



CHAMPAIGN COUNTY'S

INSIDER

SEPTEMBER 2007

CONNECTING CHAMPAIGN COUNTY'S WORKFORCE

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COUNTY BOARD REPORT

From the Desk of C. Pius Weibel, County Board Chair

The students are returning to the University of Illinois, high school sports teams are returning to practice in the hot weather, and corn and soybeans are peaking in the abundant fields throughout the county. All are reminders of the constancy of the seasons.

Seasonality is a common theme everywhere on earth, although the contrasts between seasons is quite variable. Near the equator, the seasons are typically cycles of wet and dry periods as in the monsoonal storms of southern Asia or the annual flooding of the Nile River in Africa or the Amazon in South America. In the higher latitudes and/or elevations, seasons range from wet, warm, and dry (like much of the southeastern USA) to the

four distinct seasons of Champaign County.

Locally, winter may not be what it used to be, but we still have it and, like all of the seasonal changes, I appreciate it. Seasonality reflects another cycle, the cycle of life. Many of our plants, both natural and planted, sprout, live, produce, and die within one annual seasonal cycle. Other plants, the perennials, survive the cold winters to bloom again the following spring.

So why am I invoking the themes of seasonality and the cycle of life? Because I believe it can be applied to the numerous facility changes in buildings that are ongoing in our County government. We construct buildings and use them for many years, but sometimes, they wear out. Like a car with 200K miles, functional and technological changes render them obsolete.

Throughout the summer, we have watched the new Highway Maintenance Building rise out of the ground. This "newly-born" building is just beginning what will hopefully be a very long life cycle. Standing next to it is the structure which housed the Child Advocacy Center and the Juvenile Detention Center before that. This building will be torn down, probably within the next month, to make room for retention ponds necessary for the new Highway Maintenance Building. The CAC building has reached the end of its life. It is a dated and inefficient structure which no longer has a meaningful role to play.

Just to the east, is an even larger, more dated and less efficient structure, the old

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THE NEXT PUBLICATION DATE IS DECEMBER 2007. THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION IS NOVEMBER 9, 2007. PLEASE SEND ARTICLES & COMMENTS TO [NEWSLETTER](#)

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

The Insider has been brought to you by the editorial team of Debbie Chow, Kirk Kirkland, Ron Gremore, Priscilla Lindstrom & Kay Rhodes

CULTURAL DIVERSITY...what does it mean to us?

Champaign County is made up of a rich and diverse mix of people, cultures and communities that are perpetually changing. This should be seen as both positive and exciting. The often slow but constant growth and transformation of our County has enhanced and pro-

moted the quality of life for each and every generation of citizens who reside in east central Illinois and call this region their home.

This is also true and evident in our Champaign County Government's workforce. While

Champaign County's general workforce is reported to be 50% male and 50% female, County government's 2007 workforce is essentially 38% male and 62% female. Other demographic contrasts between the general county working

population and county government are:

African Americans represent 11% of the county while African Americans represent 16% of the County government's

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CULTURAL DIVERSITY... continued

(Continued from page 1)

workforce. Other minorities make up an additional 10% of the county workforce.

What is fascinating about our County workforce is that virtually every faith, color, creed and nationality is represented and all are valued and appreciated for the contributions made to our communities by each segment of our population. It should be noted and highlighted that the constant change in the ethnic mix of our County has provided wonderful benefits to the growth and development of east central Illinois. While more diverse groups of people pursue opportunities and careers in Champaign County Government the more we are exposed to unique and challenging ideas and approaches to effectively serve the citizens of the county.

Over just the last five years, the representation of different ethnic groups in the County has increased by 5%. This statistic is fascinating in that, if this trend continues, as it is pro-

jected to do so by the Consulting firm of Woods & Poole Economics, Inc. the minority population of Champaign County will reach 36% in approximately twenty years. There are many factors that

County’s workforce, the Champaign County Board is committed to a workforce that reflects the citizens it serves. The County is committed to the principle of having a workforce that is inclusive and promoting

force that is diverse in ideas, personalities and differences.

