

Women's Club News

University of Illinois at Urbana – Champaign



Celebrating 100 Years of Building Community at UIUC

Volume 17, Number 6
June 2007

2007- 2008 Women's Club Board

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A Letter from the President...

At the end of another successful year for the Women's Club, I am honored to take over the role of President following in the footsteps of those who have contributed so much to our club.

At the Spring Luncheon Deana McDonagh gave an entertaining and insightful presentation about how modern design is functional yet satisfies our emotional needs. It gave me a new perspective on our home environment and my purchase choices. The Silent Auction organized by Susan Haney raised \$299 for the Scholarship Fund, providing an added bonus to our Luncheon.

The proposal to change our name was presented to the Spring Luncheon in recognition of changing times and a perceived need for a gender-neutral name, to reflect a gender-neutral club. Many members have contacted me personally about this proposal and their desire to discuss this further. Please give this topic careful thought over the summer and complete the survey in the newsletter or online by July 5. I hope that all members will take the opportunity to voice an opinion on this important issue.

The Interest groups are the lifeblood of the Club and I thank the Interest Group Chairs for all their efforts during the last year. I look forward to working with you over the year. We have added many new groups over the last few years and if you have a new Interest Group idea that you wish to introduce in the Fall, please contact Barbara Garlick, 3rd VP by June 30.

As we look forward to the next year, the new Board is planning an exciting schedule of events starting with the Fall Sign Up on September 14 from 11.30 - 1.30 in the Levis Faculty Center. The purpose of our Club is to encourage friendship, support and promote the University of Illinois through interest groups, tours, scholarship awards and general meetings. As we move into the second century of our organization, our aim is to strengthen our Club in particular by broadening our appeal and so increasing our membership and presence in the community.

We are continuing with our past pattern of general meetings but with some changes to details. The Fall Meeting will be in the evening to allow working members to attend. Many members have contacted me about the difficulty of attending meetings during the day and we are hoping that this change will increase attendance and connect more of our potential membership to the Club. The reception will be in the Alice Campbell Alumni Center, a magnificent new building on campus that embodies the great strengths of both the past and future of our University. I hope everyone will be able to attend. Other scheduled events include our Holiday Tea at the President's House in December, the second Murder Mystery in February (back by popular demand), our Scholarship Brunch in March and the Spring Luncheon in May.

I look forward to seeing you all at the Fall Sign Up.

Have a relaxing and refreshing summer.

Ann





Past Presidents enjoying the Spring Luncheon

Spring Luncheon
with
Dr. Deana McDonagh



Our entertaining speaker,
Dr. Deana McDonagh,
Associate Professor of Industrial Design

We revisited our material landscape with Dr. McDonagh at our Spring Luncheon. She gave us much to ponder, challenging us to re-evaluate our possessions and to think about them in new ways. How do they contribute to our experiences? Are they holding us back in some ways? As she illustrated, modern design is less about generating products and more about creating satisfying experiences for the user.

Our old and new Boards were also recognized, and Cinda Pettigrew handed over the gavel to Ann Long.



Thank you Cinda, and welcome Ann!

Name Change Results from Spring Luncheon

As most of you probably know by now, the result of the vote on the name change to **University Connections – Building Community at the University of Illinois** at the Spring Luncheon was:

Voting Members Present:	91	Votes in Favor:	57
2/3 Majority Needed:	61	Votes Against:	31
		Abstentions:	3

Although many were in favor of a name change, the 57 votes in favor was 4 short of the 2/3 majority required in our Constitution, so the motion could not be accepted. Several members have asked if they could vote by mail, but our Constitution requires the vote to be only by those present in person. In addition at least 5% of the membership must be present.

The name change was put forward in the light of an aging membership and failure to attract and retain newcomers to the club. Our “sister club” at Michigan State passed a name change last year to “Michigan State Community Club” and reported a large increase in membership, while retaining their original character. The ad hoc committee that was formed to look at these issues felt that the name should be gender neutral to attract new, younger members from the community and the University. All of the committee felt that the name should reflect inclusiveness.

The committee considered several suggestions from members and from other schools. Many could not be used, because they are already in use (University Circle, University Club, Faculty and Staff Social Club), were non-inclusive (Faculty and Friends) or might be confused with a dating agency (University Networking). “University Connections” was proposed, and at the Luncheon it was put to the vote, but was not accepted. Some members considered it too vague or possibly confused the name with computing connections, and the Campus Connections building.

