CTU 2008

Elections Committee Co-chairs Nora Carr and Liz Owen hit the ground running this year when they co-chaired the September 9 Nominations Meeting. By the close of the meeting, we had one nomination for vice president, one for secretary and five for director. [Lijuan Wang]

Because no one came forward for the position of Audit Committee member, Carr and Owen held nominations open for that position until September 12. One nomination for the Audit Committee was received by the new deadline.

Four seats are open for director, making it the only contested race in the election. In the uncontested races, CTs will have the option to vote for the candidate or vote “no.”

The candidates are:
- **Vice President**: Nancy Gray
- **Secretary**: Willie Paulsen
- **Director** (4 positions): Suzanne Peacock, Jeanette Robertson, Lois Siefring, Duferia White, Jenn Woods
- **Audit Committee**: Marcia Paterna

Employee Free Choice—Why it’s an issue now

Years of unfair decisions by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) have resulted in growing injustice in the world of work. Michigan workers are fed up.

To showcase our dissatisfaction, a coalition of Michigan labor groups called “Justice for Workers NOW!” has organized a march and rally in Detroit on Saturday, October 18. At the event, workers will call for relief in the form of the proposed Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA).

The Clerical-Technical Union is joining with Justice for Workers NOW! in order to help get labor’s message to elected leaders and those seeking our votes.

“Regardless of party affiliation, workers put the candidates **Solidarity** continued on p. 6
CT Classifieds

For sale


TV: Fisher 35”, in a cabinet, on wheels, $75 or BO. Girls bike: Turquoise, $20.

Outdoor bench with table: Amish 1 piece, 2 seater, well made & 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.

♦ Twin bedroom set: Includes captain’s bed (with 2 drawers in base), two dressers (one with mirror and one with hutch), and nightstand (with drawer, shelf, and pull out tray). Dark green with walnut colored trim. Includes mattress, comforter (blue/green plaid), and sheet set (green). (I have pictures that I can send if you send me your email address). Priced to sell, $275. Please call 517-485-1022.

♦ Baldwin spinet piano: Great condition. Light oak wood finish. Includes bench and all piano lesson books kept inside bench. $450. Contact Ann after 5 at 517-339-9364 or rebramed@comcast.net.

♦ 2003 Chevy Cavalier: 4 door sedan, 63,000 mi, metallic tan, automatic, air, tilt, cruise, AM/FM, CD player. Excellent condition, asking $5,000. Call Karen at 517-482-7287 weekends and after 4:30 M-F or email mesewing@comcast.net.

♦ Vinyl tonneau cover: Fits a 2001 Chevy Silverado long-bed truck. Not used since 2003. Black with snaps. $150 or best offer. Phone 517-646-2186.

♦ Bunnies! Bunnies! Bunnies everywhere! at Rockin’ Horse Acres Rabbitry. Show, 4-H and Pet rabbits. We have Netherland Dwarf, Holland Lop, Dwarf Hotot, and Lionhead. Can be seen 4 miles east of Charlotte on Island Hwy. Call Carol or Kendra @ 517-543-0561 or 517-303-0300 or email keniankney@hotmail.com.

Services

♦ Imprints in Time—Wedding and Special Event Photography: Photo journalistic or traditional. Eco priced. Unique and creative. Next continued on next page
Our issues

By Deb Bittner

It seems like we’d be focusing on the issues during this election season.

With all of the problems facing workers today—an economic crisis, skyrocketing foreclosures, a failing health care system, our ballooning national debt, the growing chasm in income between the rich and the rest of us, a crumbling public infrastructure, increasing unemployment—the media is busy putting lipstick on animals.

We deserve better. CTU’s decision to join other Michigan unions in telling the politicians that we’re holding them responsible (see the article about the Employee Free Choice Act on page 1), along with the recent turmoil on Wall Street this week, has me thinking about the kinds of questions to which we, as workers, should seek answers as we choose our presidential candidates. [Martha Duarte]

Here are a few of the questions I came up with. Several come from other groups that are also sick of the distractions, and I’m sure we can all think of other issues we’d like to see addressed.

