.champaign.il.us

ALL ISSUES OF THE INSIDER CAN BE VIEWED ON CHAMPAIGN COUNTY'S WEBSITE WWW.CO.CHAMPAIGN.IL.US

The Insider Editorial Team consists of Kay Rhodes, Debbie Chow, Jacque Chase, Amanda Tucker, & Traci Heiden

Champaign County 2011 Employee Recognition

Amanda Tucker, Human Resources Generalist

Events were held around the County to recognize Employees and Retirees. Members of the County Board and Department Heads gave certificates of appreciation to:

•42 employees with 5 years

- 22 employees with 10 years
- 23 employees with 15 years
- 8 employees with 20 years
- 5 employees with 25 years
- 4 employees with 30 years

The Board also honored Six-

teen Retirees with 340 consecutive years of service combined!! A special thanks to the members of the Champaign County Board, Departments Heads and Recognition Committee who assisted in preparation to make all events go well.

Network News

Andy Rhodes, Information Technology Director

Hello again, I hope you all had a great Thanksgiving! For the first time in a very long time, the entire Information Technology staff got Thanksgiving off as no system upgrades were scheduled this year. Usually, we are doing something to the email system, shared folders or the AS400s, but not this year.

MAILBOX MAINTENANCE

One of the biggest complaints we hear is about Outlook being slow to respond and frequent pop-up messages that Outlook is waiting for the Exchange server. Recently, we have deployed another Exchange server and split everyone's mailboxes into two groups (downtown departments and east campus departments) to help spread the load. While this has helped, some people

are still experiencing slow response time. If this is affecting you, please try the following to mitigate the problem:

Manage your mail folders.

Delete emails that you do not need to keep from both your inbox and sent items folders.

Create a folder structure in your mailbox and move emails out of your main inbox or sent items folder into your folder structure.

Everyone on the mail server sees a performance hit when even one user has more than 20,000 items in their main inbox; however, if mail is stored in folder structure the performance hit is lessened.

You can also save emails to your "my documents" folder; however, you may lose some search functionality by doing this.

NEW EMPLOYEE

We are excited to welcome Annah Mwangi to our staff. She has been working as a temporary employee in the County Clerk's Office for the last few years and replaces Kari Thompson, one of our Programmers, who left Illinois for sunny Florida in June. Annah's experience is in database programming against Microsoft SQL databases that run on Windows servers. Her primary responsibility will be providing support to the election program and other applications in the County Clerk's Office. She will also be assisting in the redesign of the County's website and other programming areas. Welcome Annah!

TRAINING

OPPORTUNITIES

Microsoft Office 2007 training will resume after the New Year

with hour-long seminars in Excel spreadsheet software. Dates and times will be announced soon.

FISCAL YEAR 2012

The new fiscal year is upon us, which means another round of computer replacements coming soon. The order will be placed sometime in the first quarter of 2012 and includes new computers for the Circuit Court and Adult Detention centers with a few scattered amongst other departments including Administrative Services, Information Technology and State's Attorney. Catastrophic flooding in Thailand may lead to computer component shortages or price spikes so our plans may change as a result.

Payroll Pen-Points

Leeann Robeck, Payroll Accountant

The end of the year is fast approaching and with that, there are a few reminders that need to be made for payroll purposes:

W-4 Employee's

Withholding Allowance Certificate

Please remember to file a new W-4 form any time you have changes in your filing status, exemption allowances or exempt status. Maintaining an accurate withholding certificate will prevent unpleasant surprises when it's time to file your tax returns.

If you are claiming "EXEMPT" status on your federal W-4, you must file a new W-4 for 2012 no later than February 15th, 2012. Failure to do so will result in your taxes being calculated using the Single with 0 exemptions designation.

Please Check Your Address

Please take a moment to check your address on your next paystub. If any corrections are necessary, please let the payroll desk know as soon as possible. We need to make sure addresses are up-to-date so that W-2's are mailed properly.

W-2 Wage and Tax Statements for 2011

As required by law, 2011 W-2 forms will be distributed no later than January 31, 2012. All W-2's will be mailed. We intend to mail them out the last week of January, and all employees will be given ample notice of the actual mailing date. No W-2's will be issued early and in order to facilitate faster processing, we would ask that employees refrain from calling our office to inquire as to the status of their W-2.

If you plan to calculate your taxes early in January, please

retain your paystub dated 12/30/2011. It will contain all the year-to-date information necessary for you to calculate your taxable income and withholdings.

Please contact Leeann Robeck in Administrative Services if you need to request a new form W-4 or have other questions concerning payroll. She may be reached by email at lrobeck@co.champaign.il.us or by phone at 384-3776.

Brighten a Nursing Home Resident's Christmas

Amber Stivers-Anders, Activity Director

The month of December you will find Champaign County Nursing Home bedecked with tinsel and ornaments and filled with merry carolers. Champaign County Nursing Home's Activity Department does its best to ensure that every resident has a happy holiday season by organizing our annual Adopt-A-Resident Christmas program. The Ac-

tivity Assistants are busy through the months of October and November, gathering suggestions for things our residents might like to receive as Christmas gifts. Typically gift suggestions are in the \$15-\$20 range, and can be anything from a comfy sweater, to a favorite perfume, to an Illini coffee table book. These suggestions are then printed on ornaments and

hung on a tree in the nursing home lobby after Thanksgiving. Staff, family members, visitors, volunteers, etc... are welcome to take an ornament and return the wrapped gift to the activity department by a specific date so that we can ensure we have a gift for every resident to open on Christmas Eve. Then on Christmas Eve, the CCNH department heads, play

Santa's helpers and pass out gifts to each of our residents. Please consider adopting one of our residents and ensuring a merry Christmas for them.