Since the vote showed a numerical majority wishing to see a name change, a new ad hoc committee has been formed to examine options and to consult the membership widely. If we receive sufficient interest in pursuing this, we will hold an open meeting before the Fall Reception. The ad hoc committee consists of:

Ann Long, Chair	Carrol Bunick	Sandy Camargo	Barbara Garlick
Susan Haney	Birgit McCall	Cathy Williams	Kathleen Witek

But we welcome volunteers to join the committee. We are soliciting your input, and asking for your suggestions. As a gauge, we are including a mini-survey in this newsletter, which may also be found on our website. We urge you to complete a survey. And if you have any other suggestions or comments regarding a name change for the club, please e-mail Ann Long at annlong@uiuc.edu or send her US mail at 4406 Brittany Trail Drive, Champaign, IL 61822. Please contact her before July 5, as we will be evaluating all suggestions then, old and new. We will present our findings to you in the next newsletter.

We’ve included some facts regarding our previous name changes and attempted name changes, as well as some demographics about our club. In addition, we have an opinion from Gay Roberts, another opinion from Maryly Crutcher, and some fascinating information about what women’s clubs have done for our country. And lest you think it’s all about name changing, relax! There’s some fun stuff, some calendar stuff, and another survey on where you would like to go on tour, so we can start off 2007 – 2008 in a great way! Thank you so much for responding to the surveys!

A Brief History of the Women's Club

Susan Haney

In February 1906 two faculty wives, Mrs. T. J. Burrill and Mrs. S. A. Forbes, decided that a social club for University faculty women would be an agreeable and useful thing. They issued a call for a meeting to be held the first Tuesday of every month, in the Women's Building parlors. They called themselves the "University Women's Club" and held meetings, with entertainment and tea following the meetings. A Loan Fund for students was begun. Men were allowed to attend the Spring Meeting, which was an evening reception. Members often invited other women's groups to meet with them, as well as housemothers, chaperones, and wives of local ministers. The Women's League, an organization of women students, was also entertained on occasion.

After World War I, the University of Illinois Women's Club organized their own clubhouse, which was the counterpart of the University Club for faculty men. The name similarities caused confusion, so in 1922 – 23 they decided to rename themselves the "University Women's Tuesday Tea." By 1928, with the influx of new faculty, Mrs. J. H. Reedy proposed adding a special new group, the "Newcomers' Group," which would reach out to newcomers and offer them an opportunity to get to know the people and places here. The separate clubs regularly joined together for activities. A spin-off of the Newcomers' was the "28 Club," whose members were from the years of 1928 – 1929.

The two clubs existed separately until October 1962 when the Tuesday Tea and Newcomers' clubs voted to incorporate as one organization with the new name of "The University of Illinois Women's Club." Within three short years they had a membership of 860 women. With the 70's came more changes. They incorporated as a non-profit organization, affirmative action came knocking and threw open the membership to men, and scholarships were offered to men as well as women. At the end of the 70's the organization was renamed once again, this time to "The Women's Club at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign."

By 1994 – 1995 there were discussions about changing the name to be more gender neutral. At that time there were suggestions of: University League, University Club, Illinois League at UIUC, (Illini) Faculty & Staff Associates, Campus Club, Women's & Men's Club at the University of Illinois, Faculty/Staff Club at the University of Illinois, and the 21st Century Club. In February 1995 they held a vote with three choices, none of which garnered enough votes for a change, so the name remained the same. Those choices were: Women's Club at the University of Illinois, Women's & Men's Club at the University of Illinois, and the Illinois League at UIUC.

On the next page you will find a table of membership numbers over the past few decades. Although we do decline and rebound dramatically, overall there has been steady erosion. Concerted efforts have been made to revitalize the club each time, but the boosts in membership have not been sustained. Today our boost is largely because we have created a couples' membership, which has added 49 partners. Meanwhile, our membership is aging, and we are not getting enough fresh voices and enthusiasm that new and/or younger members infuse a club with.

How do we attract those new voices? Time is so precious in today's fragmented world. Many women work outside the home now. Yet they still need friends; they still need to network in some way. During our membership drives we found that many newcomers to the University and other staff – some of whom had been members – said they would not join a "women's club." They have different needs. Today, people want things on their calendars they can drop in on and stay at if it is interesting and they have the time. Maybe something they can share with a partner. This is our challenge. Are we going to be interesting?

