Welcome!

Our new CTs in Grand Rapids met with the union’s president, vice president, contract administrators and communications specialist on July 30.

After a hearty welcome, we discussed the fundamentals of union representation, the logistics of including members located in another city and other topics raised by our new members.

The CTs in Grand Rapids face a couple of unique problems. For example, they pay a great deal more for parking than those of us in East Lansing. In addition, their location effectively limits their health care insurance option to Community Blue because PHP is a regional program. These and other issues are being investigated by the union.

Nominations notice

Clerical Technical Union of Michigan State University

Nominations for the offices of President, Treasurer, three (3) Directors and a single member of the Audit Committee will be accepted.

The President, Treasurer 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 2011.

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 2012.

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, 2009.

A nominations meeting will be held on September 9, 2009, 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

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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 News classifieds

For sale:
◆ Truck: 2001 Silverado 1500, 4 wd, ext cab, 155,835 miles; vortec 4800 V8 sfi gas engine, 4 spd automatic transmission; forest green metallic exterior; graphic cloth interior; 4-wheel abs with dynamic rear proportioning; 4-wheel disc brakes, air bags; theft deterrent ignition; daytime running lights; wide access rear doors; comfortable rear seat; tilt wheel; two additional power outlets; power steering; full size spare tire w/ lock; trailering wire harness; front recovery hooks. Single owner; runs great. Original total vehicle price $27,764; asking price $7,800. Phone weekdays after 6 p.m. and before 9 p.m. at 269-763-9877. Phone any time on weekends.

◆ Cabin: Price reduced to $42,900. Located in Roscommon, MI, approx. 2.5 miles north of Higgins Lake. 1.3 acres of land, mostly surrounded by woods. Knotty pine interior, 650 sq. ft., 3 rooms (including bathroom), plus loft (optional bedroom). Electric hot water heater, propane furnace and stove. Septic field (tank). 10’ x 12’ shed (1 year old). Fire pit. Pictures upon request. Contact sromspartans@aim.com or call 517-712-4664.

◆ Beautiful time share condo: Kissimmee, Florida, with 170,000 points. Cost $39,000, sell for $30,000, negotiable. Contact Laura at 355-9671 or cell 517-749-6043.

For rent:
◆ House: 3 bedrooms, two full baths, full basement, fenced yard, $900. Please call 517-719-3723.

Services:
◆ Wood floor installation/finishing: 10 years of experience; bamboo and hardwood. Call Ben at 517-243-0601.

◆ Ambient heating & A/C, LLC: The economy is being hard hit. I will give a 10% discount to all MSU employees. Free estimates. Call Brian at 517-795-9432 or email ambienthvac@hotmail.com.

◆ Ride sharing: Capital Area Transportation Authority offers a ride sharing service called Clean Commute that several CTs are using. Toll free 877-921-POOL, local 517-393-RIDE, fax 517-394-3733. Website (www.cata.org/cleancommute/index.html).

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.
August activities at the CTU

By Deb Bittner

It is August and, just like everyone else, we at CTU are asking “what happened to the lazy days of summer?” It has been a busy month!

The CTU building and grounds are undergoing a lot work this summer. Just as being responsible home owners has it ups and downs, so does owning our own building. After last month’s mold removal and abatement, we have had to hire a firm to repair cracks in and around the basement from tree roots, moisture, age and the settling of the foundation. Although this is normal and understandable, it is still an investment of money and time. Other normal “owner” duties have included removing dead Ash trees, fixing air conditioners and repairing window caulking. There is always something to mend or update! We are proud to say that we only use union labor. If that is not possible, then we choose only local businesses and products.

“Health care continues to dominate the news on the national, state and local levels. We have an article on page 6 (thanks to our newsletter editor for pulling all the information together in an article that clarifies and gives us direction on this complicated, rhetoric-filled issue) regarding one of the latest proposals on health care in our state. The major point is that this plan chokes out our voice and undermines our rights to bargain for ourselves.

On our local level, health care negotiations have started here on campus. As you know, we negotiate our health care with the other unions in the Coalition of Labor Organizations at MSU (CLO). We started the process with a meeting of all the executive boards of the unions covered by the health care agreement (see story on page 7). We had guest speakers, a review of our past accomplishments, a refresher on our joint negotiating process, and discussion. We are meeting with the University’s team on a regular basis. (More details as talks progress.)