▼ Labor groups have fought hard against pressure in recent years to privatize Social Security and invest the funds in the stock market. What is your position on this issue, especially in light of recent events?

▼ The United States is hemorrhaging debt from its trade deficits—$700 billion a year—what is your plan to stop the bleeding?

▼ We’re losing jobs at an increasing rate. States and cities are cutting construction, schools, and health care. The Federal Reserve has committed over $500 billion to backstop banks and investment houses, and the Treasury just guaranteed $5 trillion in loans to Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. The economy is not working for working Americans. Isn’t it time for government to rebuild America, not just bail out the banks?

▼ Do you promise to oppose lobbying efforts by corporate interests to cut benefits from Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid?

▼ Health care costs are busting the budgets of families, businesses, states and the federal government. How do we provide affordable health care for everyone?

▼ Unions, the architects of the middle class, are under assault. Do you support the Employee Free Choice Act and other efforts to encourage unions?

▼ We run a deficit of nearly $2 billion a day with the rest of the world. How do we get out of this hole? What is our national strategy to sustain a broad and prosperous middle class in a global economy?

Also on the subject of elections, we have important choices to make about the MSU Trustees, who make decisions closer to home regarding our MSU jobs. CTU is helping the League of Women Voters by co-hosting a forum where we can ask the Trustees questions on Tuesday, October 14.

For rent

▼ Office space: Rent suite or individual office at 2990 East Lake Lansing Road in East Lansing. Will work to meet your specifications. Contact the Clerical-Technical Union, 517-355-1903.

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.

Classifieds

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five bookings 50% off! www.imprintsintimephotography.com; or email imprintsintime@gmail.com.

Ride sharing

▼ Wanted MSU employees interested in forming a car or van pool (through MICHIVAN) from Grand Rapids to MSU. Looking for riders to and from the Grand Rapids area, 5 days a week. If you are interested in joining a carpool or vanpool, please contact Angie Stout at 616-826-0035 (cell) or stouta@msu.edu.

▼ Capital Area Transportation Authority offers a ride sharing service called Clean Commute that several CTUs are using. Contact them at their toll free number (877-921-POOL), local number (517-393-RIDE), fax number (517-394-3733), or website (www.cata.org/cleancommute/index.html).
CTU elections information

CTU candidate forums
A chance to question our leaders

Come meet CTU’s candidates, and ask them why they are running and how they intend to lead our organization.

Wednesday, October 21
noon – 1 p.m.
Holmes Hall, Spartan Room
(snacks provided, no outside food)

Thursday, October 23
5:30 – 6:30 p.m.
1202 Engineering Building

Monday, October 27
noon – 1 p.m., Main Library
4th Floor North Conference Room

In order to make sure that we all have an opportunity to make informed decisions about our future leaders, the Elections Committee has scheduled three candidate forums. Try to attend the one in your area or as many as possible to get all of your questions answered.

Call for volunteers

The Elections Committee is looking for volunteers to work on tasks at the following times:

**October 8**
 ▼ Prepare ballots at the CTU Office, 5:15 p.m. until done.
 **October 28**
 ▼ Work the polls at the Auditorium, half-day and full-day shifts, 7:15 a.m. until 5:30 p.m.
 ▼ Drive a van for our Shuttle Service, half-day and full-day shifts, 8 a.m. until 5 p.m.
 ▼ Count votes at the CTU Office, 5:30 p.m. until done.

CTs not running for a Board or Audit Committee position are eligible to assist the Elections Committee.

Released time is available to poll workers and van drivers who volunteer by October 13. To help, contact Elections Committee Cochairs Nora Carr (carren@msu.edu, 432-8828), Liz Owen (owene@msu.edu, 432-6088), or the CTU office (ctustaff@msu.edu, 355-1903). [Chery Moran]

Elections rules

All candidates receive a copy of the Election and Campaign Rules. Other members can request a copy by contacting Barb Harris at 355-1903 or ctustaff@msu.edu. A copy is also available on the web at http://www.msu.edu/user/ctumsu/Rules.pdf.

Need a ride?

