

CT News



CLERICAL-TECHNICAL UNION OF
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Volume XXXIX, Issue 6

Organized and Independent since 1974!

July/August 2012



It is already time to start planning for CTU's October 23 elections. Will this be the year you run for a position on the Executive Board or Audit Committee? This issue could help you decide. Page 4 lays out the duties for the various offices up this fall and page 5 gives the elections schedule and deadlines.

Nominations Notice:

Clerical-Technical Union of Michigan State University

Nominations for the offices of Vice President, Secretary, four (4) Directors and a single member of the Audit Committee will be accepted September 4 through 11, 2012.

The Vice President, Secretary 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 2014.

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 2015.

Written nominations will be accepted by the Election Committee or their designees, including CTU Office Secretary Barb Harris, at the CTU office from September 4 through 11, 2012, by 5 p.m.

A nominations meeting will be held on September 11, 2012, at 5:30 p.m. at the CTU office, 2990 E. Lake Lans-



CTU welcomes new HR AVP Sharon Butler

June 19, 2012—The CTU Executive Board hosted a visit from MSU Human Resources' new Assistant Vice President Sharon Butler (left) at the Union Hall. She is shown here with CTU President Deb Bittner (center) and Butler's assistant, Del Bracamontes. Butler, who assumed the AVP position in May, took time out of her schedule for a friendly, informal meeting with the Board.

ing 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.



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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 Cheryllee Finney.

Get results with our

CT classifieds!



For sale:

◆**2004 Mitsubishi Endeavor:** MPG city 17 and highway 22-23. Excellent in the snow and rain. Comfortable on long trips. MUST SEE . . . GREAT BUY! Call: 517-420-0428 or email: michelleketzler@gmail.com.

◆**Longarm quilting machine:** Handi Quilter Sixteen with stitch regulator and portable table, DVD, and CD with quilt loading, quilting, and maintenance instruction. Call for further information: 517-775-3499 or email bieberna@comcast.net.

◆**Six acres:** Vacant land on a paved road, close to state property, on Drummond Island. If interested, please call 517-290-2058 or email moserk6@gmail.com.

◆**Log cabin:** Two bedroom with garage and workshop on beautiful

Caribou Lake in the Eastern Upper Peninsula. Located 50 miles east of the Mackinac Bridge and 5 miles west of Drummond Island. The fantastic sunsets you will experience are absolutely FREE! Pictures available if interested. Please call 517-290-2058 or email moserk6@gmail.com.

For rent:

◆**Condo:** 2 bedroom townhouse, full bath and ½ bath, full basement, reserved sheltered parking, new/newer fridge, stove, dishwasher, super efficient furnace, air conditioner, paint and water heater. Great location near campus, highway access and shopping. \$815/month, available October 1. Contact jk_etc@yahoo.com.

◆**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 on the web (www.cata.org/cleancommute/index.html).

Free:

◆**Clerical-Technical Union 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.

◆**Advertise** to your colleagues in the *CT News*. Contact Cheryllee 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

The final 2012 Quarterly Membership Meeting will be held in 252 Erickson Hall, 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

CTU Office

All members welcome.

A good investment

By Deb Bittner

I recently received an inquiry from a member who, while reading her newsletter, took note of the CTU's donations to various organizations and causes. Considering that CT numbers are at an all-time low, she said, we might want to reconsider our charitable giving. In light of the economy, she was sure the groups would understand.

Because I think other members might share her concerns, I decided to address them in this column.

She raises some good points. These are difficult times, and our member numbers are down. However, in my opinion, this would be the worst time to shortchange our investment in the community.

"Union money" is actually hard-earned member money. As members, we democratically choose to put aside a portion of our wages in order to secure job protections, decent working conditions and a voice at work. The Executive Board is very aware (every elected official is also a member of the CTU) of our sacred duty to safeguard the Union's resources, including (maybe especially) our financial resources.

