April 2009 pay raise

The next round of general pay increases will be 1.75% for members of the nine bargaining units covered by the Health Care Agreement.

Each of the unions has a different contract cycle and each will get the 1.75% raise at a different time.

CTs will receive the increase in April 2009. (CTs who have not reached the maximum of their pay grades will continue to receive an additional wage progression of 3% per year.)

Raise continued on p. 7

July 29, 2008—Megan Bittner hands an ice cream treat to CT Angela Zamora before the Membership Meeting and Ice Cream Social. Related story on page 8.

Nominations notice
Clerical Technical Union of Michigan State University

Nominations for the offices of Vice President, Secretary, four (4) Directors and a single member of the Audit Committee will be accepted.

The Vice President, Secretary and Directors will be elected to serve a term of approximately two (2) years, specifically, from their date of installation through the installation date of their replacements elected in the union’s regularly scheduled election to be conducted in October 2010.

The person elected to the one open position on the Audit Committee will serve a term of approximately three (3) years, until the regularly scheduled election to be conducted in October 2011.

Written nominations will be accepted by the Election Committee or their designees, including CTU Office Secretary Barb Harris, at the CTU office before 5 p.m. on September 9, 2008.

A nominations meeting will be held on September 9, 2008, at 5:30 p.m. at the CTU office, 2990 E. Lake Lansing Road, East Lansing, Michigan 48823. Nominations can also be made from the floor of the nominations meeting if the nominee is in attendance. The nomination period will close upon the conclusion of the nominations meeting, at 6:30 p.m.

In order to make a nomination, a member must be in good standing. Nominees have to have completed their probationary period and be in good standing at the close of the nominations period. Self nominations are permitted; seconds are not required. No member shall be allowed to accept the nomination for more than one position. Every nominee will be required to indicate in writing, no later than the conclusion of the nomination period, whether s/he accepts or declines a specific nomination. The names of nominees who fail to accept their nominations will not appear on the ballot.

The Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act of 1959, as Amended, requires that unions use members’ home addresses during the course of the election process. Members should ensure that their most recent home address is on file with the union. Any recent changes of address should be submitted as soon as possible.
CT News

Clerical-Technical Union of Michigan State University
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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 Cheryllee Finney.

CT Classifieds

For sale:
◆ Garden of Faith cemetery plots:
East Lawn Memory Gardens, lot #69, block D, spaces 3&4, sec 5. Valued at $1,395 (parents no longer want them), selling for $1,500 for both. 69D 1, 2 plots are still open but you would have to contact East Lawn directly if you want more than 2 plots. Call Shawna at 517-391-8500 (cell).


◆ Sofa sleeper: Queen size with two matching throw pillows. Excellent condition. Asking $250. Call 517-927-2680 for more information or to request pictures.

For rent:
◆ Tent Event Rentals: Tent, table, chair rental; large BBQ grill on trailer. Call 517-819-2659.

◆ House: Clean 2 bedroom ranch, close to campus, central air, fireplace, 1 car garage. 10 minutes away from campus. $950/month plus utilities. Please contact Nicole at gonzales3330@comcast.net or 517-819-2103.

Services:

◆ Wedding Photography: Weddings at reasonable prices. Please contact LaClair Photography at 517-203-1103 for more details.

◆ Nadiz Tailoring and Costume, LLC is a new shop opened by my spouse, Ken Darden, a tailor with many years of experience. The new shop is on 6810 S. Cedar, Suite B (just north of the Holiday Inn, across from Lowe’s and Speedway), Lansing, 517-694-0696. Give Ken a call, tell him you are a CT and get 10% discount off your first order. Call Janet at 487-6139 if you need more information.

Wanted:
◆ Anyone interested in learning more about a whole plant food diet. Benefits our bodies, our animals and our planet. Eat all you want; lose weight; feel great. Email mle@msu.edu for more information.

◆ Silver trumpet: For use by high school senior. Call 896-666-2093.

Free:
◆ Affectionate cat needs good home. Tiger gray and white male found near the highway needs an owner. Very loving, perfect with the litter box, but is not yet neutered. Contact Andy at 517-333-6359 days or 517-783-5573 evenings and weekends.

◆ Advertise to your colleagues in the CT News. Contact Cheryllee Finney at ctunews@msu.edu. We accept ads from CTU members on items for sale and/or services provided by CTU members and/or their household family members.

