CTs inventory job duties

In order to protect the integrity of our jobs and to guard against their continued erosion, the CTU Executive Board has launched a project to inventory the duties associated with our positions.

Every CT should already have received a “CTU Job Inventory Project” checklist for her or his particular position. If you have not received yours, please contact the office at 355-1903 or ctupres@msu.edu.

The Board’s intent is to apply the strongest tool that the union has—the participation of the members—to one of the largest problems that we face: a declining membership in the midst of a growing campus.

At one time, CT numbers hovered around 2,500. We are now down to a little over 1,700 even though the University is as large as ever. Did the work disappear? [James A. Stewart]

While the technological revolution may account for some efficiencies, we know that much of our work remains. There are simply fewer of us doing it. In addition to increasing the stress on those of us still here, we believe that many of the duties are being “reassigned” outside our bargaining unit.

Keeping an updated list of duties is a good idea for every CT anyway. Many of us already have such a list, often developed in cooperation with a supervisor. This tool can assist us in defending our jobs and monitoring the work of our bargaining unit as well as aiding our efforts to transfer and promote.

We have had inquiries from members who are uncomfortable leaving their names attached to their returned checklists. Because the checklists are being used to inventory specific jobs, we need to be able to identify the position. If you wish to cross off your name, that is fine. However, without the position number, the checklist is useless. Please leave the position number on the checklist when you return it.

Please do not use the campus mail system to return your checklist. Call your UR, a Board member or the CTU office for a pickup or just mail it through the U.S. Postal Service to 2990 E. Lake Lansing Road, East Lansing, MI 48823.

As always, thanks for participating to help keep our union strong.
CT News

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2990 East Lake Lansing Road
East Lansing, MI 48823-2281
Phone: (517) 355-1903
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Editorial Policy: The CT News is the voice of our union. It is our vehicle for communicating, on a regular basis, the issues that confront us as workers. Through this newsletter we explain union policies, show how dues are spent, and explain the views and actions of the elected leadership for evaluation by the members.

The CT News is the voice of the membership. We welcome articles from members and stories about members.

While contributions are welcome, they should be constructive and contribute positively to the welfare of our union.

We will accept no attacks on any union leader or member. We will accept thoughtful discussion of all related issues in the letters section, and reserve the right to reply to those that seem to reflect a misunderstanding of the union and its policies.

Direct ideas, letters, questions and comments to Cherylee Finney.

CT classifieds

For sale:

◆ Convertible crib: 3 stages, $400 new, asking $175. Sealy crib mattress: $100 new, asking $40. Baby Trend Expedition LE jogging stroller: $200 new, asking $100. Summer toddler boy clothes: 18-24 mo (Gymboree, Gap, Children’s Place and Old Navy). Email shanemey129@yahoo.com.

◆ Antique settee: Wood trim, $100. Girls bike: Turquoise, $20. TV: Fisher 35", in a cabinet, on wheels, $75 or BO. Zenith Camcorder: Needs new battery and view finder, many accessories included, $25. Bench with table: Amish 1 piece, 2 seat, outdoor furniture, well made and heavy duty, $100.

Table with 4 chairs: Lightweight oak, $100. Canaries: Red factor and white male/female. Email millyshiraev@yahoo.com or call 269-823-3739.

◆ Condo: Built in 1991, approx. 1400 sq. ft., located 10 minutes from MSU, off Aurelius Rd., Lansing. 2 bedrooms (both approx 12 x 16); master bedroom has adjoining, large, walk-in closet & bathroom. 2 total full bathrooms, finished basement, stove, dishwasher, refrigerator, gas fireplace, central air, cathedral ceiling, deck, attached garage. Nice, quiet neighborhood, 10 minutes from Meijers, 7 minutes from expressway.

Asking $137,000, if interested, please call 882-2009. [Tracy Montgomery]

◆ 4 MSU football tickets: North end zone, 3rd row. Seats are at the end of the row right where the players come out of the tunnel. My kids love it!! Many games left. 517-712-9881.

◆ Boxes of plus size women’s clothing: $10 per box, 1 box of each of the following—tops, shorts and pants. Each box contains at least 15 pieces of clothing ranging from 1X-2X and is a mixture of casual and dressy.

