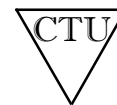


# CT News



CLERICAL-TECHNICAL UNION OF  
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Volume XXXVIII, Issue 5

Organized and Independent since 1974!

June & July 2011



June 23, 2011—Chief negotiators Jim Nash (MSU) and Nancy Pearce (CTU) reach across the table at 1 a.m. to shake hands on our Tentative Agreement.

## We have a contract!

Members of the Clerical-Technical Union voted June 29 to ratify the Agreement with Michigan State University for the period April 1, 2011, through March 31, 2015.

The final count was 500 to 19.

“This turnout, and the result, was a resounding vote of confidence in our Negotiating Team,” said CTU President Deb Bittner.

“Members understood, as did the Team, that we needed a Contract in place as soon as possible, considering the volatile political and economic climate,” she said.

“We took some cuts but we also made some gains in our Contract. Above all, we successfully defended our strong, mature Contract, our job security and our seniority protections.”

University upper management has also approved the Agreement.

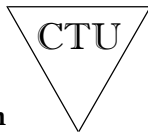
### A difficult bargain

“Although the new Contract leaves us wanting more—much as we would like a better economy and political environment—we are satisfied that this is the very best Agreement we could reach under the current conditions,”

**Contract continued on p. 4**



Julie Czerwinski waits while Donna Henning signs in to vote. Czerwinski and Henning were among 519 CTs who turned out on June 27 to vote on our new Contract.



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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 Cherylee Finney.

# CT Classifieds

## For sale:

◆ **Carpet cleaner:** Bissell compact, \$25. **Violin:** New Franz Hoffman Etude child (4-7 years), \$130. **Toy box stand** with removable 4 color containers, \$25. Contact [cath432@yahoo.com](mailto:cath432@yahoo.com).

## ◆ 6+ acres on Drummond Island

—**Gem of the Huron:** Easily accessible on a paved county road, yet close to State land and trails. Great potential for building a cabin or year-round home. Private with pine trees. Land contract with low down payment. If interested, please call 517-290-2058 (after 5 pm) or email [moserk6@gmail.com](mailto:moserk6@gmail.com)

◆ **Cabin:** 1.3 acres in Roscommon, MI, approx. 2.5 miles north of Higgins Lake. Great for hunters and snow-mobilers (marked trail about 1 mile west of cabin). Cozy cabin, with knotty pine interior, approx. 700 sq. ft., 3 rooms (including bathroom), plus loft (can sleep 3 people). Electric hot water

heater, propane furnace and stove. Conventional septic field (tank). 10' x 12' shed (3 years old). Fire pit. Pictures upon request. \$35,000 or b/o. Contact [sromspartans@hotmail.com](mailto:sromspartans@hotmail.com) for more info.

## ◆ 2000 Jayco pop-up camper:

Excellent condition, one owner, stove inside and out, refrigerator, lots of storage, awning with attached screen room, sleeps 8, one bed a queen, two propane tanks, new battery and new tires. Must see. \$3,200 or b/o. [m.conklin52@live.com](mailto:m.conklin52@live.com), 517-648-9158.

## ◆ MiFi 2200 D2DC G3 wireless device:

Connects up to 5 devices at once, comes w/charger, requires activation with Verizon. \$45. Reply to 517-230-1345 or [norths20@yahoo.com](mailto:norths20@yahoo.com).

## Services:

**Lake Michigan Fishing Charter:** In Manistee—great salmon and trout fishing. Contact info: [kelleysketch@yahoo.com](mailto:kelleysketch@yahoo.com) or 517-290-4260.

