

CT News



CLERICAL-TECHNICAL UNION OF
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Volume XXXVIX, Issue 5

Organized and Independent since 1974!

May/June 2012

State of the C-T Union

Thirty-six members attended the April 19 Membership Meeting, 14 short of a quorum.

Although we were unable to conduct the business of the union, members did get a report on the 2010 audit. Certified Public Accountant Jim Nyquist said we had, once again, received a “clean opinion” of our financial statements, meaning that our finances are presented fairly and conform to generally accepted accounting principles. [Dawn D. Bonnici]

After the presentation of the audit, Treasurer Jan Wallace presented the 2012 budget on behalf of the Executive Board.

Because of the lack of a quorum, we were unable to vote on replacements for the recently vacated positions of vice-president and director. Therefore,
Meeting continued on p. 4



April 19—CTs received the audit report for 2010 and reviewed the 2011 budget.



June 7, C-T Union Hall—CT Linda Colon attended the picnic with her family.

CTU takes a break

CTs decided it was time for a break. Along with our friends and families, we gathered on June 7 on the grounds of the CTU office building to play, socialize and share a picnic dinner.

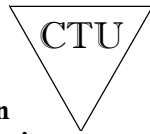
This was CTU’s fourth annual member picnic. Games for the kids as well as our famous cakewalk were highlights of the event. Food came from area vendors, including ice cream from the MSU Dairy Store. Contract Administrator and Hot Dog Chef Dan McNeil kept us supplied with the franks.

This year, we also gave a t-shirt or travel mug to each CT who attended and gave every registered voter the opportunity to sign the “Protect Our Jobs” petition. (Workers across the state have collected twice as many signatures as needed to get an amendment

Picnic continued on p. 7



These proud sisters show off their winnings. They were the first to win baked goods in CTU’s popular cake walk. See more picnic photos at www.ctumsu.org.



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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:

◆ Matching couch and loveseat:

Navy blue leather. Purchased from Art Van eight years ago. Great condition, NO rips in either. \$500. Please call Eric at 517-719-0736.

For rent:

◆ Drummond Island cottage:

Privacy and space! This 2-bedroom, 1-bath log cabin on the south shoreline has everything you need for a cozy getaway. Beautiful spot for swimming! RARE white sandy beach! Secluded, ranch style, waterfront cabin. Wood fireplace, VCR with some movies, DVD player, charcoal grill, and 2 kayaks. Launch from your private beach and explore one of Drummond's best kayak routes! Available May 1–Sept. 30. Email moserk6@gmail.com.

◆ Two 3-bedroom cottages in Manistee:

Cabins located on the sandy east shore of beautiful Bear Lake, a large, all sports lake located in the northwest corner of the Lower Peninsula. The clean, clear, sandy bottom lake slopes gently from shore. Cottages located 15 minutes from Frankfort, 10 minutes from the beautiful shores of



"This will be my third reincarnation – and I'm still paying off student loans from my first two lives."

Lake Michigan, close to Michigan's renowned Sleeping Bear Dunes National Park, 10 minutes from Arcadia Bluffs golf course and Crystal Mountain ski slopes and golf course, 20 minutes from Manistee's Casino. River kayaking, tubing and horseback riding nearby. Boats can be launched from the Bear Lake Marina. No smoking. Six occupants per cabin. Contact the lessee for pre-approval to bring pets. Weeks still available: Aug. 4–11 and Aug. 25–Sept. 1. Email bearlakecottages@gmail.com for pictures. \$900/week.

◆ 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.

Ride share:

◆ Capital Area Transportation Authority

offers a ride sharing service called Clean Commute that several CTs are using. Contact Clean Commute toll free (877-921-POOL), locally (517-393-RIDE), by fax (517-394-3733), or website (www.cata.org/cleancommute/index.html).

Free: Advertise to your colleagues in the *CT News*. Contact Cherylee Finney at Cheryl@ctumsu.org. 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.

2012 General

Membership Meetings

Quarterly Membership Meetings for the rest of 2012 will be held in 252 Erickson Hall on Thursday, July 19 and Wednesday, October 24. 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

1st & 3rd Tuesdays at 5:15
(Meeting cancelled July 3, 2012)
CTU Office

All members welcome.



April 26, Lansing—CTU participated in the Lansing commemoration of Workers' Memorial Day this year.