Gift Donations for Local Foster Kids & the Sunshine Center-(CCNH Adult Day Care)

Pam Burnside, Public Defender's Office

It's that time of year again. Gift donations for the local foster kids and for the Sunshine Center (Adult Day Care) need to be in the designated boxes in the lobby area by the time clock at the Public Defender's Office or in the County Employee's Break Room at the Brookens Administration Building by 4:30 pm on Tuesday, Dec. 13.

This year we are using the same process we used last year for both the Adults and the

Foster Kids. For confidentiality purposes, we are unable to give you a specific name but each child will be assigned a number. There will be holiday cutouts with each child's number, the age of the child and three - five items the child would enjoy. These cutouts will be available to pick up from my office door. Please remember to sign your name by the corresponding # on the Red Donor Sheet so that we can keep track of who is pur-

chasing for each child. Please wrap the donation and attach the cutout to the package so that we can match each gift to the correct child.

As in the past, we are using the above process for the Adult Day Care participants. You will get first names along with gift ideas. The Green Donor Sheet is for the Adults; please remember to put your name by the corresponding recipient's name.

If you want me to send via interoffice mail or drop off to you an adult name or a child's number, just e-mail me;

PBurnside@co.champaign.il.us

with the number of names and/or numbers you want and I will get them to you. I will also pick up your donations if you can't get to one of the boxes.

Thank you in advance for your generous spirit. Have a safe, relaxing :-) and fun holiday.

"Every Good Act is Charity.

*A Man's True Wealth Hereafter is the
Good That He Does in the
World to His Fellows." - Moliere (1622-1673)*

Champaign County Probation & Court Services Helps Co-Sponsor State Conference

Jacque Chase, Probation & Court Services

On 11/02/11 through 11/04/11, the Garden Hilton in Champaign was the site of the Fall 2011 Illinois Probation and Court Services Association conference. The hosts of this conference were the probation/court services departments from Moultrie, Douglas, DeWitt, Piatt and Champaign Counties. Work started in our Department in June organizing events, lining up lunch speakers, and canvassing the area for contribution prizes for the conference raffle. Approximately 300 people attended the conference and training sessions offered over the three day period. Lunch speakers included Supreme Court Justice Rita Garman and our own

U of I basketball coach, Bruce Weber. For those of you who remember him, our prior director, Del Weatherford, attended and reported having a great time.

Members of the departments organized a reception on Wednesday night featuring a Mexican theme with decorations and piñatas made by the detainees at the Champaign County Juvenile Detention Center. Various members of the department assisting with the registration desk, providing assistance to out of county folks, and raffle and training sessions.

Thursday night was the Honors Banquet. The Distinguished Service for Officers Award was given to members

of each our units. The following departmental officers were honored: from the Adult Unit - Lindsay Bridges, Jeff Nugent and Ashley Doty; from the Juvenile Unit - Tom Foster, Heidi Hewkin, Amber Davis and Siobhan Reynolds; from the Specialized Unit - Lori Kleppin, DeShonna Crosby and Christine Jones ; and from the Juvenile Detention Center - Judi Hansen, Jerry Hunt and Meghan Nau.

The Conference also awards individual awards for an officer who excels in a given area. The S. William Ettinger Service Award is presented to the officer who exemplifies dedication and service to the Association. Mike Carey, the Drug Specialist from our office, won this

award. Mike has been a member of IPCSA for 21 years and an employee of the Department since 01/08/90. He had served two terms as the IPCSA Association as Treasurer and has been a staple of the Substance Abuse Committee. In 2009 he was recognized with the Frank Caulkins Award presented to the Substance Abuse Committee Member of the year. Mike conducts seminars and training session in the areas of drug testing, drug identification, drug effects and adulteration techniques.

The conference was deemed a success – both for the counties hosting and the folks who attended!!!

Recycling News

Susan Monte, Champaign County Recycling Coordinator

Burned Out or Broken Holiday String Lights Can Be Recycled

The following local retailers and recyclers have free drop off programs to accept string lights for recycling:

Habitat for Humanity

Restore

119 E. University Avenue
Champaign
(217) 355-6460
Monday – Saturday

10 AM – 5 PM
*Separate working and non-working strands. Working string lights will be resold and non-working lights will be recycled.

Lowes

1904 N. Prospect Avenue
Champaign
(217) 373-7300
Monday – Saturday
6:30 AM – 10 PM
Sunday 8 AM – 8 PM
*Accepts working and non-

working string lights at Customer Service
(Lights accepted November 15 – December 24 only)

Mack's Twin City Recycling

2808 N. Lincoln Avenue
Urbana
(217) 328-2100
Monday – Friday
7:30 AM – 4:30 PM
Saturday, 8 AM – 12 PM
*Pays for working/non-working holiday string lights. Call for current scrap price.

Marco Steel

(Division of Mervis Industries)
302 S. Market Street
Champaign
(217) 352-3040
Monday-Friday 8 AM – 4 PM
*Pays for working/non-working holiday string lights. Call for current scrap price.