## For rent:

### ◆ Drummond Island weekly rental:

2 bedroom, 1 bath, rustic log cabin on the south shoreline. Beautiful spot for swimming! Secluded, ranch style, rustic beach cabin. Wood fireplace, VCR with some movies, DVD player, charcoal grill, and 2 kayaks. Located on Mackinen Bay, past Big Shoal Beach. Available May-October 1. Email [moserk6@gmail.com](mailto:moserk6@gmail.com) or call 517-290-2058 after 5 pm

### ◆ Suite or individual office:

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](mailto:ctnews@msu.edu). The *CT News* accepts ads from CTU members on items for sale and/or services provided

**Classifieds continued on next page**

## 2011 General Membership Meetings

The two remaining Quarterly Membership Meetings in 2011 will be held Thursday, July 21 and Wednesday, October 26 in Room 252 Erickson Hall. Meetings begin at 5:20, but doors open at 5, so come early to socialize. Membership meetings are for making decisions about the Union, asking questions and receiving updates about Union activities.

## Executive Board Meetings

The next Executive Board Meeting is **August 16**.

In September, we will return to our regular schedule of first and third Tuesdays of the month.

CTU Office

5:15 p.m.

All members welcome.

# A short vacation for public workers

By Deb Bittner

It is summer and for those of us who are not school kids anymore—those of us who have to work—it has been a busy one already. [Gary Schrock]

CTU held our annual picnic in June. It was a lot of fun. Preparing for guests causes a lot of work, but it's always worth it to see our members, families and friends having a good time. As you will see in the photo of the cake walk (p. 7), even adults play the games and compete to win baked goods! The 3-D chalk was a big hit this year, too.

Then we had contract negotiations to wrap up. Throw in a bit of pressure like a new "game-changer law" to add to the stress of getting another contract and getting it ratified, all by the end of June! As always, CTU can count on its members to come through. The turnout, while only 30% of our membership, still was amazing. We have a great staff who really worked hard to put all the pieces in place and our volunteers stepped up to help out.

A gentle reminder: Even though we have a new contract, we still need to use the next four years to keep our contract working for us. This means each of us working in our departments to make sure the contract is followed

and we are not losing protections or giving away benefits.

Take some time to review the provisions. As we like to say, our contract is the floor, not the ceiling, that we come to work on each day. It is the minimum standard of a good work place. Being in a union and following a union contract is not about having protection to do a bad job; it's about making the work place better. It is one more tool that we and our departments can use to help solve work place problems.

The fact that it takes two to negotiate and sign a contract means that MSU also endorses the provisions of our agreement. It is a joint commitment, a positive for both sides, to make sure the rules of our contract are followed. Don't let ignorance of the rules or sloppiness toward enforcing those rules erode our hard-earned union rights.

Speaking of eroding our union rights, the rules that protect public workers in Michigan are being erased. The politics of harming us by taking away our rights is becoming harder and harder to justify as "budgetary." It seems like the laws are ways to punish those public sector workers who participated in democracy in the last election.

And where are the new jobs we desperately need? Current employees are facing cutbacks and concessions. The alternatives seem to be only low and minimum wage jobs. Who can pay the bills on what fast-food workers earn? Who can pay for rent or mortgages? What about groceries or school? It is damned scary.

We cannot shirk our responsibility to fight this. We must keep the pressure on and demand that our representatives find



better solutions to our poor economic situation. Balancing the State's woes on us, hard working public employees and our families, is cheap and insulting.

We mustn't let the rhetoric suck us in, especially on the right-to-work agenda. We *have* a right to work, and it is with all the tools in our hands. The work place should have fair rules that ensure safety, dignity and a living wage for all workers. We shouldn't have to work two or three jobs to just eke by. And we mustn't give up the tools that make it possible for us to fight for such a work place—the tools we have by virtue of being in a union.

To keep what we have, we are going to have to oppose those trying to take our standards of living away. This is no time to rest on our laurels. It is no time to be meek and not fight. It is no time to believe that these bad laws won't affect us. Because, indeed, they have already come to our doorstep. We saw it in our contract negotiations and the rush it caused us. Your health care and your wallets are next.

Yes, it is summer—and I hope everyone has the opportunity to take a much deserved break (a paid one, thanks to your contract)—but it is also time to recommit to the work that needs to be done.

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## Classifieds

*continued from previous page*

by CTU members and/or their household family members.

◆**CTU Conference Room:** Available free to members (with deposit). For non-members, \$25/hour plus deposit. For questions, reservations, etc. contact the CTU office at 355-1903.