Parking issues? Disability? Whatever makes it difficult for you to get to the polls, have no fear. The CTU Elections Express is on the way.

Van rides to and from the polls at the MSU Auditorium will be coordinated through the CTU office. Just call 432-5665 or email ctumng@msu.edu on or before October 28 to schedule a ride. Rides are scheduled on a first come/first served basis, so register early.

Want even more fun? Reserve the whole van and come with a group of coworkers!
Elections

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from 7 to 8:30 p.m. in the MSU Union Gold Room. (See the calendar on p. 8 for more information.)

And then, of course, we have our own upcoming CTU elections. Here, we have the opportunity to meet the candidates and get our questions answered at any of several Candidate Forums being offered (p. 4).

We have a real contest in the bid for director with five members running for four seats. Even in the uncontested races, we have a choice—we can vote “no” if we determine that an individual is unqualified or unsuited for a position.

Consider volunteering. Our elections require a lot of member participation, and we always need volunteers to staff the polls, drive the vans, count the votes, etc. [Kimberly Jo Crosslan]

Whether it’s a national, state, or a more local election like we’re conducting at CTU, it is important to our democracy that we participate. We participate by voting, of course, but we also need to do the research so that we can be informed voters. And, to the extent possible, we need to go out and volunteer to make sure the process continues to work.

See you at the forums and the polls!

Ask a working woman survey results

In May, we were told of an opportunity to participate in the AFL-CIO’s 2008 “Ask a Working Woman” survey. The results are in!

After reviewing thousands of interviews, Working America and the AFL-CIO found that a pay raise is the number one need of working women. A higher wage edged out the lack of quality child care and skyrocketing health care costs, which was the top issue two years ago, the last time the study was done.

Take a glimpse at what life is like for working women in today’s economy:

▼ Working women are working harder — so much so that most of those surveyed said they talk more with coworkers than with members of their families.
▼ Thirty-seven percent said they work during their breaks or have no breaks at all.
▼ Most of the women surveyed said that if they had more free time, they would work a second job; most would choose a second job over more time with their families.

Find the full report, as well as a state-by-state breakdown, at www.aflcio.org/womenreport.

UR district news

The following members have petitioned for appointment to Union Representative positions. They will be appointed if no other CTs from their respective districts express an interest in the positions before 5 p.m. on October 10.


▼ District 28 (Clinical Center [B,C,D Wings], Engineering Research, Radiology): Becky Sullivan.

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).
Solidarity
continues from page 1

into office,” said CTU President Deb Bittner. “This demonstration will give us an opportunity to tell them that we are ready to hold them accountable.”

NLRB's assault on workers

It’s sometimes hard to remember that the NLRB, a board appointed by the U.S. president, originally was founded to protect workers’ freedom to join unions and bargain for a better life.

Instead, in recent years, it has taken away the rights of millions of workers to be represented by unions, made it harder to form unions through majority sign-up, limited the ability of illegally fired workers to recover back pay and allowed employers to discriminate against union supporters in the hiring process.

According to its website, Justice for Workers NOW! believes that “Our nation needs to unionize, not just to get better wages and grow our purchasing power, but to safeguard our livelihoods from the slave wages we are being forced to compete against in the global economy.

“The depressed wages and purchasing power of working people, resulting from federally funded union busting, is suffocating economic growth in the U.S.”

Reste the right to organize

As a solution, Justice for Workers NOW! calls for the passage of the Employee Free Choice Act (S. 1041) within the first 100 days of the newly elected congress.

EFCA would ensure that workers have a free choice and a fair chance to form a union without the fear of being fired.

Although more than half of U.S. workers—60 million—say they would join a union right now if they could, the percentage of union workers has fallen.

Why? Because employers intimidate, harass, and even fire workers when they try to bring in a union. The 1993-2003 NLRB Annual Reports states that more than 23,000 people in the United States are fired or discriminated against for supporting a union at work each year. [Deann Pierce]

The benefits of unions

Most workers know that coming together to bargain with employers over wages, benefits, and working conditions is the best path to getting ahead. Workers who belong to unions earn 30 percent more than non-union workers, and are 59 percent more likely to have employer-provided health care (U.S. Department of Labor, 1999). America’s working families need labor law reform to stop the erosion of economic opportunity. As union membership numbers fall, jobs with low pay, poor benefits, and little to no security are increasing.