In fact, for the sake of an united, productive and healthy organization, a goal of embracing a working definition of diversity in the workplace could be the full utilization of all human resources that creates a climate of mutual respect, inclusion, understanding, personal growth and values the differences and similarities relative to the talents, gifts, skills, perception, perspectives, ideas and relationships between and among each and every employee.

With this objective in mind, every employee of Champaign County Government is encouraged to embrace the tenets of this workplace definition of diversity as well and to consider the following statements as “food for thought”:

Without diversity the world would be bland and colorless.

Our differences are our strengths – varied talents

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are sighted for this transformation: The University of Illinois and its international recruitment; and immigration and population shifts.

With this anticipated growth and transformation of the

mutual respect between and among all its employees. As Mahatma Gandhi said, “No culture can live if it attempts to be exclusive.”

We can enrich our organizational culture through a work-

Frequently Asked Questions about IMRF

To help employees have a better understanding of their Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF) pension the following list of frequently asked questions and answers are provided:

Q. Why am I, as an employee of Champaign County, required to participate?

A. Illinois State law requires you to participate in IMRF if you work in an IMRF qualified position. An IMRF qualified position is one that is expected

to equal or exceed your employer’s “annual hourly standard”. The annual hourly standard for Champaign County employees is 1,000 hours a year. Therefore, if an employee is scheduled or anticipated to work 1,000 hours or more in a year they are required to participate.

Q. What do I contribute to IMRF?

A. As a member of IMRF you contribute 4.5% of your salary.

Q. Are my contributions taxed?

A. Your contributions are tax deferred; you do not pay either federal or Illinois income tax on the money used to make your contributions. Your contributions will be subject to federal income tax, but not to Illinois income tax, when you receive them as a refund or as a pension when you retire.

Q. May I borrow money from my IMRF pension account?

A. No...you cannot borrow

from your member contributions or use them as collateral for a loan. Your contributions cannot be garnished or seized by any creditor. As long as your contributions remain on deposit with IMRF, they are protected from creditors.

Q. When can I take a refund of my contributions?

A. If you stop working for an IMRF employer and have: Less than eight years of service or if you have eight or more

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IMRF - continued

(Continued from page 2)

years of service and are less than age 55 – your 4.5% contributions will be returned to you upon request. However you will be giving up the right to a future pension.

Q. How do I qualify for a regular IMRF pension?

A. You must have at least eight years of service credit and be at least age 55 when you retire.

Q. What is service credit?

A. Service credit is your total time under IMRF, stated in years and months. Service is credited monthly while you are working, receiving IMRF disability benefits, or while you make member contributions during an IMRF Benefit Protection Leave.

Q. How are my retirement benefits calculated?

A. Your retirement benefit (pension) is based upon your final rate of earnings and your years of IMRF service credit.

Q. How long will I receive my monthly pension benefits?

A. IMRF is a defined benefit plan. You will receive your monthly pension benefits as long as you live. After you retire the pension benefits will increase at annual rate of 3% on January 1 of each year.

Q. What happens to my unused, unpaid sick leave upon my retirement from the County?

A. You may qualify for a maximum of one year (240 days) of additional service credit for

unused, unpaid sick days earned with your last employer. The service credit is earned at the rate of one month for every 20 days of unused, unpaid sick leave of fraction thereof. Therefore, any unused, unpaid sick leave has value upon retirement and may enhance one's monthly benefits.

Q. If I become disabled, how do I apply for disability benefits with IMRF?

A. It is your responsibility to apply for IMRF disability benefits when it is determined that you will be disabled for more than 30 days in a row. If an employee becomes temporarily disabled for more than thirty days and has exhausted all paid leave time, it is very important to apply for IMRF disability

benefits in order to protect one's service credit. If an employee is off work on a non-paid leave status, they will lose service credit towards their pension unless they have been approved for disability benefits. This requires medical certification and reports from the employer as well as the employee's application for said benefits.

Should you have additional questions about your IMRF pension you may call IMRF at 1-800-275-4673 to talk to a Service Representative, go to www.imrf.org or call Ron Gremore or Leeann Robeck at 217-384-3776. They would be happy to help you!

