CTU celebrates

June 4, 2009—About 300 CTs, family members and friends attended the Union’s annual picnic and 35th anniversary celebration. See more picnic photos on pages 4 and 5.

Facing difficult issues—including upcoming health care negotiations and a shaky economy—CTs took time on June 4 to step back and take a deep breath before recommitting ourselves to the ongoing work of the union.

About 300 people, including CTs and our family members and friends, enjoyed a relaxed atmosphere of food, fun, and

Picnic continued on p. 5

From the CTU Constitution

Election. Section 5. Officers shall be elected by secret ballot vote conducted so as to afford maximum secrecy and shall be conducted by the Elections Committee selected by the President and confirmed by the Executive Board.

Elections Committee and duties. Section 6. The Elections Committee shall conduct and supervise all elections; it shall pass on the rights of members presenting themselves to vote if such right is challenged, and shall keep records of the members voting. The Committee shall canvass the vote in the presence of all candidates or their designee desiring to be present at such canvass, and shall keep proper tallies of the count. The votes cast for candidates shall be counted immediately after the close of the polls and shall be reported to the membership if still in session or to the Executive Board who shall be required to meet within 48 hours to certify the vote. No member of the Elections Committee may be a candidate for office.
For sale:

- **Nikon D50 digital SLR 6.1 mp camera**: Purchased May 2006. Included: AF S Nikkor 18-55 mm lens; AF Nikkor 70-300 mm lens; 2 batteries + charger; 512 MB memory card (holds 143-524 pictures); USB cable; software cd; Tiffen circular polarizer filter; Promaster Close-up filter set (+1,+2, +4); Quantary clear protection filter; camera shoulder bag; QXS 9001 tripod. Asking $500. All in excellent condition. Sensor of the camera has been cleaned a couple of weeks ago. For questions please email bea_vankampen@hotmail.com or call 517-256-3571 during the day, or in the evening: 517-655-3044.

**Services:**

- **Power washing, painting (inside and out), bike repair, and roofing**: Reasonable rates. Please call Brian at 517-894-1081.
- **Criselle’s Daycare**: Phone 517-694-1738. Email criselle1@yahoo.com. In-home daycare located at 1947 Summit Street, Holt MI 48842. Day and evening hours.

**Ride sharing:**

- **Holt to MSU**: Ride share partner wanted M-F, 8-5 (hours flexible, however). Please contact Nora Carr at 420-4308 or carrn@msu.edu.
- **Capital Area Transportation Authority** offers a ride sharing service called Clean Commute that several CTs 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).

**Free**: Advertise to your colleagues in the **CT News**. Contact Cheryllie 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.
At our annual member picnic on June 4, we celebrated our 35th anniversary as a union!

What an accomplishment!

While reflecting on the sacrifices of those who founded the CTU, the eloquent words of anthropologist Margaret Mead came to mind:

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it’s the only thing that ever has.

In mid-1968 a small group of CTs who were dissatisfied with the treatment they’d received from the University began meeting to build an organization to bargain for better wages and working conditions. By September 1969, the group had garnered enough support to adopt bylaws and elect officers. On March 16, 1974, the Michigan State University Employees’ Association was recognized as the bargaining agent for clerical employees and technicians at MSU. CTU was “born” on September 17, 1974, when the first contract was ratified.

And life at the University hasn’t been the same since!

Today,

▼ We represent approximately 1,700 clerical and technical workers at Michigan State University.

▼ We are governed by an 11-member Executive Board, which also serves as the negotiating team.

▼ We have divided our geographical bargaining area into 40 districts, each served and led by a Union Representative (UR). The UR assists the members of a district and the Executive Board and staff.

▼ We have a diverse membership that is reflected in our leadership.

▼ We have bargained 13 collective bargaining agreements with improvements every cycle.

▼ We are one of the founding unions that formed the Coalition of Labor Organizations at MSU, which has successfully bargained remarkable health care agreements that kept a fully funded health care benefit option available. The CLO now represents nine campus bargaining units in matters of health care benefits at the University and ten overall. The CLO has pledged to work together for the mutual aid and protection of its members.

▼ We have established a foundation: We own our building; we have great labor connections in the community and around the state including the Michigan State AFL-CIO; we have great resource organizations like Maner Costerisan, Rehmann Financial and our law firm available to us; and we have five long-term, very skilled staff members (who also have fully funded health care) to assist us daily.

Throughout our 35 years, MSU’s clerical and technical employees have proven that a strong, independent union could not only survive, but could become a leader in the fight for dignity, equality and economic security.

The CTU Mission Statement has this phrase which I really like and which I believe still exemplifies all we are about. This is the core:

We believe unions are the vehicles by which ordinary people can achieve extraordinary things.