President's corner

Remembering fallen workers

The CTU participated again in the yearly Workers' Memorial Day, the Lansing event that commemorates workers who were killed or injured on the job in the past year. Our union (special thanks to Cheryl Finney and Willie Paulsen for serving on the planning committee!) teamed up with the MSU Graduate Employees Union to present stories about some of the Michigan workers who were killed. It was a moving ceremony, complete with a color guard, prayers, information and the reading of the names of the 141 Michigan workers who died from workplace injuries.

One clear message from the event is that workers must watch out for each other. We think more about worker safety in jobs like construction and fire fighting, but we do have CTs that face the more traditional kinds of hazards that go with working in warehouses, farm settings, laboratories, medical offices, animal care facilities and the like. Most CTs work at sites that we think of as relatively "safe," so some-

times members can grow complacent, get sloppy or allow for non-compliance. However, even those of us who work in offices and libraries need to be vigilant, watch out for coworkers and insist on safety.

For example, some units are ignorant of—or choose to ignore—ergonomic and repetitive injury hazards. Over the years, we have had several members in various types of jobs injured from improperly designed work sites and harmful work habits. University policy dictates that supervisors be proactive in eliminating such hazards. If you are unsatisfied with your supervisor's response to concerns about these issues, contact your union for assistance and support. If you notice a coworker struggling, make sure they know the dangers and refer them to the union.

Another hazard many of us seem to share these days is work-related stress. The effects of stress on health are widely documented and make it especially important that we take our

breaks, vacations and personal time. These benefits were secured for us through hard work and tough stands by past negotiating teams. It won't help if we don't defend that language by making sure it is followed.

"An injury to one is an injury to all!" It's an old union saying that means we best protect ourselves when we look out for each other and defend each other. We need to look out for our fellow members in the CTU and all workers who face workplace hazards. Along with many other labor rights, Michigan's worker safety laws and enforcement have been seriously weakened recently. And as collective bargaining rights are eroded, the fight for safety on the job will get tougher. Workers and unions need to fight this trend, and CTU is participating in the struggle. [Marcia Jean Baar]

Watching out for each other is easier if we know one another. In this digital age, it can be difficult to put a face to

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Meeting

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the Executive Board's appointments of Duferia White to vice-president and Tracy Rich to Director will stand until the October general election or the next meeting where we have a quorum. Our next Membership Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 19.



CPA Jim Nyquist

President Deb Bittner led a discussion on open enrollment and the success of MSU union members in keeping increases in the cost of health care below 5% this past year, which means we will continue to have a premium-free health care insurance option. [Sarah Ellen Davis]

Dan McNeil reported that the layoff situation "is the best it's been in three years." Very few CTs are receiving layoff notices, and there are open positions to accommodate most.

Bittner announced:

- ▼ Director Willie Paulsen's receipt of the A. Philip Randolph Activist Award,
- ▼ CTU's support of MSU's Summer Circle Theatre,
- ▼ Our participation in the Lansing Workers' Memorial Day commemoration,
- ▼ CTU's annual picnic scheduled for June 7,
- ▼ CTU's plans for a fall craft show, and
- ▼ The upcoming distribution of our new contract.

Door prizes went to:

- ▼ Marlinda Lowery, \$50;
- ▼ Mary Canady-Hernandez, \$50;
- ▼ Katie Shelton, CTU laptop bag;
- ▼ Leeanne Dickey, CTU sweatshirt.

CTU Notables

Congratulations to **Kelly Zarka**, one of the winners of the 35th annual Jack Breslin Distinguished Staff Award. Zarka was nominated for her "exemplary work performance and contribution to MSU." She manages the lab for the MSU Potato Breeding program.

We also want to congratulate CTU Executive Board member **Willie Paulsen**, recipient of a 2012 Community Role Model Award from the A. Philip Randolph Institute. Paulsen

received the award for her perseverance in achieving goals that open doors for others in the Lansing Community.



The A. Philip Randolph Institute is a constituency group in the AFL-CIO dedicated to racial justice and economic equality.

Annual report on AFPs

Only 3.65% of our dues in 2011 were not directly related to CTU's defense of its members and contract. While low, the number is higher than last year's 2.53%. The higher percentage is due, primarily, to CTU's participation in fighting Right-to-Work and other laws unfriendly to labor in Michigan, according to CTU's Certified Public Accountant Jim Nyquist.

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 (AFP) 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.

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.

A typical union spends 10 to 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, our limited political activity, and a few of our community donations.