There are several reasons the Executive Board believes that making small donations to community organizations is a good investment of our dues. One is the importance of maintaining visibility in the community. When we have turned to the community for help as a union, we have had an outpouring of support. The Board believes small donations help maintain our good name in the community and make sure other organizations know that we stand with them—we support them

and they should consider supporting us when needed. *Union members* participate in and support the community and businesses. Our union wages play a large part in making that possible. It is essential that we reinforce this reality by keeping our organization out there—even if the donations are small.

Another reason to support community organizations is that our members and their families use some of the resources in question. Mutual support was one of the main reasons early labor organizations formed. However, the CTU can't support our own suicide prevention hotline, food kitchen or domestic violence shelter. Even if we had the resources to do so, we could tear ourselves apart trying to decide who is "worthy" of assistance and who isn't. On the other hand, we can do our small part to make sure those kinds of organizations exist if and when our members need them. And, by using our collective resources, donations cost each member pennies to a dollar while having a far greater impact.

Donations to community organizations may be down due to the economy, but that's the same reason that the need is increasing. We cannot allow worthwhile organizations—like those to which we donate—to scale back or disappear. Our members and their families need them.

Our donations have been larger lately mainly because of our contributions to the Michigan labor movement's efforts to fight laws that are devastating unions, workers and our families. As bad as the new laws are, the situation could get worse if right-to-work passes in our state. The CTU has been on record as opposing right-to-work for decades. Right-to-work



would so weaken our union that we would not be able to fight for our members with the same vigor. Therefore, we would be derelict if we were to ignore the threat. The Executive Board sees this as a critical time that requires political action.

We are lucky to have involved union members who question the actions of elected leaders and respectfully suggest improvements. With 1,600 plus members, we won't always agree, but we need to hear, understand and address each other's concerns whenever we are making policy.

Which brings me to our upcoming elections. The Executive Board, the elected body that sets policy for the CTU when the members are not meeting, will have several open positions in October. Please check out the responsibilities of the various offices on page 4 and consider running. Or, if you know someone you would like to support, encourage her or him to run. If interested, check out the schedule and deadlines on page 5. [Judy Joan Reginek]

Make sure to get a little rest and relaxation this summer and, as always, thank you for everything you do.

Leadership duties

The terms of our vice president, secretary, and four directors will be up this October. We will also need to fill a position on the Audit Committee.

To help us decide who to support, or whether or not to run, it's important to know the duties of the position.

The duties of officers on the Executive Board are laid out in Article V of the Constitution (www.ctumsu.org) or call the office at 355-1903 if you don't have internet access.

In order to fulfill those duties, elected officials are expected to take on many responsibilities. Those expectations, along with the duties of Audit Committee members, are detailed on this page.



Secretary

The Secretary of the CTU is expected to fulfill all responsibilities listed for Directors and officers. In order to fulfill the Constitutionally mandated responsibilities of the Office, the Secretary also is expected to:

- oversee maintenance of the current

Directors and Officers

In order to fulfill the Constitutionally mandated responsibilities of any position on the CTU Executive Board, those elected are expected to:

- carry out and honor the oath of office;
- commit the time required to serve the Union including some day, evening or weekend hours;
- support unionism;
- uphold the Union mission and direction as set by the Executive Board and the CTU Constitution;
- make decisions and create policy;
- use input/data from membership, experts, and staff when time permits; [Gail L. DeGood]

- serve on either the Grievance, Appeals and Trials or Finance Committee;
- represent the CTU at all times;
- attend some labor functions as a CTU representative;
- attend Board meetings, UR meetings, regular and special membership meetings (attendance mandatory);
- when possible, work in conjunction with URs on membership issues;
- keep URs informed and in the loop;
- be able to work as part of a group of people;
- honor issues of confidentiality;
- control rumors/misperceptions.

