Meet HR’s new Assistant VP

Brent Bowditch, MSU’s new Assistant Vice President for Human Resources, is now on board.

CTU’s staff and Executive Board welcomed him, along with Executive Staff Assistant Del Bracamontes and Employee Relations Director Scott Sowulewski, to the C-T Union Hall for a visit on September 9.

Bowditch comes to MSU from Purdue University where he worked in benefits.

“Coming to MSU was a wonderful opportunity for me,” he said. Adding that he hopes he will be able to make a positive difference in the lives of employees.

Although his interaction with unions has not been extensive during his career, he said that he is very interested in this aspect of his job. Both of his parents were actors and members of Actors Equity, so he grew up in a union family.

Bowditch said he prefers a collaborative approach rather than a top-down style of administrative micromanaging.

Partnering continued on p. 7
CT News

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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:
◆ ProForm 810 TR Treadmill: Very low hours of use, purchased earlier this spring. 24 different workouts, iPod connection, pulse sensor, workout journal, and mat. No space for it where I will be moving. Valued at $1,500, asking $750. Call 517-795-4013 for more information or for pictures.
◆ Interested in a video phone? Please call 517-484-5269 after 5:30 and leave a message.
◆ 2004 Silverado 2500HD pickup: 17,500 miles, 20 MPH, diesel, 2 WD. White, very clean interior. $23,000. Call 517-402-7280.
◆ Oak dining table: With hub, $100. 1965 Cadillac: $6,000 or best offer. Call 517-886-2066.
◆ Living room set: Large over stuffed couch (no sleeper), large over stuffed chair (chair and a half) plus ottoman. All matching tan with pillows. Pattern on throws and couch backs. Couch pillows reversible. Non smoker, no pets, kept very clean, extremely comfortable set! 5 years old. Pics available if you email me. Paid over $2,000, selling for $300 OBO. Contact ken_merley@hotmail.com or 517-980-4112.

Ride sharing: Capital Area Transportation Authority offers a ride sharing service called Clean Commute that several CTs are using. Contact Clean Commute 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).

Office space for rent: 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 Cherylee 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.

General Membership Meetings in 2008
The final 2008 Membership Meeting will be held in Erickson Kiva at 5:20 p.m. on October 29. Attend to help make decisions about the Union, ask questions and receive updates about Union activities.

Executive Board Meetings
In November, one meeting only on November 11.
All members welcome.
Challenge: Get involved!

By Deb Bittner

Get involved! Be informed! Take action! Do something! Grab opportunities!

These are today’s catch phrases, and in the next month we have many, many opportunities to participate. Will we?

Some will say: “But I work all day and I can’t do any more.” “I have kids.” “I have no time.” “It makes no difference what I do.” “My one vote won’t make a difference.”

To all of these, I counter with one of my favorite quotes. It is from Margaret Mead: “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world because it’s the only thing that ever has.”

In November we have the opportunity to vote for president of the United States of America, a choice that changes history. On October 28, we have the opportunity to vote for the leaders of our union. In between—and beyond—there are opportunities aplenty to make a difference in the communities where we live and work. It does make a difference whether we participate or not. Our choices affect us and our lives directly and down the road.

As for the presidential race, it is important to vote our values, remembering that our jobs are one of the great values in our lives. They are, in fact, one of our biggest assets. Our political choices do indeed affect our jobs.

As a friend once wrote, “The United States has become a job economy. Over 140 million individuals are in the nation’s labor force. Ninety-three percent of the labor force are employees. We are a nation of employees. What does a nation of employees need? They need good paying jobs. A good paying job is a most valuable piece of property. It helps to underwrite a given life style or standard of living. A good paying job also provides fringe benefits that include economic, sociological and psychological benefits. And if the American economy is built on a nation of employees—employees who purchase goods and services, what happens when we lose those good paying jobs?”

We are seeing what happens. Given the news these last weeks, we are experiencing this in our own yards. We are worried about how we are going to buy gas and groceries and, maybe, keep a roof over our head. We jokingly comment to coworkers that we will never be able to retire because our retirement funds are shrinking before our eyes. We worry and we worry and we worry. We get tired.

But in these times, our involvement is more important than ever. Money may be tight, but we can give our commitment and our time. Loss of sleep or time to do chores can be more than offset by the energy and hope we can gain by being involved in making a difference. “We are the Social Mechanics.”

Ways to be involved:

▼ Help staff a phone bank for a candidate or just to remind people to “Get Out The Vote.”
▼ Join neighborhood walks to talk about issues and candidates.
▼ Talk about issues with coworkers—and listen. [Mary Seeger]
▼ Read about candidates and their positions on work issues like unions and the laws that affect us.
▼ Join us at the worker solidarity rally in Detroit on October 18. Rides are being organized. Call 355-1903.
▼ Be a pollworker on October 28 and/or for the November 4 election.
▼ Help count ballots for CTU on October 28.
▼ Drive voters to the October 28 and/or November 4 election.
▼ Join the Labor Challenge for the 2008-9 MSU Community Charitable Campaign.