CONSTRUCTION UPDATES



Construction and remodeling projects on the County's campus grind along as the county expands and updates its work space. The Champaign County Nursing Home is about to receive its finishing touches as the flag pole is en route and bids went out for the sign at the front entrance. The dust from that project had barely settled when the ground was broken for the new Highway Department building.

According to Alan Reinhart, Supervisor of Building Maintenance,

the new building will host the offices of the Highway Department, garage storage for their fleet of trucks and equipment and a mechanical maintenance area to be used to service the departments' vehicles as



well as the Sheriff Department's fleet. The shell of the building is up and beginning to be enclosed with the roof and the windows being installed now.

The office areas are approximately 30%-40% finished with the other areas beginning to move along. The building is scheduled to finish mid winter.

The building that has housed

1978-2001 will be razed to make room for the new building. The Children's Advocacy Center has just signed leases and will move into the new Champaign Urbana Public Health Districts office building at 201 West Kenyon Road

Pod 100 at Brookens Administrative Center has seen a flurry of activity as remodeling has begun there. The Regional Planning Commission is receiving a new main entrance, updated office space and a larger conference room. The Planning and Zoning offices have already moved into their recently finished area. The work on Pod 100 should be finished mid November.

the Champaign County Children's Advocacy Center since September of 2001 and was used as the youth detention center during the years of

PROBATION & COURT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

The featured Department for the fourth quarter of the Insider is the Probation and Court Services Department. This Department, which employs approximately 70 employees, serves both adult and juveniles in Champaign County. According to Director Joe Gordon, the mission of the Department is to provide services to the judiciary, the community as well as to the offenders. Using a community corrections approach, the goal is to improve public safety by enforcing court orders and at the same time providing services to juvenile and adult offenders to aid in their rehabilitation.

The professional services provided to adult and juvenile probation clients are vital to the security, confidence and safety of the citizens of Champaign County. Examples of the various services include: conducting presentence investigations on criminal defendants/juvenile offenders, assisting each probationer in developing a plan of supervision so he/she can choose to remain in the community crime-free and providing options to avoid incarceration. Additionally, probation officers may make referrals to community agencies for assistance with substance abuse problems, mental health care, employment or other services that may be deemed needed.

Director Gordon reported there are approximately 1200 adults serving a sentence of probation with another 2000 under supervision for conditional discharge/court supervision dispositions. As for

juveniles, approximately 125 to 150 juveniles are presently under court order. As a probation officer, one major challenge is for staff to act as case manager. In this role, an officer must have problem solving

the department maintains its own lab for the purpose of testing offenders for the presence of illegal substances. Two officers are specially trained to operate the sophisticated equipment in the lab.



capabilities and interact closely with parents, guardians, school administrators, teachers, the courts and law enforcement. Such efforts require extremely professional, well trained, committed and caring staff.

The lab equipment is the type of drug testing equipment commonly used by hospitals and clinics. Drug Court has been effective in helping offenders overcome their substance abuse problems and



In addition to the standard caseload of offenders, the department also provides specialized services for drug offenders, sex offenders, domestic batterers and high risk offenders. Court Services participates with a team of agencies that comprise Drug Court. To offer the Court the latest and most accurate drug test results,

has significantly reduced the necessity for incarceration of many offenders. The Drug Court of Champaign County has received some very positive and well deserved praise and has also been identified as a model program for other counties throughout the State of Illinois.

The department also employs

probation officers who work with high risk offenders. The high risk offenders are typically individuals that have been in the system longer and remain at high risk to repeat crimes based upon their criminal thinking patterns. The offenders classified as "high risk" are monitored at a supervision level above the standard offender. The offenders have a series of needs requiring an enhanced supervision level and necessitate multiple referrals to various agencies to address their special needs.

The department also includes the operation of the Champaign County Juvenile Detention Center (JDC). This forty bed facility is designed to provide a secure setting for minors who have been found guilty or alleged to have committed a crime. The primary mission of JDC is to supervise, educate and care for minors detained at the facility. In addition to providing safety for the juvenile offenders while in secure care, the staff also provides important programming to address the special needs of this young population.