Vice President

The Vice President of the CTU is expected to fulfill all of the responsibilities listed for Directors and officers. In order to fulfill the Constitutionally mandated responsibilities of the Office, the Vice President also is expected to:

- serve as the Executive Board liaison to the Union Representatives and the Union Representative Coordinating Committee;
- substitute for the President, as necessary;
- chair the Grievance Appeals and Trials Committee;
- serve as authorized signatory of the Union;
- use 25% released time from MSU position in order to fulfill duties.

Audit Committee

This description of the Audit Committee and the duties of its members is taken from Article VI of the Constitution:

- The Audit Committee shall consist of three members. They shall be elected for staggered three-year terms with said election held at the same time and under the same rules as apply to the Executive Board. Members of the Audit Committee may not be members of the Executive Board.
- The Audit Committee shall make or cause to be made at least a yearly audit of the Union's finances and shall report to the membership the result of such audit.
- The Audit Committee shall monitor normal operating expenses and shall serve as an independent communications channel between the members of the Union and the custodians of the Contingency Fund for verification of withdrawals from that fund.



2012 CTU elections schedule

August 2012. Nomination notice distributed through the *CT News*.

September 4 through September 11. Nomination period.

September 11. 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 process.

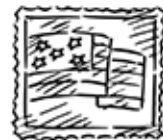
September 18. Deadline of 5 p.m. for candidates to submit a campaign statement/biography (up to 500 words, electronic format preferred) to the CTU office secretary for publication in the *CT News*. Photo arrangements must also be made at this time by contacting Cheryllee Finney at 432-9580 or Cheryl@ctumsu.org.

October 5. Election notice will be mailed to the last known home address of all union members.

October 8–19. 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.



CTU of MSU
2990 E. Lake Lansing Rd.
East Lansing, MI 48823



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. CTU members should ensure that their most recent home address is on file with the union. To verify and update your address, login at <http://ebs.msu.edu/>, click on the ESS Salary tab, select personal info and go to addresses. Direct questions to the EBS support office at 884-3000.

October 8. Week of publication for the special elections edition of *CT News*.

October 15. Candidate forums begin.

October 19. Deadline to request absentee ballots from Barb Harris (355-1903, Barb@ctumsu.org) by 5 p.m.

October 22. Absentee ballots need to be at the Post Office box by the end of the day.

October 23. Polling from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Official vote count begins at 6 p.m. [Patricia A. Schultz]

October 24. Officers installed at the Membership Meeting.

November 2. Deadline for receipt of election protests.

November 13. 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.

UR district news

The following CTs have petitioned for reappointment to UR positions. They will be reappointed if no other members from these districts express an interest in a position before 5 p.m., August 28.

▼ **District 25** (Spartan Way, IM West, Demonstration Hall, Jenison, Circle IM, Breslin, Munn Ice Arena): **Brenda Bailey**.

▼ **District 37** (Clinical Center A-Wing): **Kim Baker**.

The following URs have promoted out of the bargaining unit. We wish them the best in their future endeavors:

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

▼ **District 20** (Eppley, Owen, Shaw, North Business College Complex): **Tammy Jo Sopocy**.

Interested in becoming a UR? Contact URCC Chairperson Becky Sullivan (884-3374 or sulli306@msu.edu).



Board actions

April through June 2012

The following CTU Executive Board discussions took place April through June 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.

April 3

- Approved final 2012 budget.
- Renewed \$192.02 annual subscription to Detroit Free Press
- Donated \$250 to MSU Safe Place's 18th Race for the Place.
- Donated \$200 for Union Label "Renew America" expo.
- Received report on mandatory inspection and test of elevator.
- Discussed upcoming Board retreat.
- Discussed Red Cross strike and the impact on CTU members.

April 17

Approved proposal from Consumers Energy and RM Electric to upgrade light fixtures with low energy units for \$6,320.58 minus a new Consumers Energy incentive of \$1,723.70, a total \$4,596.88 expense for CTU.