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Labor challenge

The Coalition of Labor Organizations at MSU have initiated a Labor Challenge as part of the annual 2008-09 MSU Community Charitable Campaign. If you donate to the Charitable Campaign, we are asking you to mark your contributions so that it is clear you are a union member.

Unions are all about working collectively, and through our joint efforts, your contribution—no matter how small—strengthens other gifts. Every contribution will help someone who might not otherwise receive help.

By giving through payroll deduction, most working people have found that they can afford to contribute. By joining other union members who share our commitment, camaraderie, and teamwork we can showcase what the MSU Labor Family can do when challenged.

To ensure it counts toward your union, just write “CTU” on the department line after your department name.

Thanks for all you do on part of the MSU community and the communities where you live!
Vice President

Nancy Gray

For the last year and a half I have served as Vice President. With your support I would like to continue for the next two years. I was elected to this position after the newly re-elected Vice President resigned. It has been a lot of work but very rewarding. In addition to my role on the Executive Board, I have been involved in monthly training sessions for our Union Representatives. My goal, which I worked on along with the Union Representative Coordinating Committee, was to provide training and tools to our URs so they could better assist the members they represent in every district across the entire University.

I am a long-term employee of the University, received my bachelor’s degree in Employment Relations at MSU and have been very committed to our Union. In addition to Vice President, I have served as Executive Director, Union Representative, and Chair of the Elections Committee. I bring extensive experience to this position.

I cannot present you with a big agenda, nor will I make promises I may not be able to keep. However, I can promise you that I will work hard on the Executive Board to make sure every angle is discussed before decisions are made and that we try to do what is good for the organization as a whole. Sometimes this is tough but I promise I will continue to be active in this role in serving the membership. [Darlene Zajac]

Playing a major role in the quality of our work life is extremely important to me. I will work hard and do my best to improve the quality of employment for all CTs. It is worth the time commitment and all the hard work to make sure we stay strong and united. Every day we go to work, use our health care, take a paid vacation, use a sick day or any other benefit, we are exercising rights that were fought for by the members who represent all CTs at the bargaining table and every day as we enforce our contract. It is my hope that you will support and vote for me on Election Day.

Secretary

Willie Paulsen

It is once again time for us to stop and reflect on where we’ve been and determine where we want to be. It’s time to elect those we believe will provide the best leadership for our union. I am asking for your vote for me to remain as Executive Board Secretary.

A union works best when we have a commitment to, from and by the members. This is why it is vitally important that we maintain the most open and ongoing communication between union leadership and remaining members possible. I state “remaining members” from the perspective that we all are CTU members and those of us in leadership are very much aware that whatever decisions we make as an executive group are the decisions that we ourselves will be required to abide by. The better informed we are, the better equipped we are for decision making. I also implore members to become more involved with any aspect of the union with which they might be comfortable. There are a multitude of things that you can be involved in without having to commit to a large amount of time, meetings or labor.

My pledge to all members is that, as Secretary for the CTU Board of Directors I will continue to provide to the very best of my ability, the most current and accurate information regarding the decisions of leadership and the union.

We are facing many issues in these tough economic times. It appears that we are very quickly becoming a society of two groups—the “haves” and the “have nots.” There have been many statements made attempting to place the blame on organized labor for causing these difficulties. We, as educated members, realize that this could not be further from the truth. It is imperative that we, as a union, retain our solidarity and work toward retaining a safe and healthy work environment as well as income that will allow us to adequately provide for our families. Remember—it is organized labor that created the middle class and organized labor that will retain our rights.

Solidarity has always been and always will be the answer.
Suzy Peacock
My name is Suzanne Peacock and I am the Graduate Secretary in the Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics. I am asking for your support as a candidate for the Executive Board of our Clerical-Technical Union. I have a long commitment to both Michigan State University and CTU. I spent four early years of my life living on campus as my father attended and graduated from MSU. I continued on p. 6

Jeanette Robertson
CTU is respected by many of our union brothers and sisters. Our Contract is strong, and our Coalition’s health care plan has been a saving grace for me personally. I didn’t have to worry about how my services would be covered. [Christine York]

Lois Siefring
I am seeking your support for a seat on the CTU board. I am a thirty-year MSU employee, and I have been involved with the Union for many of those years. I served as Union Representative for the Clinical Center A-wing starting in 1997. After approximately seven years in that capacity, I took the position as Solidarity Chair, which I still hold. Many of you might know me as the “Doughnut Lady.” continued on p. 6

Duferia White
I have been on campus for 23 years and a very active member of the CTU for 16 years. During this time, I have served as a Union Rep for nine years and as a Director for seven.