# Contract

*continued from p. 1*

said Bittner, speaking for the Negotiating Team. "If that were not the case, we would still be at the table."

## Educational assistance

The University was adamant about gaining concessions from CTs in educational assistance. As employees of a highly respected land grant educational institution, the Bargaining Team vehemently opposed efforts to reduce this benefit and succeeded in preserving the full impact of the benefit for most CTs.

The Team preserved **full tuition coverage for undergraduate level classes taken at MSU.**

Reimbursement for classes taken at other educational institutions in the State of Michigan will be reimbursed up to 50% of the MSU undergraduate maximum tuition rate, \$444.50 as of Fall 2011. In other words, MSU will reimburse up to \$222.25 toward classes taken at other Michigan institutions, an amount that covers **full tuition for most (if not all) undergraduate or associate level classes taken at public universities, colleges and community colleges in the State of Michigan.**

A review of the data by our Team showed the great majority of CTs use the benefit for classes that could lead to associate's or bachelor's degrees. Only a handful use it for graduate classes.

The Team did preserve **assistance for graduate classes**, including MSU, but it was reduced to 50% of the MSU undergraduate maximum tuition rate.

In order to limit the outflow of assets from Michigan universities and col-



*June 27—Michael McCune and Walt Peebles, both of Art and Art History, vote on ratification.*

leges, educational assistance will not be provided for online only or out-of-state educational institutions.

The Course-Fee Courtesy Policy, which covers half the MSU tuition of the spouses and children of eligible CTs, was not changed in this Contract.

## Overtime

As with educational assistance, MSU came to the bargaining table insisting it needed changes in overtime language from all MSU unions, including CTU.

As required by Federal law and as consistently policed and enforced by our Contract Administrators, overtime compensation will continue to be paid by MSU for all hours worked in excess of 40 in any workweek. "Hours worked" for purposes of calculating overtime shall also include paid holidays provided that the employee works the regularly scheduled work day preceding and following the holiday.

However, CTU has agreed that "hours worked" for *purposes of calculating overtime compensation* (including comp time) shall no longer include

paid time off (other than paid holidays), such as personal leave, funeral leave, vacation or sick leave.

The Union expects some confusion on the change and encourages members to call if they have any questions or concerns about how the new overtime language is being applied in their units.

MSU also sought to drastically alter the manner in which employee work schedules could be modified (which could have significantly affected overtime computation and requirements), but CTU was able to avoid these changes.

## Post retirement health care

As a result of the University's elimination of retiree health and dental plan coverage for employees hired on or after July 1, 2010, CTU negotiated an additional retirement contribution on behalf of our newest employees.

At the completion of 60 months of service, MSU will contribute to the employee's 403(B) Base Retirement Program 2.5% of the bargaining unit's

**Contract** *continued on next page*



# Contract

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average wage. During years 5-10 of employment, MSU will contribute to the employee's retirement program 1/2% of the bargaining unit's average wage. After 10 years of employment, MSU will contribute 3/4% of an employee's per pay period wage to the MSU 403(B) Base Retirement Program.

These contributions for CTs hired on or after July 1, 2010, are in addition to the regular retirement contribution to the Base Retirement Program.

## Other improvements

The Agreement preserves important contract language, such as our layoff provisions and position application process, both of which were under assault throughout our bargaining talks.

In addition, the Team was able to expand on several benefits:

- ▼ Sickness leave payouts were increased from 1,100 hours to 1,200 hours.
- ▼ An employee who is temporarily assigned to a job in a higher grade to perform the usual duties and responsibilities of the job for ten (10) working days or more shall be paid an additional sixteen dollars (\$16) per working day (previously \$8).
- ▼ The special maximum vacation accrual hours for CTs with more

than 10 years were raised from 225 to 240.