JDC is a "state-of-the-art" facility and includes the latest technical digital camera system available to monitor all activities. Director Joe Gordon also noted that JDC is a juvenile facility operated under the rules and regulations of the State of Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice rather than under the Department of Corrections which regulate the operations of County Corrections and the Sheriff's Office. He reported JDC is managed by Superinten-

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LESSONS TO PONDER



“Big things can come when you take the time to teach. While some people claim to be too busy to teach, others think it just won’t matter. Seven years ago a four-year-old girl named Alexandra Scott showed how teaching a simple lesson can really matter. In 2000, she announced she was setting up a lemonade stand to raise money to help “her doctors” find a cure for kids with cancer. As a four-year-old cancer patient, she was building on a simple lesson and taking steps to

change the world by setting up “Alex’s Lemonade Stand for Childhood Cancer” on her front lawn in July of 2000.

For the next four years, Alex held an annual lemonade stand to raise money for childhood cancer research. Others were inspired around the country, resulting in thousands of lemonade stands and other fundraising events to benefit Alex’s Lemonade Stand Foundation for Childhood Cancer. When she died in 2004 at the age of eight, she had raised \$1 million for childhood cancer research. As of June 2007, her foundation has raised

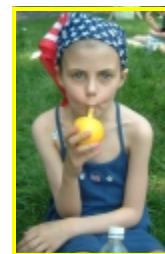
\$12 million for childhood cancer research. All from the action of a little girl having learned some very simple lessons.

Someone took the time to teach Alex those very simple lessons. In addition to teaching her how to run a lemonade stand, someone taught her about love and kindness, and the power one person can make in the world.” Excerpt from Everyday Leadership by Clint Swindall – at Verbalocity.com

One important yet simple lesson in life is that “it is better to give than to receive”. The example of Alex Scott in the article above is well worth pondering. In the next several months Champaign County

employees will once again be reminded of the Combined Charities Campaign. Participation is voluntary and totally self motivated. When you receive the announcement of this year’s campaign think about Alex and the impact one person can have on the entire community.

- Ron Gremore, 2007 Combined Charities Coordinator.



Alex’s Lemonade

PROBATION & COURT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Continued...

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dent Connie Kaiser. Although there are 102 counties in Illinois, there are only 16 juvenile detention facilities in the state. According to the Director, Champaign County’s JDC is recognized by other counties as a model facility.

The Champaign County Probation and Court Services Department is regulated by the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts on a state level and by the judicial system on a circuit wide level. The Department is accountable to the Chief Judge of the Sixth Judicial Circuit for compliance with policies and procedures as established by the Chief Judge. In addition, administration of the department is

overseen by our local chief judge through our current Court Administrator – Roger Holland. Mr. Holland and his staff also provide support services to the Judges and their staff. This work is critical, and many days overwhelming, given the volume of cases that come before the Courts weekly.

The County can take great pride in knowing that the professionalism of the entire Department’s workforce is truly a model for all other counties in Illinois. We acknowledge their contribution and thank them for making Champaign County a safer place to live and work.



COUNTY BOARD REPORT

Continued...

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County Nursing Home. Nearing the end of it’s life as a meaningful structure, it appeared to be only one County Facilities meeting away from being moth-balled and demolished. Instead, it will be rejuvenated as the new ILEAS Training Institute. This will not be the first time this building has been reborn. Before being converted into the Nursing Home, it housed the Champaign County Hospital.

Somewhat similarly, the decision to rebuild the tower and repair the outside masonry will rejuvenate the County Court House. Obviously, the function of the Court House will not be changing.

Early next year, we will mark the 175th anniversary of the establishment of Champaign County, and the founding of Urbana as its County Seat. How many ventures have been planted, sprouted, lived and died during this time? How many have survived to be reborn and bloom again year after year? Let’s take the time to reflect on them. If you have any ideas on how we should celebrate this important anniversary, please pass your ideas to me, or any of the members of the Champaign County Board.