Bookcases: Five shelf with oak finish, $5; Five shelf with oak finish, bottom two shelves are behind a set of doors, $10. Please contact Keri at 517-749-7375 or kbsmorrison@sbcglobal.net.

◆ Green plaid sofa: Great condition. Easy pickup in East Lansing home. $70. Call 517-333-8060 or email msustats@sbcglobal.net.

◆ 2002 Saturn L300 Series: 118,000 miles, 26 mpg, perfect shape, very well maintained, moon roof, all the buttons, burglar alarm, good tires, 4 dr. Car has been wonderful, hate to sell, moving. Call any time at 432-6147 or 316-6651.


◆ Union rug loom: Two harness, excellent condition, 36", all the extra’s (shuttle, warp, etc.) included in price. $500 or BO. Call 517-712-4560

Services:

◆ Evening, Overnight, and Weekend Babysitter Available: Mom with “empty nest” syndrome is available to babysit at night (and overnight) and on the weekends. If you need to get away for a romantic weekend or just need some downtime, I would love to babysit for you. I have raised 3 children of my own and miss having them around! If you are tired of not being

Classifieds continued on next page
President's corner

CTU: A partner in change

By Deb Bittner

Change is the buzzword in several MSU units these days, and we all know that change can be scary.

It is especially scary when we feel we have no control, that we are individually at the mercy of whatever new-fangled management theory or restructuring scheme that someone has dreamed up or read in a book.

Lucky for us, we have a strong Contract and an active union. None of us need feel we are alone in facing any workplace problems.

As long as our Contract is not violated, management can entertain all sorts of whims and reorganizations. We can't stop it, nor would we want to. In fact, we welcome change that leads to a better University and workplace.

However, it is our job to make sure our rights are not minimized or overlooked during these changes. We are the ones who must insist on the priority of our interests and rights.

Some areas undergoing reorganization right now are in computer services, housing and development. Recently, some of the members from these areas and others around campus have been meeting with their URs, Contract Administrators and Board members, including myself.

We have been able to share information with groups and individuals about what to watch for and how to protect our interests during these reorganizations.

In the course of conversation, we have also learned of some long-term practices that are in direct violation of our Contract, an indication that we need to be talking with each other on a more regular basis.

For example, we have learned that some departments have practices that arbitrarily decide when a CT can move up the classification ranks. There is no such “rule.” If you are doing the work, you deserve to be properly classified. Period.

We have also learned that some CTs cannot take vacations unless their coworkers approve the time away or agree to cover the work. Not appropriate. The supervisor and the CT work out vacation arrangements and the supervisor works with the CT to get the work covered. [Charlene Wagner]

We have also learned that there is a lot of misinformation out in the departments, especially in what is being said that the “Union will or will not allow.”

By far, the biggest lesson reinforced by these conversations is that by working together—by sharing information—this is how we keep the union strong. The CTs involved really stepped up to help other CTs across department lines and across campus. We are even more aware that we are support group for each other. By talking to each other, we share the burdens of work. We point out the “right” workplace rules. We share ideas on how to reduce workplace and workload stress. It makes a difference in how we see our jobs and do our jobs.

So remember, if you have questions about changes in your workplace, or just general questions about how things are organized, do not hesitate to contact your UR or the CTU office. Start with your best advocates, the CTs in the CTU.

Got a bad boss?

Fifteen million workers report they have bad bosses, and more than 50 million say they feel pressured to stay with a bad boss because of the economy today, according to a recent poll conducted by Lake Research Partners for Working America.

To give workers a place to vent about their bad boss experiences, Working America is sponsoring a bad boss contest. To enter and/or vote for posted stories, go to www.workingamerica.org/badboss. Submissions are published anonymously.

The grand prize winner receives a weeklong condo vacation and $1,000 toward airfare. [Linda Driscoll]

Classifieds

continued from previous page

able to go away without worrying about the care your child is getting, please call me! I live close to Laingsburg, Bath, DeWitt, St. Johns, Ovid, and North Lansing. Reasonable, reliable and trustworthy! Please call Kelly at 517-819-7904.

◆ Power washing, painting, deck refinishing: Reasonable rates!! Please call Brian at 709-3689 and leave a message.