General Membership Meetings in 2007
The final 2008 Membership Meeting will be held in Erickson Kiva at 5:15 p.m. on October 29. Attend to help make decisions about the Union, ask questions and receive updates about Union activities.

Executive Board Meetings
1st & 3rd Tuesdays at 5:15
CTU Office
All members welcome.
Labor day history

By Deb Bittner

Since this newsletter edition will be arriving at your workstation around Labor Day, I thought that maybe you would be interested in how Labor Day came about and what it means.

Sure, most of us know that we are fortunate that those who came before us negotiated this paid holiday. We know that it has something to do with work and that the holiday is the first Monday in September and gives us our last three-day weekend until Thanksgiving! Almost all of us see it as the day that signals summer fun has ended.

But what do we really know about the history of Labor Day?

“Labor Day differs in every essential way from the other holidays of the year in any country,” said Samuel Gompers, founder and longtime president of the American Federation of Labor. “Labor Day . . . is devoted to no man, living or dead, to no sect, race, or nation.”

He called it “the day for which the toilers in past centuries looked forward, when their rights and their wrongs would be discussed . . . that the workers of our day may not only lay down their tools of labor for a holiday, but upon which they may touch shoulders in marching phalanx and feel the stronger for it.”

Although the language is less lofty, the U.S. Department of Labor agrees that “Labor Day is a creation of the labor movement and is dedicated to the social and economic achievements of American workers. It constitutes a yearly national tribute to the contributions workers have made to the strength, prosperity, and well-being of our country.”

The first Labor Day
The first Labor Day celebration, organized by the Central Labor Union to place in New York City on Tuesday September 5, 1882.

In 1884 the first Monday in September was selected as the holiday, as origin proposed, and the Central Labor Union urged similar organizations in other cities to follow the example of New York and celebrate a “working-men’s holiday” on that date. The idea spread with the growth of labor organizations, and in 1885 Labor Day was celebrated in many industrial centers of the country.

By 1894, 29 states had enacted Labor Day legislation. [Carmen Elliott]

At about the same time, a strike by the American Railway Union, led by Eugene V. Debs, was violently repressed by order of President Grover Cleveland, resulting in the death of two workers, the imprisonment of Debs, the breaking of the union, and a considerable backlash against the government’s heavy handed tactics.

Many saw it as an election-year attempt to appease labor when, on June 28, 1894, Congress passed an act making the first Monday in September of each year a legal holiday in the District of Columbia and the territories.

A nationwide holiday
The first proposal for the holiday described it as a street parade to exhibit “the strength and esprit de corps of the trade and labor organizations” of the community, followed by a festival for the recreation and amusement of the workers and their families.

This was the way Labor Day was originally celebrated. The speeches of prominent men and women came later, as the economic and civic significance of the holiday was emphasized. Still later, in 1909, the American Federation of Labor declared the Sunday preceding Labor Day to be Labor Sunday and dedicated it to the spiritual and educational aspects of the labor movement.

I am particularly fond of this quote that I found on the Department of Labor’s website: “The vital force of labor added materially to the highest standard of living and the greatest production the world has ever known and has brought us closer to the realization of our traditional ideals of economic and political democracy. It is appropriate, therefore, that the nation pay tribute on Labor Day to the creator of so much of the nation’s strength, freedom, and leadership—the American worker.”

As we enjoy our last summer holiday, let’s remind ourselves of all we have achieved as part of the labor movement and be proud to be an American worker. Let’s also be extra kind to the workers we meet who assist us in the grocery or convenience store, gas station, shopping center, or wherever we stop as we are out and about on Monday, September 1. Happy Labor Day to you and your families!
**Board actions**

**April—June 2008**

The following CTU Executive Board discussions took place April through June 2008. All expenditure decisions are included, but the list does not represent meetings in their entirety. CTUs can receive copies of complete minutes through the mail by contacting the CTU office at 355-1903.

**April 1**

Heard CTU member’s request for donation for educational class trip by Dansville Middle School students to Washington, D.C. Approved donation of $100.

Purchased three tickets, at $35 each, for the annual César Chávez Dinner at the Lansing Center.

Agreed to request a transfer of $200,000 from the Contingency Fund to Operations at the April 28, 2008 Membership Meeting.