We also reaffirm in the Mission Statement that:

The Clerical-Technical Union of Michigan State University is committed to the empowerment and dignity of the individual; democracy; diversity; and social justice through pursuit of fair wages, safe and humane working conditions; and the right to have a voice in decisions that affect CT’s lives. [Susan Dysinger]

CTU’s mission is to empower its members to exert control and choice over their own lives. To do so, it develops leaders who direct CTs’ collective resources and power to achieve the aims of the membership.

The Mission Statement is a vow by CTU to keep the needs of its members in the forefront of its activities and to face the tough issues looming ahead of us with confidence borne from the knowledge that collectively we have the strength to prevail. Our solidarity makes us strong!

We owe a debt of gratitude to all of the individuals who helped create and develop the union of clerical-and technical employees at MSU. We should also thank everyone who continues in the struggle of maintaining and strengthening our organization—and that’s us!

Happy 35th Anniversary!
Above: Our delicious celebratory cake was baked by members of other campus unions at the MSU Bakers. Departments and individuals can order baked goods from MSU Bakers at www.msubakers.msu.edu.

Right: CT Kristi White shakes hands with Assistant VP of Human Resources Brent Bowditch as Associate Professor Michelle Kaminski and CTU President Deb Bittner look on.

Left: The CTU sub.

Right: Valentino misses his shot.

Above: Executive Director Jan Wallace registers for the picnic with the help of retired CT Larene Smith.
Above: Hope Rankin hands out tickets for the door prizes.

Above: Alissa enjoys a cookie.

Above: CT Ron Hanson and his grandson get up close to Sparty.

Above: Jenny Chapman of the Michigan State AFL-CIO’s Union Label and Service Trades Council at her “Made in America” display.

Above: CT Chris Schaffer with Carlee.

Above: Anita watches as her brother Carl plays a tossing game.

Above: Acting Director of MSU’s Employee Relations Jim Nash and CTU Attorney Nancy Pearce.

Above: The cakewalk was the most popular game at the CTU picnic.

Above: Alissa enjoys a cookie.

CTU t-shirts $5

Union Made in the USA cotton t-shirts with the CTU logo are available for just $5 from your union in five colors: white, black, ash, dark green and orange (not all colors are available in all sizes). Call 355-1903 or email ctustaff@msu.edu.

[Ann Poxson]
Reduction of hours

The CTU’s contractual layoff language is working.

Since the first of the year, 38 members have been affected by the elimination of positions, according to Contract Administrator Dan McNeil, because their own jobs were cut or because they were bumped or replaced by someone more senior.

However, only two CTs—both probationary employees—have been laid off. [Lillian Fox]

Another member has experienced a reduction in hours to 75% time.

Although any full-time employee who does not want to accept part-time work has the right to bypass the next available vacant position, that can be a difficult wait when MSU is shrinking its workforce. [Phyllisia Pryor-Taylor]

“Individual situations may vary,” McNeil said, “so if you are told your hours are being reduced, contact the union immediately to determine the best protection for you.”

Letters

May President’s Corner: “Everyday Values”
Thank you so much for a well-written column. We all need to be more careful as much as we can to check out WHERE products we use and buy come from.

I would like to suggest to everyone to patronize Menard’s. I do not know if their staff is organized. But what I like is that in their flier, they put a little “Made in the USA” logo next to all the featured products that week that ARE domestically produced. I realize that I probably will not be able to purchase a domestically made item for each part of a home improvement project, but as the Brits say, “Every little helps!” When we did our bathroom remodeling two years ago, we bought as much as we could from Menard’s. You can sign up on-line to get their weekly flier if you don’t get a weekly paper.

Yours, Janet Roe-Darden,
College of Arts and Letters
UR, District 36

Picnic kudos

I wanted to express how much I enjoyed the annual CTU picnic and 35th anniversary celebration on June 4. It was a beautiful evening with fabulous food and even better company, not to mention games, prizes and other fun. The organizing committee did a wonderful job.

MSU is so big that we don’t get many on-campus opportunities to socialize with our colleagues outside of our working units. I appreciate the efforts the CTU has made to offer game nights, garden work days, picnics, and even ice cream socials at membership meetings so that we can meet new friends and stay in touch with former co-workers. These are great ways to build cross-campus relationships while we strengthen our union, and the CTU leadership deserves a lot of credit for making these things happen.