In total, we refunded \$309.25 to 19 AFPs in 2011, with the average check being \$16.27.

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



Sometimes you gotta laugh

Inefficient Schubert

An efficiency consultant critiqued Schubert's Unfinished Symphony:

All 12 violins played the same notes, This is unnecessary duplication and their number should be cut.

For a considerable period, the oboe players had nothing to do. Their number should be reduced and their work spread evenly among other staff.

No useful purpose is served by repeating with horns the passage that was already handled by the strings. If such redundancies were eliminated, the concert could be cut 20 minutes.

The symphony has two movements. Mr. Schubert should have been able to achieve his musical goals in one.

The consultant's conclusion: If Mr. Schubert had paid attention to these matters, he would have had time to finish the symphony.



Share

Do you have a funny workplace story? Have you received a humorous work-related email? If something at work makes you LOL, consider sharing it with other CTs. Send humorous work-related photos, cartoons and graphics to Cheryl@ctumsu.org.



Thanks to Supervisor Josselyn Miller, UR Liz Owen found flyers announcing her 30th birthday all over the Vet Med Center when she arrived at work.



Member tip: Be a set of “eyes and ears”

Union Representatives can't be everywhere at once, and they can't see or hear personally everything that goes on around the workplace. So part of our jobs as individual union members is to be on the lookout for things that the union needs to know about, and to pass along the necessary information. If, for example, a change is made in working conditions, or CT work is re-assigned to a non-member, but too long a period of time passes before a grievance is filed, we may have more trouble challenging the employer's unilateral action. So it's part of our responsibility as individual union members to be the union's “eyes and ears” in our workplace.

—Adapted from The Union Members Complete Guide, by Michael Mauer



Board actions

January—March 2012

The following CTU Executive Board discussions took place January through March 2012. 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 or email by contacting the CTU office at 355-1903.

January 5 (electronic meeting)

Agreed to the request by a department to allow a temporary employee to remain in a CT position 60 days past the 180-day limitation stipulated in our contract. The department is accommodating the medical leave of another CT in the office and has posted the position.

Voted to spend \$50 plus travel to send the CTU president to a Labor and Employment Relations Association (LERA) presentation in Detroit, "Bargaining in Economic Crisis: Embracing Creative Solutions," with Brad Raymond, former CTU counsel.

January 17

Donated \$250 to the "On Equal Terms" labor exhibit being held at the MSU Museum.

Donated \$100 to sponsor the Michigan Summit on May 12, 2012, at the Kellogg Center.

Donated \$75 to the Meridian 2012 Growing Greener Recycling Event.

Donated \$250 to Walk for Warmth.

Announced that Jeanette Robertson is our representative on the All-University Traffic and Transportation Committee. [Diana L. Shank]

February 7

Renewed \$180 subscription to *Society for Human Resource Management*.

Agreed to send the treasurer, financial manager and president to a financial class for \$179 per person.

Agreed to send up to two additional people to the LERA luncheon on smoking policies.

Decided to purchase up to 6 tickets at \$125 per person for the MSU LEP Employment Law Update Conference.

Agreed to continue the \$480 monthly donation to the Michigan State AFL-CIO to help oppose Right-to-Work and other anti-worker legislation.

Appointed CTU Director Duferia White to the vacant vice president position and witnessed her swearing in.

February 21

Agreed to purchase a computer and LCD projector for a total of \$985.78.

Decided to pay \$562.69 for an additional electrical outlet that is needed in the meeting room.

Cosponsored the MSU Theatre Department's Summer Circle in the amount of \$250.

Donated \$225 to support a child's attendance at the YMCA Mystic Lake Union Camp.

Donated \$1,000 for the May 10 Empty Plate Dinner fundraiser for the Greater Lansing Food Bank, which has assisted CTs and their families when in need.

Appointed Tracy Rich as Director and witnessed her swearing in.

Discussed meeting in District 25. CTs there are concerned with CT work being assigned to students. Contract Administrators are investigating.

Received report on Employee Assistance Program.

March 6

Announced that two board members will attend the March LERA meeting: "General Motors Update."

Received reports on the 2012 Employment Law Update conference.

Received report on February's union training conference: Coalition Chair Wayne Cass discussed health care. The March conference will cover open enrollment and will be conducted by MSU Staff Benefits representatives.

March 20

Reviewed current financial status and a draft of the 2012 budget.

Renewed \$139 yearly subscription to *The Nation* magazine.

Decided to end subscription to *Inside Michigan Politics*.