Because this is the last issue of the CT News before the Labor Day holiday, our last holiday until Thanksgiving, I want to remind everyone 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” (U.S. Department of Labor).

Join Lansing’s 150th anniversary celebration of workers—Lansing 150 LaborFest —on September 5. The CLO will have a booth. Stop by and visit. Call me (355-1903) if you can volunteer to work on the publicity or in the booth.

“‘The American trade union movement—unlike any other labor movement in the world is committed to working within the American political and economic system in order to achieve the social and economical justice promised by the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.’ —George Meany, AFL-CIO Labor Day message, 1978

Lansing LaborFest 150th Anniversary Celebration

Saturday, Sept. 5
11 a.m. – 9 p.m.
Adado Riverfront Park
Lansing

Free to the public

Visit the booth of the Coalition of Labor Organizations at MSU.

http://www.lansing150.com/
Board actions

April—May 2009

The following CTU Executive Board discussions took place April through May 2009. All expenditure decisions are included, but the list does not represent meetings in their entirety. CTs can receive copies of complete minutes through the mail by contacting the CTU office at 355-1903.

April 7
Discussed president’s meeting with Meridian Township official: we are required to replace six trees in our parking lot, awaiting final determination on building signage.
Declined to renew subscription to Inside Michigan Politics at the increased cost of $155 per year.
Contributed $50 for Diversity Day in the City of Lansing.

April 21
Authorized tuition of $249 plus mileage for a contract administrator to attend the Workers Compensation Conference in Plymouth, Michigan.
At the request of a member, donated $50 to the three-day Breast Cancer Walk in Detroit. The CT participant will wear the CTU logo.
Accepted the 2009 CTU budget.
Received a report from the Solidarity Committee: $300 spent on CTU activities in connection with Take Your Child to Work Day.

May 5
Listened to a member displeased with the wait for corrected minutes.
Accepted audit report as presented.
Received report from the treasurer: As of March 31, we have $99,698 in the undesignated account and $3,791,698 in the designated account.
Authorized tuition of $275 and mileage for a contract administrator to attend the Labor Arbitration Institute in Dearborn, Michigan.
Donated $75 to the Black Child and Family Institute 2009 summer program.
Renewed $100 membership in the local chapter of Pride at Work.

May 19
Received vice president’s report that training session on contractual language went well and number of members volunteering for UR positions is up.
In conjunction with our 35th anniversary celebration, authorized the purchase of 500 union made/union printed t-shirts to be made available to members at a cost of $5 each, with monies received to be returned to the operating fund. Health and Safety Committee will donate $500 toward the shirts.
Agreed to have the Health and Safety Committee Chair assume responsibility for pursuing a resolution to the problem of mold in the basement.
Donated $100 to the 2009 PACMAC Spelling Contest.
Authorized the expenditure of up to $2,000 for a new computer system for the communications specialist.
Discussed lease agreements and payments of CTU tenants.
Authorized $25 each for two Board members to attend the Doug Griffiths’ Community Service/Children’s Miracle Network event.
At the request of members working on the CTU garden project, authorized $300 for the purchase of planters, flowers, plants and other items.

CT notables
Congratulations—again!—to Marge Barkman, an office assistant in the College of Communications Arts and Sciences. Barkman was profiled in the July 24 MSU News, the online news source published by University Relations.

She was awarded the Thomas and Concertina Gliozzo Clerical-Technical Award in 2006 for her assistance to students at MSU.

Have a safe & fun Labor Day Holiday Monday, September 7
A union negotiated benefit!
**August 2009.** Nomination notice distributed through the CT News.

**September 1 through September 9.** Nomination period.

**September 9.** Deadline of 5 p.m. for written nominations. Submit written nominations to the CTU office secretary or a member of the Elections Committee. 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 15.** 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 Cheryllee Finney at 432-9580 or ctnews@msu.edu.

**October 2–October 23.** 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.

**October 2.** 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, ctustaff@msu.edu) by 5 p.m. on October 20.

**October 12.** Approximate publication date for the special elections edition of the CT News. Candidate forums begin. [Joan Reid]

**October 26.** Absentee ballots need to be at the P.O. box by the end of the day.

**October 27.** 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 28.** Officers installed at the Membership Meeting.