FREE: Advertise to your colleagues in the CT News. Contact Cheryllee Finney at ctnews@msu.edu. The CT News accepts ads from CTU members on items for sale and/or services provided by CTU members and/or their household family members.
Above and below: Both kids and adults participated in the CTU cake walk in order to win delicious, donated baked goods to take home.

Member Audrey Smith brought her niece Ariann and her goddaughter Serena, both of whom especially enjoyed the hotdogs.

UR Janet Roe-Darden waits for a hotdog from Contract Administrator (and grill chef) Dan McNeil.

Samantha Stewart starts an art project using crayons she won in one of the contests.

Sparty welcomed everyone to the festivities.

Hunter McBee competes for toys in the bowling game.
Letters

Editor’s note: Our article on parking in the June CT News generated responses from several members. We share five of them here and expect to include more in a future issue.

Although we are angry about the recent increase in parking rates, please remember that the CTs answering the phones at the MSU Department of Police and Public Safety do not set the parking rates, and they are in the same boat as the rest of us. Any MSU employees wishing to complain to DPPS about parking are encouraged to politely ask to have their concerns shared with the appropriate personnel.

Enforce parking regulations

Just to add this note to your parking issue: Neither entrance to the gated lot in front of East Fee Hall has had a gate in at least four months. We have called DPPS on numerous occasions. They are “working on it.” Faculty and staff that leave during the regular school year for lunch or business have absolutely no place to park when they return. Most of the spaces are occupied by student cars.

I know the university says our parking permits only say we can park on campus not that there are spaces (what we are told when we call in). However, students shouldn’t be parking there at all.

—Judy James

No part-time parking

I so appreciate your article in the latest edition of the CT News as this is a very stressful subject for me personally.

I work at the Vet Clinic and am only part-time. By the time I get to work at 10 there are no spaces in the parking lot closest to the building. Therefore, I have to park across the street in the Wharton Center ramp. It’s not the walk I mind but the fee as I’m paying as much as a full-time person who not only makes more than I do but also gets a spot in the parking lot. Since I’m at work a lot less hours than a full-time person, I question why the fees aren’t charged according to the number of hours I’m here. I don’t get the same vacation or personal time as a full-time employee so why do I have to pay the same amount for parking?

This puts a huge strain on my budget, especially when you include the union dues and required retirement dollars that come out of every paycheck.

I understand that nothing can be done about the way DPPS charges us all the same for parking, but I just appreciate this issue being addressed. I think it’s insane how expensive it is to park. Thanks.

—Sherye Robitaille
Large Animal Clinical Sciences

Carpooling works

Dear President Bittner and Fellow CT’s:

I am very happy to see the Unions taking issue with the University over the increase in parking fees! As of May, I, for one, am saving money by carpooling with a fellow CT who works across the street and happens to live just two blocks from me. I’m very proud to say that we found each other through the CT News!! We’ll each save $180 this fiscal year in parking fees alone. Our gas costs will be cut in half.

Back to the topic of rising parking rates, I had an excellent discussion with my boss who worked at Dartmouth College before coming to MSU four years ago. Apparently, Dartmouth has some very innovative ideas. For example, they allow every employee who doesn’t pay to park on campus, four free parking days per month. Their incentive program is an excellent role model for any university wishing to be green! See the site: http://www.dartmouth.edu/~fom/services/parking/incentives/tdm.html.

What I’d tell MSU is that we don’t need more parking ramps. Rather, we need more options available to drive less frequently and park more creatively. Some teamwork with CATS could make this a reality and truly make us put our money where our mouth is and BE GREEN.

As it is now, MSU is only offering lip service to such a concept.

Rising parking costs are only one indication of a mixed message that is growing more and more unacceptable for the entire MSU Community, in my opinion. Please add my voice to the Unions’ outcry. Please count me among those willing to help work to make us truly GREEN.

Sincerely,

Nora Carr
MSU Libraries

Offer realistic options

I would like to comment on the ridiculous parking fee rates and lend my voice to the outcry. I commute 45 minutes to work each way so the increase in gas (which has caused groceries to skyrocket as well) has really made it difficult for me. Topping the situation off with a huge parking increase makes my stretched paycheck even smaller.

Is the university offering a cost-of-living raise to help us meet our bills? No. They will just raise tuition (I have two college students and do not get the tuition break since I have only been back at MSU for four years), which will stretch me even further.