- ▼ "Stepgrandparent" and "step-grandchild" have been added to the funeral leave provision.
- ▼ Employees on layoff status who elect to fill temporary assignments that are expected to last in excess of 30 days will earn service credit, benefits (including health care) and seniority.
- ▼ Both the Union and the University reconfirmed their shared goal of identifying ways in which MSU can promote diversity and inclusion across campus, and the Employer agreed to encourage flexibility for employees who desire to participate in sponsored events to celebrate Martin Luther King, Jr. Day as well as other opportunities to increase sensitivity to diversity and inclusion.
- ▼ We clarified the language in the retirement section, added clearer CLO references and eliminated outdated language or references.

## Thank you

Bittner said that a lot of thanks is owed our Bargaining Team, including Chief Negotiator Nancy Pearce. Once House Bill 4152 was signed into law as of June 8, the Team had to go into overdrive to try to meet a June 30 deadline for ratification. The new law prohib-

ited public employers from paying anniversary increases or any other increases under an extended contract. Retroactive payments were also outlawed. [Renee L. Cowdrey]

Team members made it clear that they were willing to bargain past June 30, if necessary, to protect our Contract, but arrangements were made to swing into immediate action if a tentative agreement was reached in time. Members were notified of this possibility. When the parties agreed to a TA at 1 a.m. on June 23, details and explanations were prepared and sent to members' home and email addresses, informational meetings were scheduled, and the team fielded questions.

"We had a lot shorter time than usual in which to become educated about the TA and vote on it," Bittner said, referring to the fact that ratification was held seven days after the Team agreed on the TA compared to 36 days four years ago. "But we got the information out and we had a great turnout for ratification."

The Bargaining Team thanks the CTU staff for assistance and continuity throughout the process.

In addition, several union leaders stepped forward to stuff envelopes, staff the polls, drive the vans and count the ballots: Brenda Bailey, Kathy Bergdolt, Deb Bittner, Julie Detwiler, Rosie Garcia, Nancy Gray, Karen Jakus, Kathy Kirby, Kelli Kolasa, Angel Lovall, April Moore, Liz Owen, Tracy Rich, Stephanie Six, Kim Smith, Becky Sullivan, Norma Teague, Amanda VanKoevinger, Jan Wallace.

And, of course, a big thanks goes to the 519 members who voted.

"It was truly a team effort," Bittner said, "We got the job done."



*June 22—URs met with the Negotiating Team for an update on bargaining and to plan for contingencies in case the parties did not reach a settlement before the next day.*

Michigan's citizens are fighting back

# We are the people!



June 1, 2011—GEU Past President Elizabeth Pellerito and current President Sam Otten with CTU President Deb Bittner protest cuts to K-12 education at Eastern High School in Lansing.

The attack against workers seems to be picking up steam, but many CTs are adding our voices to those of other public workers, students and community members in standing up for the middle class and demanding legislators focus on creating jobs and revitalizing the economy.

Several CTs have joined in rallies and other efforts to oppose the anti-worker push coming from the officials we elected to represent our interests.

Stay informed about new efforts and how to join in by signing up for notices from We Are the People at [wearethepeoplemichigan.com](http://wearethepeoplemichigan.com).

Also, the Michigan State AFL-CIO offers a Daily Bill Update. The Update is an excel spreadsheet outlining worker related legislation that has been introduced in the State Legislature: [www.miaflcio.org/legislative-action/legislative-report.html](http://www.miaflcio.org/legislative-action/legislative-report.html). The spreadsheet also provides links to helpful information about writing letters and emails and making phone calls to try



June 2, 2011—CTU members (not shown) joined students, teachers and other members of the community to protest cuts to K-12 education.

to influence our elected officials. [Genia Renee Smith]

We got a very small taste of the affect of one of the new laws when House Bill 4152 went into effect overnight, causing us to have to scramble to get our new Agreement ratified. The legislation was intended to undermine

## Supervisor award

Submitted by Laraine D. Walton,  
CTU Member, FRC

The Outstanding Supervisor Committee is accepting applications for the 2011 MSU Outstanding Supervisor Award.

If your supervisor is understanding of your work/life balance, allows flexible schedules, treats everyone with dignity, respect and integrity (to name a few things), you should nominate them for the 2011 Outstanding Supervisor Award as a way of showing appreciation.