As UR, I have been through the fights to help the CTs in my area when needed, and I have stood beside them through the grievance process. Fighting for the membership is nothing new to me.

My service as Director has spanned a continued on p. 6

Jen Woods
I’ve been on campus for approximately 14 years and will be completing my first term of service as a Director on the Executive Board. It has truly been both an honor and a privilege to serve you and our Union in this capacity which is why I am running again.

My service as Director included participating in the most recent round of contract negotiations, sitting on the Finance Committee and many community activities. I am proud to have had a role in representing you, the CTU membership in negotiations. Your CTU Board stood firm to keep our layoff language intact and protect our other hard fought for contractual rights. [Meredith Prince]

I am committed to representing you, our membership, and our Union contract and will work diligently to keep the contract strong and our membership united. During my term on the Board, I have tried to make sure the Board made decisions based on what is in the best interest of all the members we represent. Sometimes the decision making process isn’t easy. It can lead to bouts of intense debate and discussion that occasionally make the Board meetings run long into the evening. If I disagree with an issue, I don’t hesitate to vote no if I feel the Board is moving in a direction that I think won’t benefit our members. But I have found it definitely worth the

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Peacock
returned to the university after high school and graduate from MSU myself. I have bachelors’ degrees in both Social Work and Elementary Education. Later I was employed on campus and have worked here for the last 32 years. I have been active in CTU for most of those 32 years.

I served as Union Representative for District 4 for over 25 years. I served on the Union Representative Coordinating Committee (URCC) for a number of years, and I was Chair of URCC for about six years. While serving as UR and URCC Chair, I also served on the CTU Audit Committee. For the last year I have served as a CTU Board member, first as an appointed director and later as an elected director. As a Board member, I have served on the GAT (Grievance Appeals & Trials committee). I have also been involved in numerous CTU sponsored activities.

As Union Representative and presently as a CTU Board member, I have gained valuable experience. This includes hands on experience in the day-to-day activities of CTU and such things as policy making, helping CTs and defending our contract.

This experience has enriched my life and enabled me to serve our membership even more effectively.

As a UR I’ve attended several grievances and have testified in an arbitration—both of which are invaluable in understanding and upholding our CTU contract.

In this economic climate the CTU has to be stronger than ever in promoting SOLIDARITY, within our membership and also in our community.

I am committed to moving our Union forward in a positive, strong manner, and realize that continuing to work at the Executive Board level will allow me to be more effective in reaching our goals.

Solidarity and commitment to unionism are the glue of any union. I have and will continue to work promoting those values within CTU. I am available for members to talk with (517-897-0141) and again ask for your support in the 2008 CTU elections.

Robertson
communication, education and training throughout the organization.”

I am quite familiar with what is expected of me in this position. I have a significant history with the CTU as a Director, Union Representative, and a member of both the Health and Safety Committee and Audit Committee.

Please allow me the opportunity to represent the Clerical Technical Union as a Director on the Executive Board. Please vote on October 24, 2006. Thanks!

Siefring
because I have delivered coffee and doughnuts to many of you around campus.

I value my time and experience with the Clerical-Technical Union, because it has taught me the strength of a group that stands together, and stands up for one another. Without the Union, I know we would not have many of the benefits we have now. I have watched other employee groups take cuts in pay and benefits, while we have stood strong. I used to think that only State of Michigan employees had a better contract than we did. I don’t think that any more. We have maintained our status while others have taken cuts in pay and increased cost sharing when it comes to their medical benefits. Part of the reason for our success is the brilliant contract that Harold Schmidt wrote for us many years ago. Another reason is the people behind the Union who fight for each and every member, seeing that their rights are upheld.

Those of you who know me, know that I am a straight shooter who says it like it is. I think I am qualified and would serve well as a member of your CTU Board. I hope you will give me your support on Election Day.

White
busy time for our organization. I have participated in both regular and health care negotiations, and I am proud of the Contracts we have been able to present to the CTU membership. I am especially proud of my contribution to keeping our layoff language and fully funded health care options. And the fact that we will receive raises during these difficult economic times—when most workers are making concessions or taking pay cuts—can’t be beat.

There is still a lot of work to be done for our union and the membership: We need to fight to protect members and defend the Contract. We need to strengthen our ties to other campus unions in order to maintain the progress we have made in health care coverage. We need to remain accessible to members. There’s a lot to do. I hope you will give me another opportunity to continue the fight to keep our union strong.