**November 10.** Deadline for receipt of election protests.

**November 17.** If a runoff election is required, it will take place November 17. No absentee ballots will be available in the case of a runoff election.

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**Elections committee**

Four Union Representatives have graciously stepped forward to run the 2009 CTU elections. We appreciate the commitment of:

- Brenda Bailey, baileyb@msu.edu, 884-1058
- Liz Owen, owene@msu.edu, 432-6088
- Kim Smith, ksmith@msu.edu, 355-7457
- Becky Sullivan, sulli306@msu.edu, 355-0120x333

Both Owen and Smith have chaired past elections.

Contact someone on the committee to submit written nominations, make arrangements to view the membership list, and with any questions or concerns about the elections.
Dillon’s prescription for disaster:
Bad for Michigan / Bad for MSU workers

The Executive Board of the Clerical-Technical Union of Michigan State University has joined the opposition to a recent health care proposal by Michigan House Speaker Andy Dillon (D-Redford Township).

“Dillon’s Prescription for Public Sector Healthcare Reform,” purports to save nearly a billion dollars by moving all State public sector workers, including those at universities and schools, into one big insurance plan.

Since Dillon made his proposal in mid-July, several voices have joined in. In addition to the statements coming out of traditionally anti-union groups like the Mackinac Center, letters to the editor of newspapers criticize the “Cadillac plans” of State workers, accusing them of holding cushy jobs at inflated salaries. Public sector workers are prodded to make sacrifices in these tough economic times.

Much of the criticism, however, is based on fallacies.

State workers have made sacrifices as a result of Michigan’s budget crisis. Adding all the sacrifices—including an 18.1% decrease in the number of employees; furlough days, banked leave time arrangements; increases in health care deductibles, co-pays and premiums; changes in the retirement plan, etc.—employees working directly for the State of Michigan have saved taxpayers more than $3.7 billion since 1991, according to a study by Charles Ballard, an economics professor at Michigan State University.

Many, including labor leaders and even some supporters of the plan, have questioned its ability to save nearly as much money as Dillon asserts.

In fact, the plan, if adopted, would not reduce the budget in 2010 at all. Not

CTU Executive Board Resolution

Whereas public employees, including members of the Clerical-Technical Union of MSU, have already made significant sacrifices in the wake of the State’s budget problems; and

Whereas “Dillon’s Prescription for Public Sector Healthcare Reform” is a scheme to slash health care benefits and place the burden of Michigan’s budget problems on the backs of public sector employees; and

Whereas the “Prescription” would undermine collective bargaining and destroy creative efforts to lower health care costs, such as those employed by unions and management through the Joint Health Care Committee at MSU;

Be it resolved that the Clerical-Technical Union of Michigan State University opposes “Dillon’s Prescription for Public Sector Healthcare Reform,” which would do nothing to reduce health care costs but merely shift costs to the backs of public employees and reduce health care in the State of Michigan; and

Be it further resolved that the CTU will encourage its members to become involved in the opposition to the plan. —August 19, 2009

URGENT

Act now to protect your health benefits and bargaining rights! Contact House Speaker Andy Dillon, Senate Majority Leader Mike Bishop and your state representative and senator.

We need to make our voices heard by legislators, neighbors, colleagues and the media regarding Speaker Andy Dillon’s scheme to put us and all other public employees in one massive insurance plan—and then slash the health care we and our families receive.

Speaker of the House
Representative Andy Dillon
164 Capitol
Lansing, Michigan 48909-7514
Phone: 517-373-0857
Fax: 517-373-5976
Email: andydillon@house.mi.gov
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senmbishop@senate.michigan.gov
Web: www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/senators/bishop.asp?District=12

Contact information
for your senator: http://senate.michigan.gov/SenatorInfo/find-your-senator.htm
for your representative: http://house.michigan.gov/find_a_rep.asp

REMINDER: Do not use your MSU email address to correspond with legislators on political matters.
only are they overstated, but a great deal of the estimated “savings” ($400 to $600 million) would result from reduced coverage and cost shifts that Dillon and his supporters expect to wring from employees.

One of the most important problems with the proposal is that it undermines collective bargaining, thereby eliminating the ability of employees and employers to reduce health care costs through the collective bargaining process. [Traci Osterman]

Union executive boards meet and health care talks begin

To kick off this year’s health care negotiations, the executive boards of nine MSU unions met recently.