EFCA would give workers a fair and direct path to form unions through majority sign-up, help employees secure a contract with their employer in a reasonable period of time, and toughen penalties against employers who violate their workers’ rights. It would give more workers a chance to form unions and get better health care, job security, and benefits—and a chance to remain part of the middle class.

Add your voice

On Saturday, October 18, stand with your union and other Michigan labor groups to protect our workplace rights and our way of life. Vanpools and carpools are being organized in the area. Call the CTU office at 355-1903.

quote: “All that serves Labor serves the nation. All that harms is treason. If a man tells you he trusts America, yet fears Labor, he is a fool. There is no America without Labor, and to fleece the one is to rob the other.”

—Abraham Lincoln
JOIN US

SOLIDARITY MARCH
SATURDAY
OCTOBER 18

Theme: "Employee Free Choice Act . . . Yes we can!"

American workers desperately need CHANGE. The assault on working families has been relentless. The NLRB has mercilessly discouraged and impeded us from forming, joining and assisting labor unions. As a result, consumers lack the money to fuel our economy, workers lack a voice in industry, and a depression is upon us. October 18 is an opportunity for the Labor Movement. We can move, like movements do, or we can sit still while our quality of life goes the way of our wages—down. Now is the time to act, to join the labor movement on the streets of Detroit and tell our elected officials—and those seeking our votes—that the Employee Free Choice Act is CHANGE WE NEED NOW!

March begins at 9 a.m. in Detroit
Carpools from Lansing are being organized
Call 355-1903

SPONSORED BY:

JUSTICE NOW!
A MICHIGAN COALITION
Calendar

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

October 7 (First and third Tuesday of each month), CTU Executive Board Meeting, 5:15 pm, C-T Union Hall. All members welcome.


October 11 Creative Kids at Kresge. Ages 8-13. Free. 1–3 p.m. Information and registration at artmuseum.msu.edu/education/family/ or call 353-9835.

October 14 MSU Board of Trustees and the 69th Legislative District Forum. Tuesday from 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. at the Gold Room in the MSU Union. Questions will be taken from the audience. Light refreshments provided.

October 15 Deadline to submit materials for the November CT News.

October 15 (Third Wednesdays) Caregivers Together Support Group—Elder Class Series. An ongoing support group designed to provide a range of supportive services to MSU employees who provide care to those they love. Sponsored by MSU’s Family Resource Center and EAP. 12:10 – 12:50 pm, 250 Nisbet Building. RSVP to 432-3745 or fre@hr.msu.edu.

October 21, 23, 27 Candidate forums for the October 28 CTU elections. See page 4 for details.

October 21 (First and third Tuesday of each month), CTU Executive Board Meeting, 5:15 pm, C-T Union Hall. All members welcome.

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

October 28 CTs VOTE! Polling from 7:30 am to 5:30 pm.

Stop tossing & start saving

Submitted by CTU Retiree
Barbara Reeves

A recycling event will be held Saturday, October 11, 9 a.m. until 2 p.m., at the Meridian Twp. Service Center (2121 Gaylord Court, off North Okemos Road at Nancy Moore Park).

Some of the items that will be accepted are ones rejected by some local curb-side recycling programs. For example, clear and colored glass (except auto glass) will be accepted. The Meridian recyclers are also taking

▼ #1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 nonsorted plastics
▼ Paper and hardback books
▼ Telephone books
▼ Pharmaceuticals (for destruction)
▼ Polystyrene (styrofoam) (clean and in clear plastic bags)
▼ Polystyrene peanuts and bubble wrap (bag separately from other polystyrene)

Dropped off books will be resold until 3 p.m. (25-50 cents).

The event is organized by the Meridian Township Citizens’ Recycling Advisory Committee. Call 337-1705 with questions or to volunteer to help.