I would highly consider parking in the commuter lot, but with the construction it would be nearly impossible to get to work in any kind of a timely fashion. So, they have us hostage. If we want to come to work and don’t live close enough to walk or bike in.

Letters continued on next page
Master gardener class

Submitted by CT Sharon Conley

EAST LANSING—The Master Gardener state office is sponsoring a Master Gardener Volunteer training program September 3 through November 19 from 8:30 a.m. to noon at the Plant and Soil Sciences Building on the Michigan State University (MSU) campus.

Each course session consists of a two-hour lecture with an additional one-hour hands-on experience. Trainees will use MSU greenhouses and laboratories to complement the lectures covering a variety of horticulture topics. Instructors are MSU professionals and other horticulture experts.

The Michigan Master Gardener Volunteer Program is a horticulture education and volunteer leader training program. Participants who complete the educational series must complete 40 hours of volunteer service over the course of one year to become certified Master Gardener Volunteers.

Students in the course receive the Master Gardener manual, which consists of more than 800 pages of research-based information.

The $250 registration fee is due by August 11. Class size is limited. For an application, visit web1.msue.msu.edu/mastergardener/Counties/mg_MSU.htm, call 517-355-5191, ext. 1408, or email mg@msu.edu.

Completed applications with payment may be mailed to the Master Gardener Program, A422 Plant and Soil Sciences Bldg., Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824-1325, or faxed to 517-355-0188.

Letters

continued from previous page

we have to pay their parking fees. I asked about parking in lot 91, which is a five minute walk for me to work, and they refused to let me park there, saying it is a storage lot for students. The buses don’t run in the summer either, so that makes it very difficult as well.

—Lynn Ball
Surgical Oncology Unit

Glad the union’s on the job

I knew I wasn’t the only CT shocked by what I saw when I purchased my new parking permit, but obviously there are many.

It is very reassuring to me to know that you are addressing the parking fees. I normally accept whatever comes my way with a positive attitude and do not like making waves. However, how much does the University think that we can give up in wages (decreased wages because of increasing expenses) and continue to afford to be here?

I live several miles from campus and between the rising costs at the fuel pump and the continually rising prices at the grocery store, I am becoming very concerned that I cannot afford to commute to my job each day. I think it is time that we all make our voices heard and pray that it will make a difference.

I feel that the University’s ultimate goal is to force us to use the commuter buses and not park on campus at all. I have certainly considered trying to car pool from my home town to campus, which would help me with my budget for gas, but my concern there is what if there is an emergency at home? What if I become ill and need to go to the doctor, hospital or home? When you reach a certain age you find that you do have several appointments a month and that would make it difficult to share a ride with others. Perhaps it will become a real luxury to be able to continue to drive independently (and we all need to look at ways we can cut down and save because of course it will impact our environment in a positive way if there are fewer cars on the road and fewer emissions), but I really do not want to be forced to do it.

Please keep us informed of the outcome of your meetings. Thank you for being there for us and for being a voice that the University listens to and respects.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Baker
Upward Bound

Quote: “The way to honor work, which we all claim to do, is first of all to pay for it.”
—Barbara Ehrenreich
Leadership duties

The terms of our vice president, secretary, and four directors will be up this October. We will also need to fill a position on the Audit Committee.

To help us decide who to support, or whether or not to run, it’s important to know the duties of the position.

The duties of officers on the Executive Board are laid out in Article V of the Constitution (www.msu.edu/user/ctumsu/ctu.htm or call the office at 355-1903 if you don’t have internet access).

In order to fulfill those duties, elected officials are expected to take on many responsibilities. Those expectations, along with the duties of Audit Committee members, are detailed on this page.

CTU Elections Committee

seeks new members to conduct and supervise the October 28, 2008 election

Contact Deb Bittner at 355-1903.

Directors and officers

In order to fulfill the Constitutionally mandated responsibilities of any position on the CTU Executive Board, those elected are expected to:
• carry out and honor the oath of office;
• commit the time required to serve the Union including some day, evening or weekend hours;
• support unionism;
• uphold the Union mission and direction as set by the Executive Board and the CTU Constitution;
• make decisions and create policy;
• use input/data from membership, experts, and staff when time permits;
• serve on either the Grievance, Appeals and Trials or Finance Committee;
• represent the CTU at all times;
• attend some labor functions as a CTU representative;
• attend Board meetings, UR meetings, regular and special membership meetings (attendance mandatory);
• when possible, work in conjunction with URs on membership issues;
• keep URs informed and in the loop;
• be able to work as part of a group of people;
• honor issues of confidentiality;
• control rumors/misperceptions.