Renewed OPAC testing software annual service plan for \$295. This software allows CTs to prepare for the University's proficiency tests.



CTs answer phones to help kids

June 2—Katie Shelton, Janice Hengesbach, Sarra Boraily, Cheryl Luick, Joyce Hengesbach and Wendy Baker (left to right) represented CTU by lending their time and their ears to help the Lansing Labor Council answer phones at the Children's Miracle Network Telethon. The program, which aired on WILX, brought in nearly \$757,000 on June 2 and 3. All of the money stays in mid-Michigan to help children in need. Donations help affiliated hospitals, like Sparrow, build medically advanced programs and facilities. They also ensure children with serious illnesses can be treated in mid-Michigan regardless of their parent's ability to pay.

UR district news

The Union Representatives from **districts 8 and 11** recently resigned and left MSU employment. We thank both **Amy Henner** and **Katherine Bergdolt** for their service to CTU and wish them the best in their future endeavors.

District 8 (Grand Rapids): **Kirk Bartling** was appointed UR. Contact him at 234-2741 or kirk.bartling@hc.msu.edu.

District 31 (N&S Kedzie, Bessey, Computer Center): **Betty Walther** was reappointed as UR. Contact her at 432-5353 or walther@msu.edu.

Several of our districts are currently without a UR (districts 3, 10, 11, 12, 17, 23, 26, 33 and 40). Interested in the position? For more information, contact either URCC Chairperson **Becky Sullivan** at 884-3374 or sulli306@msu.edu or Vice President **Duferia White** at 432-1951 or whitedu@msu.edu.

Picnic

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on the November ballot that would stop Right-to-Work).

We want to thank everyone who contributed to making 2012's membership picnic so successful, especially the volunteers from our staff, union reps, board, membership and families who pitched in to help with setup, decorations, food and drinks, staffing the tables and games, and cleanup.

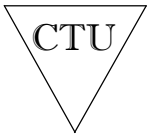
"We had a nice turnout with CTU friends and members with their families . . . even a few members' parents!" said CTU President Deb Bittner. "The weather was quite cooperative and lovely. Our parking lot and yard looked quite festive. The food was tasty. But the company was the best of all."

Memorial

continued from p. 3
the individuals with whom we communicate across campus. Our recent picnic brought together many CTUs from different areas of the University. We even had members from Detroit and Grand Rapids stop by. It was also nice to see the MSU administrators and other union officials who came over to visit. It was especially uplifting to see everyone talking, laughing and relaxing together. [Kim Miller]

I hope you take the opportunity to get to know other CTUs at one of our upcoming events. Our next Membership Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 19.





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

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Calendar

July 3. Due to the holiday, the CTU Executive Board meeting has been cancelled.

July 17. The CTU Executive Board meets at 5:15 p.m. on the first and third Tuesdays of every month at the C-T Union Hall, 2990 E. Lake Lansing Rd.

July 19. July Membership Meeting. See the ad on this page.

July 25. NutritionMatters, the Recipe for Health Cooking Series, Brody Square Demonstration Kitchen, 12:10-12:50 pm. A cooking demonstration is presented each month when the Recipe for Health is served in the dining facilities on campus. Using cash or a meal plan, purchase your lunch from the dining hall and then watch the demonstration. July features bok choy. To attend, complete a registration form at health4U.msu.edu, send an email to health4u@msu.edu, or call 353-2596.

August 8. NutritionMatters features tomatillos. See July 25 for time, location and registration details.

Protecting collective bargaining

LANSING—June 13, 2012—Nearly 685,000 Michigan voters signed a petition submitted to the Secretary of State today in support of a constitutional amendment to protect people's right to negotiate for fair wages and benefits. The 684,286 signatures submitted are more than double the state requirement to appear on the November ballot.

"Collective bargaining lifts up all workers and businesses," said Nayyirah Shariff, a Flint small business owner. "Everyone benefits when management and workers can come together and negotiate."

The petitions will now be certified by the Michigan Secretary of State Bureau of Elections to be formally added to the November ballot.

—*The Coalition to Protect Collective Bargaining*

Beat the heat of SUMMER

Come early to share some ice cream and socialize with your CT colleagues. We will be discussing issues of interest to our union members, including finances, health care and layoffs. Several door prizes will be awarded, including two for \$50 each. Join us!

July Membership Meeting
Thursday July 19, 2012
252 Erickson Hall
5:20 p.m.