The meeting included the leaders of the unions receiving health care under the Memorandum of Understanding between the University and the Coalition of Labor Organizations at MSU (CLO).

CLO President Wayne Cass reviewed CLO accomplishments and gave an overview of the current health care and economic situation.

Michigan State AFL-CIO President Mark Gaffney spoke about the unique situation that the unions have been able to forge at MSU.

“You have to know that the rest of the labor movement is very proud of what you do. . . . The rest of the labor movement’s depending on you,” he said.

Michigan Education Association President Iris Salters congratulated us on our success in bargaining health care and in exposing the lie that union members don’t know anything about health care and are only out to get the benefits for themselves.

MSU President Lou Anna Simon spoke about current budget concerns and other pressures on the university, making it clear that difficult days are ahead.

Brent Bowditch, Assistant Vice President of Human Resources, spoke briefly on the unique relationship of trust that has been forged between the University and the unions and the need to “focus on shared interests” as we seek solutions.

Prescription

Continued from previous page

For example, as public sector workers at Michigan State University, we have approached the problem of escalating health care costs in a different manner than other workers.

Because of the unique relationship the unions have negotiated with the employer through the Joint Health Care Committee, we have been able to lower the entire health care spend at MSU rather than just transferring the increases to employees. In so doing, we have saved our employer tens of millions of dollars in a way that worked best for both the employer and the employees. Last year, the University experienced an increase in health care costs of only 1.9%. Under the Dillon proposal, we would be unable to negotiate creative plans like ours that reduce the actual cost of health care. [Deborah Kay Womble Ray]

We need to act now to protect our right to collective bargaining, our health care benefits, and our ability to save tax payer dollars.
Calendar

Sept. 1 Executive Board Meeting, C-T Union Hall, 5:15 pm. Members welcome. [Sarah Holmes]

Sept. 5 Lansing LaborFest 150th Anniversary Celebration. 11 am–9 pm, Adado Riverfront Park, Lansing. Free. Details on page 3.

Sept. 9 Deadline to submit nominations for CTU’s October elections. See page 5 for details.

Sept. 15 Exec. Board Mtg., C-T Union Hall, 5:15 pm. Members welcome.

Sept. 15 Deadline to submit materials for the October 2009 newsletter, including biographical statements for the Special Elections Issue.

Sept. 16 Weight Watchers at Work. Open house meeting with tasty, low calorie, low fat treats at the Administration Building, fourth floor Boardroom, 12:15 pm. New series begins Sept. 30. One week free.


Sept. 20 Twilight in the Garden fund-raiser for Kresge Art Museum. RSVP by Sept. 14. ($100, $150, or $250 per person or $800 for a table of eight.) James B. Henry Center for Executive Development, 3535 Forest Road, Lansing, 4:30–8 pm.

July Membership Meeting

Lacking a quorum, we were unable to conduct business at the July 28 Membership Meeting.

The 38 members in attendance, however, enjoyed some ice cream from the MSU Dairy Store while discussing union finances, health care negotiations, repairs to the union hall, and layoffs.

The door prize winners were: $50 each for Marian Erickson and Tammy Jo Sopocy, coffee and doughnuts for Mary Austin, and a choice of a gift bag or t-shirt for Tobin Mellberg and Cathy Morrison.

Workshops at CTU

MSU’s Labor Education Programs (LEP) will present three programs designed especially for women union activists. The workshops will be held on Saturdays at the C-T Union Hall.

1. **Women’s Union Leadership**, $65 (includes lunch), Sept. 19, 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.
2. **Work-Family Balance**, $35, Oct. 24, 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
3. **Workplace Bullying**, $35, Dec. 5, 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Attend all three programs for $120.

Although this is not a CTU program, interested CTs are encouraged to attend. The workshops are intended to provide a place for women unionists to network and learn about key topics in a comfortable atmosphere.

LEP will offer another program locally, **Basics of Collective Bargaining**, at OPEIU 459’s building at 838 Louisa St., Suite A, in Lansing on Saturday, October 10, from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. This program is open to everyone and costs $65 (includes lunch).

For more information and a list of additional programs, visit [www.lir.msu.edu/laborEd/workshops.php](http://www.lir.msu.edu/laborEd/workshops.php).