**April 15**

Received reports from those attending the Labor and Employment Relations Association (LERA) Luncheon, Labor Notes Conference, Union Label Breakfast Fundraiser and Martin Luther King, Jr.’s Last Stand presentation.

Approved the 2008 budget for presentation to the membership.

Agreed to send the CTU president and a contract administrator to the Labor Arbitration Seminar in Chicago at the cost of $700 each plus mileage, lodging, parking and food.

Agreed to send two people to the 13th Annual Doug Griffith Community Service Award Breakfast for $25 each.

Decided to rent an updated postage meter at a cost of $193 per quarter.

Agreed to spend up to $100 on Administrative Assistants Appreciation Day gifts for the organized staff at CTU.

**May 6**

Heard CTU member’s request for support for her daughter’s family. The Dewitt community has undertaken a project to provide the family with handicap accessible housing. Approved donation of a $50 item for a silent auction and purchase of two $10 dinner tickets.

Received updates on upcoming events: union training, special membership meeting, new member orientation, solidarity picnic.

Agreed to send up to three people, at a cost of $30 per person, to the Michigan Policy Summit.

Agreed to cover the $75 registration fee plus lodging, meals and mileage for a member to attend the Michigan State AFL-CIO Health and Safety Conference.

Donated $100 for the PAC-MAC spelling bee.

Decided to not help sponsor International Union of Operating Engineers 13th Annual Golf outing.

Decided to not donate to the International Union of Labor Rights Forum.

Received reports on activities of the Coalition of Labor Organizations at MSU (CLO).

**May 20**

Received reports on UR conference, LERA luncheon, upcoming picnic, Michigan Policy Summit, Union Trade Show.

Discussed options for fixing the leaking basement at the C-T Union Hall. [Sarah Grillo]

Announced the new president of the Administrative Professionals Association, Maury Koffman.

Agreed to purchase a $150 advertising spot on WKAR-TV’s “Whatever Happened to Organized Labor,” part of the “Michigan at Risk” series. The ad reads: “Support for WKAR is provided by the Clerical-Technical Union of MSU, working to advance and protect the rights of all people who work in our community. We believe unions are the vehicles by which ordinary people can achieve extraordinary things!”

**June 3**

Agreed to reimburse Solidarity Chair for mileage involved in delivering doughnuts and coffee on a yearly basis.

**June 17**

Received reports on union training, picnic, membership meeting, CLO.
August 2008. Nomination notice distributed through the CT News.


September 9. Deadline of 5 p.m. for written nominations. Written nominations should be submitted to the CTU office secretary or the Elections Committee chairs. That night, nominations will be accepted from the floor during a Nominations Meeting at the CTU office from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. The nominations period will close upon the conclusion of the meeting. Candidates will be given an opportunity to speak at this meeting. Upon submission of their nominations, candidates will be given a list of rules and guidelines for the election.

September 16. Deadline of 5 p.m. for candidates to submit a campaign statement/biography (up to 500 words, electronic format preferred) to the CTU office secretary for publication in the CT News. Photo arrangements must also be made at this time by contacting Cheryl Lee Finney at 432-9580 or ctnews@msu.edu.

September 24–October 24. The membership list will be available for inspection by the candidates between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Arrangements to inspect the membership list must be made by contacting a member of the Elections Committee or the CTU office secretary. [Careen Loos]

October 3. Election notice will be mailed to the last known home address of all union members.

October 3–20. Request absentee ballots from Barb Harris (355-1903, ctstaff@msu.edu) by 5 p.m. on October 20.

October 13. Approximate publication date for the special elections edition of the CT News. Candidate forums begin.

October 27. Absentee ballots need to be at the P.O. box by the end of the day.

October 28. Polling from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Absentee ballots will be retrieved from the P.O. box at 4 p.m. Official vote count begins at 6 p.m.

October 29. Officers installed at the Membership Meeting.

November 11. Deadline for receipt of election protests.

November. If a runoff election is required, it will take place November 18. No absentee ballots will be available in the case of a runoff election.

Questions for the candidates?
Submit your questions to the Elections Committee before September 9. The Committee will review the questions and give the candidates a chance to respond. The questions and answers will then be posted on our web site.

Elections committee

We still need members to come forward to serve on the Elections Committee. If you are interested, contact President Deb Bittner at ctupres@msu.edu or 355-1903.