If we change the name of our club, we feel we can attract that second glance, and provide the bridge to building the community that this population needs. And they do need community, the kind of community that we have been providing for over 100 years. At the same time, we can maintain the core of our club – the interest groups, the general meetings, and the scholarship fund.

As a gauge, all of our active Past Presidents support a name change to something non-gender specific, in addition to Mary White, Susan Herman, and Judy Ikenberry. They all recognize that for our club to stay relevant and survive, it must continue to evolve. We have our worthy purposes of scholarships and creating friendships across departmental, collegial, and community lines. Those will never change. But how we go about them will have to, if we wish to remain vital. Let’s honor our Past, celebrate our Present, and embrace our Future wholeheartedly!

Total Members

Year	Members	Year	Members
Mid 60’s	860	1992 – 93	454
1978 – 79	639	1993 – 94	460
1979 – 80	596	1994 – 95	397
1980 – 81	621	1995 – 96	440
1981 – 82	641	1996 – 97	441
1982 – 83	600	1997 – 98	443
1983 – 84	550	1998 – 99	411
1984 – 85	532	1999 – 2000	403
1985 – 86	634	2000 – 01	336
1986 – 87	606	2001 – 02	368
1987 – 88	600	2002 – 03	366
1988 – 89	518	2003 – 04	308
1989 – 90	506	2004 – 05	330
1990 – 91	495	2005 – 06	356
1991 – 92	452	2006 – 07	405

Unavailable Names: University Circle, University Club, Faculty and Staff Social Club
Non-inclusive Names: Faculty and Friends
Confusing Names: University Networking

Name Change Survey

- University Connections** **Yes** **No**
- University Community Club** **Yes** **No**
- Change Existing Name** **Yes** **No**

Name Suggestion _____

Mail to: Ann Long, 4406 Brittany Trail Drive, Champaign, IL 61822
annlong@uiuc.edu by July 5

In Consideration of Our Club's Name

Gay Roberts

In April when I learned that the Women's Club UIUC Board had voted to change the name of our organization, questions immediately came to me. Would we continue to have general meetings? Interest groups? Tours? Scholarships? I was assured that these activities would continue.

Then why change the name? I wondered. The answer given to this query was that the name needed to be more inclusive in order to attract and retain a broader spectrum of members. The average age of our members continues to rise. If we value the continuity of our organization, we need to win the membership and active participation of new younger members. I reasoned that if the club were to offer the same opportunities as before and *after* the name change to *more* interested individuals, we should change the name. I voted for the name change. I felt that this quote from Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* was apt:

*"What's in a name? That which we call a rose
By any other name would smell as sweet."*

Now after subsequent discussion with numerous members who voted against the name change as offered, I believe that there is a sizable number of fellow members who were convinced of the wisdom of a name change, but did (do) not accept the name of University Connections. I strongly urge our current Board to provide an opportunity for us, the membership, to submit club names, perhaps within a one-month span during this summer. At the end of the open period the Board would have the opinions of interested members, could consider those names, choose the most appropriate, and present that name to our membership in the fall.

I conjecture that this procedure would be extremely respectful of our members by enlisting our *active participation* in this weighty matter. Being involved might garner the additional support of a significant number of members and thereby effect a new and forward-looking name. If the name chosen in this very open manner were appreciated by enough members who understand the need for a name change but didn't feel comfortable with the previously offered one, the vote for a new name could be positive.

*"Wisdom is not so much attaining the goal by the initial means as by
adjusting the means in a further reach for success."* – Anonymous

Let's Keep Our Name

Maryly Crutcher

When I joined The Women's Club at the University of Illinois over 30 years ago, I had just moved here from California. Believe me, I had as much of an adjustment to make as women from other countries that have moved to the Midwest. One of my first experiences here was to be a part of the Women's Club. I enthusiastically enjoyed Bridge, Gourmet, and Newcomers' interest groups. Later, I joined many more of the interest groups. What I felt as a newcomer to this environment was the support, camaraderie and society of women just like me. We, in addition, had the pleasure of welcoming and supporting women from other countries.

