

# Champs Sports Bar & Grill

## *Nearing 20 Years of Tremendous Success*

BY: CHRIS STEPAN

**W**hen Somerset, Wisconsin residents George and Linda Soifakis purchased and opened Champs Sports Bar & Grill in November of 1991 they had no idea how quickly Champs would become a staple of the downtown area of New Richmond, but seemingly overnight, the family owned and run business attracted droves and droves of loyal patrons, who have called Champs home now for nearly 20 years.

Champs has had a long history in New Richmond, as a bar of some type has sat at 220 South Knowles Avenue since the mid 1950's. Champs was originally known as Riley's Bar from its opening in the 50's until it was sold and re-opened in 1964 as Leverty's Bar. The business operated as Leverty's until 1977, when it was renamed the Elk Inn before changing names a year later to Walsheez Bar in 1978. The bar ran as Walsheez until being sold and opened as Champs in November of 1991.

Upon its opening in late 1991, Champs immediately became 'the place to be' for delicious homemade food, a friendly atmosphere, great times and a place to get together to watch the big game, and just as quickly as Champs became successful, the need for more room arose, which led to George and Linda to purchase the building next door and expand Champs, nearly doubling in capacity in June of 1997. With the extra space, Champs continued to flourish until early October 2009, when a devastating fire destroyed most of the business and left the New Richmond patrons without one of their favorite establishments for over six months.

Champs was rebuilt with new state of the art interior and was reopened on June 1st, 2010 with the same great qualities that Champs has always been known for plus some new amenities. Champs now boasts 31 tap beers, a kitchen that stays open until closing providing a full menu with food to go including homemade soups and chili, half pound burgers, grilled chicken sandwiches, steak sandwiches, pizza, salads and countless appetizers. Champs also offers pool tables, foosball, a jukebox, video poker, dart machines, golden tee golf, buck hunter, buzz time trivia and poker along with 24 flat screen televisions, where sports fans can



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be sure to catch their favorite team in action no matter the time of year.

Champs also offers free hall rental for any type of gathering from weddings, bachelor parties, showers, birthdays, graduation parties, reunions etc. Champs also features live bands and comedy shows several times throughout the year, so be sure to check for upcoming events at Champs all year long.

Not only does Champs provide a great place to get together and great food and drink specials, but Champs has always and continues to give back to the community by sponsoring many events in and around New Richmond including golf teams, bowling teams, softball teams, auto racing events amongst other community wide activities.

Plus, just recently on June 1st, 2011, Champs completed and opened their newest attraction – a double-decker roof top patio high above the city. The patio features a full service bar, 2 televisions, a waterfall, capacity for 250 people and two high tech fireplaces, built by the same company that built them for the Minnesota Twins new stadium Target Field – one of the fire pits even appears to be shooting flames out over Main Street! As Champs closes in on its 20 year anniversary this November, be sure to stop in for a bite to eat, a drink with friends, to watch the game or just to wind down and relax on the new rooftop patio.

For more information, you can check out Champs Sports Bar & Grill on facebook or log on to [www.champsnr.com](http://www.champsnr.com) or you can call them at (715) 246-3345.