Vice President

The Vice President of the CTU is expected to fulfill all of the responsibilities listed for Directors and officers. In order to fulfill the Constitutionally mandated responsibilities of the Office, the Vice President also is expected to:
• serve as the Executive Board liaison to the Union Representatives and the Union Representative Coordinating Committee;
• substitute for the President, as necessary;
• chair the Grievance Appeals and Trials Committee;
• serve as authorized signatory of the Union;
• use 25% released time from MSU position in order to fulfill duties.

Audit Committee

This description of the Audit Committee and the duties of its members is taken from Article VI of the Constitution:
• The Audit Committee shall consist of three members. They shall be elected for staggered three-year terms with said election held at the same time and under the same rules as apply to the Executive Board. Members of the Audit Committee may not be members of the Executive Board.
• The Audit Committee shall make or cause to be made at least a yearly audit of the Union’s finances and shall report to the membership the result of such audit.
• The Audit Committee shall monitor normal operating expenses and shall serve as an independent communications channel between the members of the Union and the custodians of the Contingency Fund for verification of withdrawals from that fund.

Secretary

The Secretary of the CTU is expected to fulfill all responsibilities listed for Directors and officers. In order to fulfill the Constitutionally mandated responsibilities of the Office, the Secretary also is expected to:
• oversee maintenance of the current membership list;
• stay informed of new members, including information they receive from the Union;
• conduct New Member Orientations;
• take minutes at Board and membership meetings.
Breaks: brought to you by your union!

The Union that brought you work breaks now brings the coffee and doughnuts right to your office.

Recent winners of the Solidarity Committee’s coffee and doughnuts drawing are:

- **Pamela Martinez**, James Madison, March
- **Jackie Botsford**, Medicine, April
- **Liz Owen**, Veterinary Teaching Hospital, April Membership Meeting
- **Carolyn Schein**, Engineering

Submit your name to win a union coffee break with doughnuts from the Solidarity Committee. Contact Chairperson Lois Siefring at 353-4911 or lois.siefring@hc.msu.edu.

Library, May

**Peggy Donahue**, School of Criminal Justice, June

**Juli Kerr**, Forestry, June Special Membership Meeting,

**Rosario Garcia**, Human Resources, July

Calendar

**July 29** Summer Membership Meeting and Ice Cream Social. Erickson Kiva. Doors open at 5 pm for socializing. Meeting starts at 5:20. Agenda includes a discussion of the job inventory project and collection of checklists, finances member issues, and door prizes.

**August 5** (First and third Tuesday of each month), CTU Executive Board Meeting, 5:15 pm, C-T Union Hall. All members welcome.

**August 9** (Second Saturday of every month), CTU Game night, 7–11 pm, C-T Union Hall. This is an adults-only evening. No alcohol.

**August 15** Deadline to submit materials for September 2008 issue of the *CT News*. [Lori Ann Phelps]

**August 19** (First and third Tuesday of each month), CTU Executive Board Meeting, 5:15 pm, C-T Union Hall. All members welcome.

**UR district news**

**District 30** (Campbell, Central School, Gilchrist, Landon, Mayo, Human Ecology, Union, Williams, Yakeley, Wills House): **Mary Austin** has resigned from her UR position. We thank her for her many years of service and wish her all the best.

The following CTs have been reappointed Union Representatives:

- **District 17** (Grounds, Physical Plant, Wilson, Holden, Case, Wonders, Duffy Daugherty Football Building): **Victoria Tryban** can be reached at 355-7590 or tryban@msu.edu.
- **District 37** (Clinical Center [A-Wing]): Reach **Kim Baker** at 432-7055 or bakerk@msu.edu.

We have 13 districts without a UR. Interested in becoming a UR? Know of a coworker who would make a great UR? For more information, contact URCC Chairperson Colleen Drake (432-6123 x162 or drakec@msu.edu) or Vice President Nancy Gray (353-8632 or grayn@msu.edu).