I support a gender-specific group and am proud to tell others about being a member of the Women's Club. I am not among those that think it is a handicap to call ourselves a "women's club." Many of my friends look forward to being part of a women's club when they leave their full-time jobs. Many women I know have expressed the thought that it is a unique environment to be in social situations that are designed for women. When I had young children, I especially enjoyed going out to my Cosmopolitan group, knowing it was a holiday from the responsibilities and environment of being a wife and mother.

I have happily been a member of groups that include husbands, as part of the Women's Club, such as Bridge, Gourmet or Wine Appreciation. But for me the meaning of being a member of this club was the special sharing and learning in a gender-specific environment. I have made some of my closest women friends as a result of this women's club, and have enjoyed support over the years by these rare and fine women.

As far as the concern that our club is not growing, many groups I belong to have suffered attrition. Women especially are all working full-time jobs and just not available during the day, and often too tired at night. I do not think that smaller membership is a reason to change our name and attempt to draw more members. Many of the interest groups would have a very hard time accommodating the crowd if all the members of those groups all showed up at once.

My experience in our women's club has been that one of our most important successes is helping women from all over the world feel more comfortable in a new environment. I am not hearing from our friends from other countries, nor from my friends in the club, that being called a "women's club" is a negative. I'm glad that for now we can continue to call ourselves the Women's Club.

Women's Club: What's in a Name?

Paula Watson

Did you know that women's clubs lent critical support to many of the most important reforms of the Progressive Era? When I started my own research on the role of women's clubs in the establishment of public libraries, I was surprised both by the magnitude of their contribution and the fact that so little had been written about it. I also found that many historians seemed to discount their accomplishments because they thought of women's clubs as elitist and conservative. The following article is meant to provide a little history and some food for thought regarding the connotations of the name "women's club" – both positive and negative.

On a November afternoon in 1866 twelve ladies met together in Quincy, Illinois for the purpose of reading Lecky's *History of the Rise and Influence and Rationalism in Europe*. They discovered they learned more by reading together and soon decided to form a club called Friends in Council to continue to broaden their horizons. Though they probably did not know it, they were part of what came to be known as the women's club movement. In the years after the Civil War women in towns all over the country were forming reading and study groups. Women had gathered in groups for companionship and charitable activities since the early days of the Republic but in the middle of the nineteenth century they felt an increasing desire to join together to improve their minds and explore new roles in society.

In 1890 these increasingly numerous local groups of women were drawn together into a national organization – the General Federation of Women's Clubs. At first most of the clubs in the GFWC

were devoted to what was called “self-culture,” but leaders recognized early on that a national organization of women could accomplish important political and social goals. The GFWC’s second President, Ellen Henrotin of Chicago, understood the importance of federating local clubs into state organizations so that policies and programs developed by the national leadership could be advanced on a broad front.

One of the earliest items on the GFWC action agenda was the formation of public libraries. In the course of their studies the ladies gathered together collections of books on specific topics. It seemed natural to share these volumes with others. In fact, many clubs were formed with the express purpose of founding a public library. They also developed a strong interest in bringing books to remote places where tax-supported libraries were impractical. Many groups (including the Social Science Club of Champaign) organized traveling library services, sending boxes of books fitted with shelves to isolated places. Clubs across the U.S. circulated hundreds of thousands of books and magazines during the early 1900’s. A great many were also responsible for obtaining Carnegie grants for libraries in their towns. As of 1930 the American Library Association credited women’s clubs with founding 80 per cent of the libraries in the U.S.

Libraries were by no means the only civic improvements women’s clubs accomplished. The ideas for the both the Burnham Athenaeum (later the Champaign Public Library) and Julia F. Burnham Hospital were conceived almost simultaneously by the Social Science Club of Champaign. Nationwide, women worked for compulsory education, the creation of kindergartens, and to promote vocational education. They also campaigned for the eight-hour working day and against child labor, playing a major role in the establishment of the Children’s Bureau and Women’s Bureau of the Department of Labor. The GFWC also claims credit for passage of the Pure Food and Drug Law. As early conservationists clubwomen were instrumental in securing establishment of both the U.S. Forest Service and the National Park Service. What is now Everglades National Park was preserved and maintained by the Florida Federation of Women’s Clubs for many years and clubs have been involved in the creation of many other national and state parks and forests. The General Federation of Women’s Clubs still exists today (see <http://www.gfwc.org>) and continues to work for many of the causes supported in its earliest days.

