

JEAN VIRNIG

A person who appreciates landscaping – planting oaks and chestnuts around her property – Jean Virnig can give you a first-hand account of being uprooted and transplanted. With the razing of her former workplace, Salisbury Hall, Jean is one of many who have currently set up shop in White Hall. That building was taken offline as a student residence hall and remodeled to meet the needs of L&S faculty and staff who were moved from Salisbury at the end of the summer.

Jean began her career on campus as an LTE in January 1994. By June 1994, she had become a permanent employee, working in a couple of different offices over the years, including Curriculum & Instruction, Sociology, and currently in the Social Work Department. She has been in that office for a year and a half. She enjoys her work there because it is fast-paced and there is a lot happening. Besides her work, she is busy settling in and adjusting to her new office area.

Jean hails from Fort Atkinson. She is a widow with a grown son and daughter. Her son graduated from UW-Madison in Electrical Engineering and has come back to live at home for awhile. Her daughter graduated from UW-Whitewater and is teaching K-5 vocal music in Zion, IL. Besides landscaping, Jean is an avid scrapbooker. She loves working on family albums and is involved in a project with her sister, putting together an historical family book, complete with old family photos. Her heart is especially captured by cats plagued by misfortune. She and her son have four cats – Pumpkin, Al Capone, Blanca and Snowball -- all of which have been rescued from some unfortunate past. She is more than happy to provide a good home for all of them.

What does Jean like most about UW-Whitewater? The camaraderie and friendliness that she sees on a daily basis impresses her; so many of the students are active and outgoing and seeking answers. She also appreciates understanding faculty and staff. And all the changes occurring on campus? Jean thinks students and staff have been great about dealing with the changes. Having received her associate degree from UWW, she is pleased to see that classes have been modernized to meet student needs. Say the word “change” and Jean just laughs. “We’re survivors,” she says. And that says it all.