Once we have a committee, we will publish the chairpersons’ names on our website at msu.edu/~ctumsu and in the September issue of CT News.
Letters

Commuting frustrations
This letter is in response to the June issue of the CT News concerning the skyrocketing increase in campus parking fees.

I recently started a carpool from Howell and want to share my frustration with the system.

Thanks to CATA’s Clean Commute program, which I highly recommend, I was able to start a carpool with other drivers from my area. Unfortunately, one of the drivers couldn’t join us because the way MSU sets up its fees for carpooling made it unfeasible.

For carpooling, MSU charges the usual yearly rate (currently $426) plus $60 for each additional vehicle used in the pool, up to five. The total fee is divided amongst the carpoolers.

Only one vehicle in the pool is allowed on campus at a time. Members share a “validator” depending on who drives in. Only one free day of parking per calendar month is allowed to riders who find it necessary to drive separately. After that, they pay for a $6 daily visitor permit as needed.

In our case, two days out of the week one person needed to drive separately because he instructs a class on those nights. Visitor passes would quickly add up, to roughly $48 per month—on top of the carpooling fee.

It doesn’t make any kind of sense to charge the extra parking fee. What exactly does the $60 dollars provide for each additional vehicle?

Michigan State University promotes recycling and reducing energy use. Yet it seems as if we are being discouraged from carpooling so the University can continue to get their funding for construction and maintenance.

This is very discouraging when people are trying to conserve energy and save on the high cost of gas. Carpooling also gives us cleaner air, keeps vehicles off the roads, and opens more parking spaces, not to mention the decrease in wear and tear on our vehicles. [Daniel Drolett]

Although carpoolers make sacrifices to conserve, we don’t get the benefit of using electronic payroll deduction or pretax dollars because the system isn’t set up for it. To our relief, we were finally told that we could pay monthly or quarterly instead of by the year.

I’d like to mention that CATA’s Clean Commute also offers rental car vouchers for anyone in a carpool needing an unexpected ride home, and I have to commend Cathleen Edgerly, the Coordinator there for her proficiency in the service we received.

It seems to me that new regulations need to be established at MSU as the energy crisis forces more people to look to carpooling. We shouldn’t be discouraged from doing so.

— Theresa Iadipaolo  
Crop and Soil Sciences

Union response to parking woes
Regarding the article about the extreme rise in the cost of parking on campus for employees, it is about time that the workers speak up against this unreasonable “taxation” on our salaries.

Several years ago, I brought this issue up in a CT Union membership meeting. The inquiry was made in a non-confrontational manner. I inquired on how it came about that employees were required to pay for their parking here on campus, and the fact that the parking permit doesn’t guarantee a parking space within a reasonable location of our offices.

The response I was given was that it is a privilege to be employed by MSU and paying for our parking is not out of line . . . and this was said with a slight edge of indignation.

Because of the ongoing decrease of parking space on campus in the past ten years, it is exasperating to think that you will have to give up your parking space to go to a doctor’s appointment, or think about running an errand during your lunch hour. I know of many CTs who now schedule doctor appointments in the afternoon, so that they do not have to contend with trying to find a parking place when returning to work afterwards, not to mention trying to attend meetings or workshops held on the other side of campus from where you work.

The atmosphere has become one of confinement. You feel as though once you arrive to work you’re confined for nine hours and released to be free again at the end of the day.

In years past, I remember how co-workers would plan an off-campus luncheon several times a year. This was good for morale and for the development of comradery and teamwork. That really doesn’t exist much anymore.

Not only is the cost for parking taking a toll on any cost of living we may receive, this cost, in addition to gas...
Did you know?

Michigan State University maintains a listing of businesses that offer discounts to employees. For employee discounts on oil changes, cars, phones, travel, etc., go to www.hr.msu.edu/HRsite/Recognition/RewRec/perks.htm.

Board
continued from p. 4

Sweat-Free Michigan campaign, Lansing Project Homeless Connect, Michigan AFL-CIO Health and Safety Conference, advertising our rental space, CTU secretary’s schedule.

Agreed to transfer $60,000 from operating savings to checking.

Discussed some of the reorganizations in campus units.

December 6, 2007
(conference call)

[Editor’s note: The December 6 minutes were inadvertently omitted from an earlier reporting on Executive Board decisions that covered December 2007.]