Response to women’s clubs has not always been positive. Though many men in powerful positions came to value their support, President Grover Cleveland, writing in the *Ladies’ Home Journal* in 1905 warned that the “club habit” was “harmful in a way that directly menaces our homes.” Less portentously, clubs were ridiculed as the “middle-aged women’s university,” where ladies tittle-tattled over the teacups and amused themselves by presenting papers copied from encyclopedias.

Though not necessarily fair or justifiable, a variety of negative associations and stereotypes may still cling to the name “women’s club,” ranging from triviality to exclusivity. While some historians give clubs credit for enlarging the concept of women’s role in the world, others criticize them for failing to triumph over the conventional values of women of leisure. Sensitive to criticisms like Cleveland’s, many clubwomen sought to distance themselves from the suffrage question and the GFWC did not support votes for women until 1914. Though the GFWC motto “Unity in Diversity” proclaimed a vision of women of all ages, religions, races, and educational backgrounds working together for the common good, some writers emphasize that most clubwomen were white, Protestant, middle class matrons. Women’s clubs have also been accused of being “sexist;” i.e., insufficiently resistant to the limitations imposed upon them by men. Though many turn-of-the twentieth century women reveled in the new joys of sisterhood, others longed for the day when the ideal social or service club would consist of men and women working together as equals.

New and Returning Members & Corrections
As of 14 June 2007

Warmbrunn, Ellen

2110 S. Vine St.

Urbana, IL 61801

333-8663

warmbrunn@uif.ullinois.edu

Creason, Nancy

2520 Pinehurst Dr.

Champaign, IL 61822

239-7597

ncreason@shout.net

Are You Feeling Web Savvy?

We are looking for individuals who are interested in working with our webmaster to maintain our website. Do you know php or HTML (and do you know how to code "from scratch" *not* using tools such as FrontPage or Dreamweaver)? Have you used css? Are you familiar with mySql?

If you have any of these skills, and you're interested in helping out a little or a lot, please contact Birgit McCall at 217-356-6654 or bdmccall@uiuc.edu to discuss your skills, interests, and availability.

Tours Survey

Jeanne Mitchell, our new Tours Chair, would like to hear from you about what tours would excite you. Please fill this out and send it to her by July 5, 2007 via e-mail (jeanneqm@sbcglobal.net) or by US mail to Jeanne Mitchell, 707 Phlox Drive, Savoy, IL 61874. She would love to know how she could best serve you and your interests. Thanks!

Tour Survey

Which of the following interest you (please circle all that apply):

Museums Theaters Dinners Wine Tours Shopping Golf

Would you prefer: Overnight Trips Day Trips Local Trips

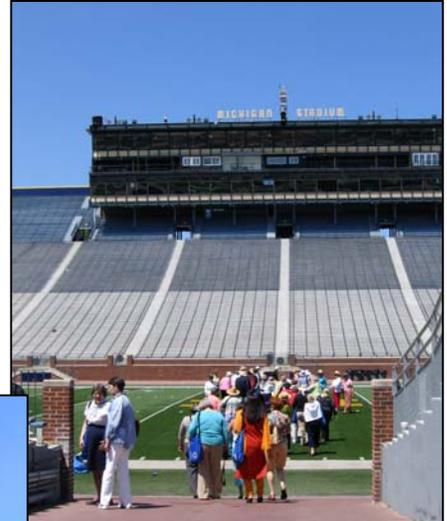
Would you prefer: Weekend Trips Weekday Trips

Please mail to: Jeanne Mitchell, 707 Phlox Drive, Savoy, IL 61874 **by July 5**

Big 10 Women's Organizations Conference

The Big 10 Women's Organizations 12th Biennial Conference was held June 8 – 10 in Ann Arbor, Michigan this year. The University of Michigan wowed everyone with their fabulous "Full Circle and Beyond" theme, focusing on positivity, and finding solutions to mutual problems. Ann Long and Susan Haney represented the University of Illinois, and came away with a lot of great ideas, and even more enthusiasm for this great club and University.

Our club wowed the others with the things we do right, such as a respectable number of scholarships, the endowment fund, the number of men we have as members, weekly e-mails, website, and newsletters. Like almost all the others, however, we do have a declining and aging membership, and we talked a lot about how to reverse that. We also talked about how to get newcomers to remain in the club, once they are no longer newcomers. And publicity: how do we get it??? Other than robbing a bank, of course... It was a fun time, and truly worthwhile. Can't wait to go again!