COOK'S CORNER*Real Simple*, OCTOBER 2006**Sausages with Ratatouille**

- | | |
|---|--|
| 2 tablespoons olive oil | 1 14.5-ounce can diced tomatoes, undrained |
| 1/4 teaspoon black pepper | 1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt |
| 1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes | 1 medium yellow onion, roughly chopped |
| 4 Italian sausages | 1 small eggplant, unpeeled, cut into a 1/2-inch dice |
| 1/2 cup fresh flat-leaf parsley,
finely chopped, plus sprigs | 1 red bell pepper, cut into a 1/2-inch dice |
| | 1 yellow bell pepper, cut into a 1/2-inch dice |
| | 2 cloves garlic, thinly sliced |

Heat oven to 400° F.

Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the onion and cook for 2 minutes. Add the eggplant and bell peppers and cook for 3 minutes. Add the garlic, tomatoes and their juices, salt, black pepper, red pepper, and 1/4 cup water and bring to a boil. Nestle the sausages in the skillet, spooning the vegetables over them. Transfer to oven and cook, uncovered, until the sausages are cooked through, about 30 minutes. Stir in the chopped parsley. Divide the sausages and ratatouille among individual plates and add the parsley sprigs.

Tip: This dish has flavor to spare, so you don't need all the sodium that comes in a standard can of tomatoes. Try using a brand with no added salt instead.

Yield: Makes 4 servings

CALORIES 254 (50% from fat); FAT 14g (sat 3g); SUGAR 7g; PROTEIN 16g; CHOLESTEROL 25mg; SODIUM 1,367mg; FIBER 5g; CARBOHYDRATE 17g

from **CookingLight**

Roasted Chicken and Bow Tie Pasta Salad

- | | |
|---|---|
| 3 cups uncooked farfalle (bow tie pasta) (about 8 ounces) | 1 1/2 teaspoons rice vinegar |
| 1/3 cup fresh orange juice | 2 cups shredded cooked chicken breast (about 2 breasts) |
| 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice | 1 1/2 cups seedless red grapes, halved |
| 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil | 1 cup thin diagonally cut celery |
| 1 tablespoon stone-ground mustard | 1/3 cup finely chopped red onion |
| 2 teaspoons sugar | 1/3 cup coarsely chopped walnuts, toasted |
| 1 1/4 teaspoons salt | 3 tablespoons chopped fresh chives |
| 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper | 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley |

Cook pasta according to package directions, omitting salt and fat; drain. Cool completely.

Combine orange juice and the next 7 ingredients (orange juice through rice vinegar) in a large bowl, stirring with a whisk to combine. Add pasta, chicken, grapes, celery, red onion, walnuts, chives, and parsley; toss gently to combine.

Yield: 6 servings (serving size: about 1 2/3 cups)

CALORIES 363 (36% from fat); FAT 14.4g (sat 2.4g, mono 5.5g, poly 4.8g); PROTEIN 18.5g; CHOLESTEROL 33mg; CALCIUM 45mg; SODIUM 553mg; FIBER 3.1g; IRON 2.2mg; CARBOHYDRATE 42g

WEATHERIZATION PROGRAM SAVES LIVES

Champaign County Regional Planning’s Construction Specialist, Mike Hunter inspected the a furnace of an Urbana family on June 28th. He found a carbon monoxide level of 147 parts per million. Any level above 50 is considered dangerous to human life. Mike prevented a possible tragedy. Great job Mike!

Do you have **your** detector installed?

Illinois Carbon Monoxide Alarm Detector Act

The Illinois General Assembly has passed and the Governor

has signed the Carbon Monoxide Alarm Detector Act (Public Act 094-0741). This new law, effective **January 1, 2007**, requires homeowners and landlords to install carbon monoxide detectors in all buildings containing bedrooms and sleeping facilities.

Carbon Monoxide (CO) is a natural by-product of combustion from fuel burning appliances and is invisible to human senses. It can cause health problems, brain damage, even death. Carbon monoxide alarms are designed to activate a warning before

symptoms appear in healthy adults.

You should follow the following procedure if your CO alarm activates:

Gather all family members in a pre-designated meeting place and check to be sure everyone is present.

Determine if anyone is experiencing poisoning symptoms such as headache, nausea, dizziness or disorientation.

