

CHARLENE KLEMP

June 29, 2008 marked Char's 40th anniversary on the UW-Whitewater campus – congratulations, Char! There has to be something special about a place where individuals remain for the better part of a lifetime, and Char will be among the first to agree. She has made UWW a second home and does not appear to have any regrets. She has carved a comfortable little niche in a corner of the lower level of the Andersen Library Building and it's a nice fit.

Char resides in Fort Atkinson with her dog, Cheyenne, a Siberian husky. She has two grown daughters, Karrie and Heather. Older daughter, Karrie, lives in Tempe, Arizona and works for Farmers Insurance. Heather makes her home in Wisconsin Rapids, working for Wood County. She is employed with the Department of Recreation and Forestry. Her fiancé, Steve, who lives in Whitewater, completes the family picture.

Char's interests include golfing (which she admits has not been a regular activity of late), going to stockcar races, and doing some traveling. We asked her if she also enjoys reading. She laughs and says, "It would be kind of funny to work in a library and not enjoy reading." She is particularly fond of mysteries and novels by James Michener. She opens quite a few of the boxes of books that arrive periodically, so she has the opportunity to see what new gems the library will be placing on its shelves.

So, what does Char like about this job she has been performing for so many years? Well, her duties include paying the invoices and she enjoys doing the accounting-related tasks. She also likes the diversity of her job. She finds a certain satisfaction in searching for information for faculty orders. Sometimes the incoming orders are incomplete and she has fun sleuthing out the information to complete those orders.

What does she like most about UW-Whitewater? "The paycheck," she says and chuckles. Taking it down a notch to a little more serious note, she indicates that the pay and benefits package are really a plus in this employment. She appreciates being allowed to work with very limited supervision and is very fond of the staff in her office. What she likes most is the fact that people on this campus "are individuals, not numbers, and the people at UWW are good people".

Having been on campus for forty years, Char has certainly experienced and seen a vast array of changes on the campus. When asked about the most recent changes and construction, she notes that she does miss the yearly receptions the campus used to give for the classified employees. As for the recent physical changes to the campus, she thinks those have been good. She is especially happy to see more course offerings that will draw people to UWW. She laughs as she states that she's "still waiting for the plan (from 20 years ago) to make the Hamilton Field into a parking structure." One thing she has definitely maintained over her forty-year tenure – a wry sense of humor.

There has to be something special about an individual who stays 40 years with one employer, and Char is definitely a special kind of person. UW-Whitewater is very fortunate to employ individuals who come for the work and stay to become the lifeblood of the campus.