You must be able to show your membership card or a picture I.D. at the polls on October 28.
Audit Committee

Marcia Paterna

My name is Marcia Paterna, and I am running for the office of Audit Committee member for the CT Union. I have been an employee of MSU, and member of the CT Union, for over 15 years. I began my employment at MSU in the Payroll office where I worked for over 7 and 1/2 years. I processed student and labor payrolls and worked with all levels of employees, including many international employees, doing various payroll related tasks. My next position on campus was at AIS, (Administrative Information Services), where I was in a secretarial position for five years. My current position, at the MSU Libraries, is in the acquisitions area, where I receive, catalog, and pay invoices for new books coming into the Library. I am currently a representative on the Libraries’ SSAG committee, (Support Staff Advisory Group), which brings issues to the attention of the Director of the Library.

As a member of the Audit Committee, you can be assured I will work diligently to understand and convey our C-T Union budget to all members. I ask that you consider me as your candidate for the Audit Committee, for I will commit to doing the best job I can for you.

Woods continued from p. 5

time commitment it takes to be a Director in order to have an active role in representing our members.

I hope you will support my bid and give me another opportunity to continue to serve you and keep up the fight to keep our Union strong. In Solidarity, thank you.

Partnering continued from p. 1

“Obviously we’re going to have our differences, and we’ll have to work things out,” he said, “but by partnering together I think we can come up with some mutually beneficial solutions.”

Bowditch said he sees an opportunity to expand many of MSU’s wellness programs. He believes that lowering health care costs through such measures would benefit the University’s bottom line through decreased costs in the long run and also result in “more dollars going into our pockets” as a result of our joint health care agreement that ties raises to health care costs.

He also addressed the changes being ushered in by MSU’s Enterprise Business Systems Project, which will replace and upgrade the existing financial, research administration and human resource systems on campus. Bowditch lived through just such a transition at Purdue, and he suggested that it was another area in which we can work for solutions that benefit us all. [Gregory Kapp]

“We want what is best for the people of Michigan State,” he added. “It’s Human Resources. We’re a people oriented operation.”

Absentee ballots

Contact Barb Harris (355-1903, ctustaff@msu.edu) to receive an absentee ballot and instructions.

Deadline to request an absentee ballot: 5 p.m., October 20.

Our off-campus members are encouraged to vote using an absentee ballot. Off-campus members can also vote at the MSU Auditorium from 7:30 a.m. through 5:30 p.m.

Elections contacts

Elections Committee Chairpersons

▼ Nora Carr, carrn@msu.edu, 432-8828
▼ Liz Owen, owene@msu.edu, 432-6088 (work), 927-8222 (cell) Contact either co-chair to make arrangements to view the membership list, protest the elections and with any questions or concerns about the elections.

Barb Harris, CTU Office Secretary 353-1903, ctustaff@msu.edu
Contact Barb Harris to set up appointments to view the membership list and request absentee ballots.

Patricia Shackleton, CTU Office Manager 432-5665, ctumgr@msu.edu
Patricia Shackleton is taking appointments for van rides to and from the polls. Call early: first come, first served.

VOTE
Calendar

Oct. 20 Deadline to request absentee ballots for CTU elections.

Oct. 21 CTU Executive Board Meeting, 5:15 pm, C-T Union Hall. All members welcome.

UR district news

District 4 (Biomedical and Physical Sciences, Planetarium): Kelli Kolasa has petitioned for appointment to Union Representative. She will be appointed if no other CTs from her district express an interest in the position before 5 p.m. on October 31.

The following CTs have been appointed UR.

District 6 (Baker, Geography, Snyder-Phillips, Mason-Abbot, Psychology Building, Kresge, Auditorium): Contact Julie Detwiler at 353-5258 or detwiler@msu.edu.

District 28 (Clinical Center [B,C,D Wings], Engineering Research, Radiology]): Becky Sullivan can be contacted at 353-5053 or sulli306@msu.edu.

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).

Candidate forums

The CTU offers several opportunities this year for us to come out, meet our CTU candidates and ask questions about how they intend to lead our organization.

Tuesday, 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


October 27 Deadline for Absentee ballots. Due at the P.O. box by the end of the day.

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

October 29. Officers installed at the Membership Meeting (see p. 1).

Nov. 11—Only CTU Exec. Board Meeting in November. 5:15 pm., C-T Union Hall. All members welcome.

Nov. 11. Deadline for receipt of election protests.

Nov. 18 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.

Oct. 18 Workers solidarity rally

Reminder: Rally with Michigan workers in Detroit. Tell the candidates to work for us! Call 355-1903 for information about rides.

Board meeting

In order to encourage participation in the November 4 general election, the CTU Executive Board has moved its meeting to November 11, 2008. This will be the only Executive Board Meeting in November.