Submit packets to the Family Resource Center by Monday, July 25, 2011. Visit the FRC website for instructions and a nomination form (<http://www.frc.msu.edu/awards/outstanding-supervisor-award/>).

labor in collective bargaining situations. However, our Team and our membership were prepared, so we were able to turn the situation into a success.

We will continue to provide information about the escalating attacks on workers. Watch for more to come (unfortunately) in future issues.



# 2011 CTU Picnic

Our fourth annual CTU Picnic proved to be as popular as ever, with over 200 of us, including family members and friends, other union leaders and MSU administrators showing up for hotdogs, grilled chicken, subs, Turkeyman barbecue, MSU Dairy Store ice cream and all of the other picnic classics. [Brenda Brown]

While the adults got to know one another, the children played games. Of course, everyone got in on the most popular event: the cake walk on the CTU logo!



## UR district news

The following CTs have been appointed to UR positions:

▼ **District 2** (Administration Building floors 2, 3, 4): **Kathie Kirby** can be reached at 432-6701 or [kirbyk@msu.edu](mailto:kirbyk@msu.edu).

▼ **District 7** (East and West Fee, Hannah Technical Building): Contact **Stephanie Six** at 353-1998 or [six@msu.edu](mailto:six@msu.edu).

The following members have petitioned for appointment to UR positions in their districts. If no other members from their respective districts express an interest in the positions before 5 p.m., August 1, they will be appointed.

▼ **District 16** (Univ. Housing, Old Purchasing, Food Stores, Laundry, Univ. Services, Power Plant, Angell Building, Surplus and Recycling): **Angel Loveall**.

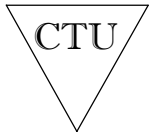
▼ **District 18** (Kellogg Center, Brody Complex): **Cynthia Helms**.

▼ **District 24** (International Center, Wells, Central Services Building): **Tracy Rich**.

▼ **District 32** (Library): Contact **Colleen Drake**.

Want more information about becoming a UR? Contact URCC Chairperson Becky Sullivan (884-3374, [sulli306@msu.edu](mailto:sulli306@msu.edu)) or Vice President Nancy Gray (353-8632 or [grayn@msu.edu](mailto:grayn@msu.edu)).

*Produced by your CT colleagues at MSU*



**CTU OF MSU**  
**2990 E. LAKE LANSING ROAD**  
**EAST LANSING, MI 48823-6219**

**CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED**

## ***July Membership Meeting***

Thursday, July 21  
Room 252 Erickson Hall  
5:20 p.m.

We have a Contract, but it's no time to relax. Join us at the summer membership meeting to discuss how we will make our new Agreement work for us, how we are responding to political attacks on public workers and how we are defending our collective bargaining rights. [Becky Joanne Sullivan]

To keep us cool, there will be ice cream from the MSU Dairy Store.



Join us at Union Family Fair Day on Thursday, August 4. Bring the family to a day of

◆ **Carnival Fun** ◆  
◆ **Food** ◆ **Rides** ◆

**The entry fee is \$3 per person** (includes entry to the Grandstand) if purchased in advance (\$8 at the gate). Children two and under are free.

Ride tickets are \$12 per person if purchased in advance (\$18 to \$20 at the gate) and are good **all day**, 1 p.m. until closing.

Discount tickets are available through

CTU. Contact CTU (355-1903, [ctustaff@msu.edu](mailto:ctustaff@msu.edu) or [ctumngr@msu.edu](mailto:ctumngr@msu.edu)). Tickets must be purchased by 5 p.m. on Friday, July 29. We have a limited number of tickets and they go fast, so contact us early.

### **Gerri Olson Educational Loan Program**

It's time to register for the Gerri Olson Educational Loan for fall semester. To do so, contact Patricia Shackleton (432-5665, [ctumngr@msu.edu](mailto:ctumngr@msu.edu)) July 18 through 29. Registrations received after July 29 will be considered as space permits.