Thanks again!
Chris Barden
Office of Study Abroad

UR district news

The following members have been reappointed to UR positions:

- **District 7** (East Fee [Floors 5 and 6], West Fee [Floors 1-6]): Contact Stephanie Six at 353-1998 or six@msu.edu.
- **District 10** (Farrall, Chemistry, Biochemistry, Cyclotron): Contact Amy McCausey at 333-6372 or mccauese@nscl.msu.edu.
- **District 16** (University Housing, Old Purchasing, Food Stores, Laundry, University Services, Power Plant, Angell Building): Contact Angel Loveall at 355-8520 x223 or loveall@mail.msu.edu.
- **District 40** (Sparrow Bldg., Breslin Cancer Ctr., Lansing Medical Office Ctr., Downtown/Misc.): Reach Suzanne Good at 975-9544 or suzanne.oster@hc.msu.edu.

The following members have petitioned for appointment to UR in their districts. They will be appointed if no other members from the respective districts express an interest in the positions before 5 p.m. on July 9.

- **District 22** (Erickson): Linda Brandau.

Interested in becoming a UR? Contact URCC Chairperson Colleen Drake (432-6123 x162 or drakec@msu.edu) or Vice President Nancy Gray (353-8632 or grayn@msu.edu).

“Half-time”

“Will we have you out of there in no time, Winston. In the meantime, I'm sending down your work.”
Nontenured faculty vote UNION YES

We are thrilled to welcome the nontenure track faculty into the family of unions at MSU.

The group went to the polls on May 29 and voted 240 to 113 to join the Union of Non-tenure-Track Faculty (UNTF), an affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT).

With that vote, UNTF became the eleventh MSU bargaining unit.

The UNTF’s next step will be to negotiate a first contract with the University.

As American colleges and universities have cut budgets, they have increased their reliance on part-time, nontenure track faculty. Over 50% of all faculty jobs at higher education institutions are not on the tenure track. Contingent faculty members may work for years with no job security, low wages, few or no benefits and no voice in the workplace.

At MSU, the number of contingent faculty has risen by about 70% over the past decade according to UNTF.

UNTF members at MSU join a growing number of contingent faculty who are choosing the security of a union. Recent successful campaigns in Michigan have taken place at the University of Michigan, Wayne State University, and Henry Ford Community College. Part-time faculty at Western Michigan University will soon vote on union representation.

Annual report on AFPs

For the year 2008, the auditors determined that only 2.57% of our dues were not directly related to the union’s defense of its members and contract.

CTs who opt out of membership in the union have to pay a fee equal to dues but have a right to the return of the portion of dues not spent on issues directly related to negotiating or maintaining our contract. These CTs, known as Agency Fee Payers (AFPs) cannot vote in our elections, run for office or vote on whether or not to accept negotiated contracts, but they receive all the benefits that result from those negotiations and are entitled to union representation.

A typical union spends 10-20% of its funds on “nonchargeable” activities, with some spending as much as 50%.

The CTU, on the other hand, has only minor charges that qualify, such as our classified section and certain articles in the newsletter, some committee activities, and a few of our community donations.

In total, we refunded $201.47 to 29 AFPs in 2008, with the average check being $6.95. We currently have 22 “active” AFPs.

Some unions require that each AFP request a rebate, but the CTU sends out these checks automatically as soon as the amounts are determined.

Our AFPs often change their minds and decide to become members in order to vote or participate in the union. However, a few CTs decline membership for religious or philosophical reasons.
Calendar

July 7 The regularly scheduled Executive Board Meeting has been cancelled.

July 15 Deadline to submit articles, letters, ads, etc. for publication in the August CT News.


July 28 Summer Membership Meeting and ice cream social. Meeting starts at 5:20 but socializing starts as soon as we arrive. Erickson Kiva.

Yard sale reminder
Remember to donate kitchen and household items for the yard sale to benefit the Mildred B. Erickson Scholarship for nontraditional MSU Students. Call the MSU Union Building Sales Office at 517-355-3464 for details. The sale will be held September 3.

Board meeting cancelled
Due to summer scheduling conflicts, the July 7 Board meeting has been cancelled. The next Board meeting will be July 21.

Union Family Fair Day
It’s time for Union Family Fair Day at the Ingham County Fair. Purchase tickets for Thursday, August 6, from your union and you and your family can get huge discounts on entrance and ride tickets.

Tickets for all-day rides are only $10 ($18 at the gate), and entrance tickets are only $2 ($5 at the gate). Children two and under get in free.

Sponsored by the Lansing area labor unions, this special day gives union members and their families the opportunity to sample all that the Fair has to offer at considerable savings. [Luann Carlisle]

Make sure your family participates in the 14th annual Karaoke Contest for Kids. It will be held at the Shirley Clark Pavilion. Age divisions are 6-10, 11-14, 15-18.

Contact Deb Bittner (355-1903; bittner@msu.edu) for discount tickets, which must be purchased by the end of the day on Friday, July 24.

Call early as the tickets go fast, and we are sometimes unable to get more at the last minute.

See you at the Fair!