If so, leave the building immediately and call 911. Do not re-enter until responders say it is safe to do so.

If no symptoms are present, press your CO alarm’s reset button and turn off all potential sources of carbon monoxide—any appliance or machine that runs on fossil fuel such as gas furnace, water heater, stove, oven, clothes dryer, space heater, fireplace or car left running in an attached garage.

Open doors and windows to let in fresh air.

Call a trained service technician to check your appliances, flue and chimney systems.

CULTURAL DIVERSITY *continued.....*

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working towards the same goal.

You don’t need to like everyone you work with, although that would be nice, but you do need to *Respect* them.

“Inclusion” ensures that everyone feels valued and empowered to contribute their part to the whole.

The objective of diversity is to allow our differences to enhance and strengthen each other.

Diversity is the spice of life... think about it.

To quote the great American athlete and humanitarian, Arthur Ash, “Too many people seem determined to forget that although we are of different colors and beliefs, we are all

members of the same human race, united by much more than the factors and forces that separates us.”

Let us not forget nor forsake the fact that we are all dependent on each other as county employees and everything we do impacts everyone in some way.

You are valued for your unique contribution to your job and to

the service of the citizens of Champaign County. Let us each find ways to show our respect and appreciation for our co-workers each and everyday.



HELP! E-MAIL TIP

DO NOT OVERUSE HIGH PRIORITY



We all know the story of the boy who cried wolf. If you overuse the high priority option, it will lose its function when you really need it. Moreover, even if an email has high priority, your message will come across as slightly aggressive if you flag it as “high priority”.

CONGRATULATIONS to Lynn Kopmann, Lead Custodian, Physical Plant! Lynn’s name was drawn from a pool of correct answers in our hidden corn contest. The “ear” was hidden on page 6, Cook’s Corner, within the shrimp’s tail. Lynn won a \$10.00 gift card from Blaine’s Farm & Fleet.

This month’s winner will receive a \$10.00 gift card from the **Papa Murphy’s** Pizza. Please send your answers to the [newsletter](#), by noon on September 14th, 2007. If you do not have access to a computer; send your answer via inter-office mail. Everyone with the correct answer will be placed in a drawing for the gift card. **No the “hidden” corn is not within this box.**

The winner will be announced on September 17th, **GOOD LUCK!** This will be the last hidden corn contest. Beginning December 2007, we will have a new contest. Thanks for playing!!!

Being defeated is often a temporary condition. Giving up is what makes it permanent.
- Marilyn vos Savant

Teamwork is the ability
To work together
Toward a common vision.

The ability to direct individual
Accomplishments toward
Organizational objectives.

It is the fuel that allows
Common people to obtain
Uncommon results.

To err is human.
And to blame it on the
computer is even more
so.
- Robert Orben

- LONG TERM VISION
- EXCELLENCE
- ADVANCE PLANNING
- DISCIPLINE
- ENTHUSIASM
- RESPONSIBILITY
- SACRIFICE
- HUMILITY
- INFLUENCE
- PERSEVERANCE



2007 COUNTY BOARD
EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION EVENT

When you
come to the
end of your
rope,

tie a knot &
hang on.

-Franklin
D. Roosevelt

Opportunity is
missed by most
because it is
dressed in over-
alls and looks like
work.
- Thomas Edison

The County Board has designated the week of *October 22, 2007*, as Employee Recognition Week. Various events will take place throughout the week to accommodate employees. The Board will recognize 110 employees who have reached a range of employment anniversaries. Seven retirees will also be recognized. RPC will conduct an employee recognition event on November 20, 2007. Please watch for future notices to find out where and when your department's program will be held. More detailed information will be forthcoming in weeks ahead. Mark your calendars!

We make a
living by what
we get,
but
we make a life
by what we
give.
- Winston
Churchill

Champaign County continues to auction on Ebay
Here's how to get to our items:
Go to Ebay.com
In the search bar, click on advanced search.
Scroll down to "From Sellers" and click on Specific Seller button.
Type in champco1776, our seller name.
If you have questions regarding specific items, please contact
Ranae at 384-3765. Good Luck!!