Entering the "Big House"



Lunch on the 50



Conference attendees and guide



Ann and Susan in the peony test garden

Women's Club List Serve

Do you want to receive timely reminders and announcements of Women's Club events, like the interest group meetings and tours?

If you are not on our e-mail list serve, follow the List Serve link from our webpage:

<http://www.uiucwomensclub.org>.

It's easy and convenient for quick club communications.

Questions? Ask Ann Campbell at 217-352-1487 or annc@prairienet.org.

Newcomers' Group

Our definition of "newcomer" is your first or second year of membership in the Women's Club, not just your first or second year of residence here. Come, meet new people, make some new friends, have fun! We are finalizing our fabulous schedule for the year, and here's our kick-off event:

Reception

Wine and Cheese

7:00 PM Friday, September 7

Ann Long's home, 4406 Brittany Trail Drive, Champaign

Mona Higginbotham, 2nd Vice President Newcomers'

217-344-0532, monaspool@hotmail.com

Nancy Uchtmann, Asst. 2nd Vice President, Newcomers'

217-384-7875, nuchtmann@insightbb.com

Tile Sales at the Farmer's Market

Once again we are selling tiles at the Farmer's Market on select Saturday mornings from 8 – 12 at Lincoln Square. It was decided to pick some advantageous dates this year for the Farmer's Market instead of trying to cover *every* Saturday.

We have two shifts: 8 – 10 AM and 10 – 12 NOON, so we only need two people, plus the 'set-up' person. The dates are:

June 23 August 4, 18
July 7, 14, 21 September 1

It would be great to fill our sign-up sheet ahead of time to eliminate calls each week. Please review your schedule, choose a date that you can help, and contact Julia Schmidt, so she can create a schedule. If you cannot work a shift, but could help set up or take down, then please also let Julia know.

Remember, not only do we help our scholarship effort, but we also increase our visibility and attract new members while there. Please volunteer! *Thanks* so much in advance! Contact Julia at 217-403-1110.

Interest Group Reports Due

Barbara Garlick, 3rd VP for Interest Groups, is reminding all outgoing chairs that you need to send in your annual reports to her by June 30. E-mail it (k9soundsolutions@hughes.net) or send the report via US mail. She will especially need to know who will chair your group for next year. Thanks!

Have a New Interest Group in Mind?

If you have an idea for a new interest group, let Barbara Garlick know by June 30. Contact her by calling 217-762-9088 or by e-mailing her at k9soundsolutions@hughes.net.

Newsletters Needed for Archives!

Vivian Larson is looking for old newsletters to put into our archives. We are sadly lacking a lot of them. Give Vivian a call, and she'll be happy to make arrangements to pick them up. She is also interested in photos you may have of past Women's Club events. You may contact her at 217-367-0800 or v.larson1@insightbb.com.

2007 – 2008 Women's Club Events

Interest Groups Chair Meeting	Wednesday, Aug. 22, 7:00 PM	Barbara Garlick's
Women's Club Networking	Thursday, Sept. 6, 5:00 – 7:00 PM	Krannert Uncorked, Krannert Lobby
Newcomers' Reception	Friday, Sept. 7, 7:00 PM	Ann Long's
Fall Sign Ups	Friday, Sept. 14, 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM	Levis Faculty Center
Campus Tour	Tuesday, Sept. 18, Time TBA	Meeting Location TBA
Fall Reception	Wednesday, Oct. 10, 6:00 PM	Alice Campbell Alumni Center
Holiday Tea	Tuesday, Dec. 11, 4:00 – 6:00 PM	President's House
Murder Mystery	Saturday, Feb. 9, 7:00 PM	Champaign Country Club
Scholarship Brunch	Saturday, March 29, 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM	Heritage Room, ACES Library
Spring Luncheon	Thursday, May 1, 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM	Champaign Country Club



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The Levis Center
919 West Illinois Street
Urbana IL 61801
<http://www.UIUCWomensClub.org>



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In Matte Finish
Yellow or Green
\$35 Each



The Round Barn
In Matte Finish
Blue, Brown, or Oak
\$35 Each

The Perfect Gift!
Beautiful Motawi Tiles

Proceeds to Benefit the
Women's Club Scholarship Fund

Contacts:
Julia Schmidt – 403-1110
Jan Merchen – merchenjan@aol.com