Decided to buy a $60 quarter-page ad for the 2008 Greater Lansing Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission program booklet

Donated $50 to the United Way on behalf of CTU as part of the local labor movement.

Letters
continued from previous page

prices alone, more than exceeds that increase. For the most part, I am thankful for what benefits I do have, but have always felt that the cost of parking on campus was very much out of line.

—Debra Gleason, Student Life

Flex schedules
Regarding the effect of gasoline prices on CTU members getting to work. I have personally changed my schedule to four days per week, 10 hours per day. Another person in our department is temporarily working under this arrangement, and I have heard of other departments in our college doing the same thing.

Our director/supervisor, Dr. Jane Briggs-Bunting, is very flexible and concerned about this issue also and appears to be open to any suggestions.

—Linda Hartwig, Journalism

Chemical sensitivity
It is vitally important that we remember to be attentive to the types and amounts of perfumes/colognes that we wear in the work place and the potential effect that it may have on our co-workers.

On July 23 I was exposed to a high level of perfume substance that I am extremely allergic to. This resulted in an extreme asthmatic reaction which resulted in my being hospitalized, and as of August 21, I am still not able to return to work. This is something that I would never want to occur with anyone in the future. We need to be mindful that it is not just cleaning/construction or lab type fumes that can cause this type of an issue.

My heartfelt thanks to my union family members who have contacted me with their well wishes and support! It truly is appreciated. Family is everything!

I look forward to being back on track and able to return to work quickly!

—Willie Paulsen, MSU Health Team

Raise
continued from p. 1

This increase is the result of an agreement between the Coalition of Labor Organizations and the MSU Administration that links increases in the costs of health care benefits to raises. This arrangement was first approved by the members of all MSU unions in 2002 and most recently ratified in 2005.

Because the agreement ties wages to health care, we are also guaranteed a fully funded health care plan while the agreement is in effect.

The CTU will continue to receive raises based on the formula laid out in the current MSU/Coalition Health Care Agreement through April 2010.

Current pay ranges can be seen on the Human Resources web site at www.hr.msu.edu/HRsite/Recognition/Pay/Staff/.

See the current health care agreement between the Coalition and MSU at www.hr.msu.edu/HRsite/Documents/Staff/Contracts/2002+health.htm.
Calendar

Sept. 1 Labor Day Holiday.

Sept. 9 Deadline for nominations to the CTU Executive Board and Audit Committee. See page 5 for a detailed elections schedule and instructions.


Sept. 13 (Second Saturday of every month) CTU Game night, 7–11 p.m., C-T Union Hall. This is an adults-only evening. No alcohol.

Sept. 15 Deadline to submit items for the October CT News. Send letters, articles and other information to ctnews@msu.edu.

Sept. 16 (First and third Tuesday of each month) CTU Executive Board Meeting, 5:15 p.m., C-T Union Hall. All members welcome.

Sept. 19 “I don’t appreciate some middle-class woman telling me to get out of the kitchen who didn’t know if there was a kitchen there”: Working-Class Women and Feminism in 1970s Brooklyn,” a presentation by Tamar Carroll. MSU Museum, 12:15–1:30. Labor Education Program’s “Learn at Lunch” series.

July membership meeting

Thirty-eight members attended the July 29 Membership Meeting and Ice Cream Social, twelve short of a quorum.

President Deb Bittner discussed the need for Election Committee volunteers and the response that we are getting to the Job Inventory Project.

URs and staff members visited members on their jobs during a recent “walkaround” to collect completed inventories. Several reported that they were very well received by CTs and some were surprised by the variety of jobs we do.

Treasurer Jeannine Lee presented the most recent financial statement and discussed the current volatile investment climate. [Naomi Lilly]

“We’re good,” she said, “because we are in it for the ‘long run.’ We’re where we should be.”

Lee reported that the Finance Committee is cleaning up some educational loans that have been outstanding for several years.

She also encouraged members to contact her if they have any questions or input into the Union’s finances.

Mike Misner and Mary Austin won the $50 door prizes.

UR district news

District 27 (Giltnner, Natural Science): Marie Hensley has been reappointed Union Representative. Contact her at 353-9855 or mhensley@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).

CTU job inventory

Our CTU Job Inventories are pouring into the office. However, we have received inquiries from a couple members who didn’t receive their inventory. If you have not received yours, please contact the office at 355-1903 or ctupres@msu.edu.