April 19 (Email discussion/vote)

Agreed to buy four \$30 tickets to the APRI Lansing Chapter Activist Awards where Executive Board Member Willie Paulsen is being honored.

May 1

Meeting cancelled to allow Executive Board members to attend the MSU Service Recognition Awards.

May 3 (Email discussion/vote)

Agreed to purchase a \$150 ad for the Cristo Rey program book.

May 15

- Donated \$150 to Tri-County Meals on Wheels.
- Donated \$100 to the Women's Center of Greater Lansing.
- Received report on Lansing Workers' Memorial Day event.
- Discussed CTU's participation in investigating dental plan options in light of increases in Aetna's premiums. [Ashley Hann O'Bryant]
- Cancelled the July 3 Board meeting due to holiday schedules.
- Received reports on fundraisers for Lansing Food Bank Empty Plate and the MSU Department of Theater.
- Received report on an NIH grant proposal that would use our member population in a study by MSU's Health4U and two professors.

June 5

- Approved an estimated \$3,928.50 to finish basement repairs and upgrade the electrical closet.
- Agreed to donate \$50 to the Women's Hall of Fame picnic fundraiser. [William T. Parke, Jr.]
- Discussed merger within the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

June 19

- Approved \$100 donation to the Greater Lansing Food Bank summer lunch program.
- Donated \$100 to the Greater Lansing Old News Boys golf outing.
- Agreed to send a contract administrator and the president to the Michigan Labor-Management Association Conference for \$109 each plus costs. (Ed. Note: The event was cancelled and the check returned.)
- Renewed annual \$159.95 subscription to the ClipArt graphics program.
- Received report on the activities of the Coalition of Labor Organizations and Joint Health Care Committee.
- Received report on the meeting of CTU Executive Board members and staff with new Assistant Vice President for Human Resources Sharon Butler.
- Finalized plans to meet informally with Grand Rapids members.
- Received report on the Michigan State AFL-CIO's Union Label "Renew America" Expo.
- Received report from the Picnic Committee: approximately 140 to 160 attendees and all feedback positive, especially about the children's area and the cake walk.
- Because of computer problems and other delays, the May and June newsletters were combined.

July Membership Meeting

Members of CTU held our quarterly Membership Meeting on July 19. Because we fell 23 members short of a quorum, no business could be conducted. Therefore, the positions of vice president and one director will continue to be filled by interim Board appointees until the general election in October.

Because President Deb Bittner was on vacation, Vice President Duferia White chaired the meeting.

Treasurer Jan Wallace reported on our current finances. She also asked for the members' opinion about continuing CTU's financial contribution to the fight against anti-labor laws in Michigan. As a group, the members present said that they want CTU to continue fighting right-to-work and other laws that threaten workers and their families.

Contract Administrator Dan McNeil reported that we have only a few CTs on active layoff and these situations are being monitored closely.

McNeil also discussed the activities of the Coalition of Labor Organizations and the MSU/CLO Joint Health Care Committee. He said that there hasn't been a lot of activity lately, except for talks about our dental program (see p. 8).

Winners of door prizes were: Amanda VanKoevinger and Janet Roe-Darden, \$50 each; Cassandra Hatinger, four Lugnuts tickets; Becky Sullivan, two Lugnuts tickets; and Kirk Bartling, CTU hoodie.



July 19—Union Representatives Becky Sullivan, Karen Jakus, Tammy Jo Sopocy, Kim Smith and Pam Sloan (left to right) were among the attendees at the July Membership Meeting.



June 21—UR Kirk Bartling talked to Office Manager Patricia Shackleton during the union's lunchtime get-together in Grand Rapids.

Grand Rapids visit

Recognizing that timing and distance made it difficult for some members to attend the union's June 7 picnic in East Lansing, the CTU took the picnic on the road.

On June 21, CTU staff members, the president, vice president and several directors carpooled to Grand Rapids for a very informal lunchtime meeting where we could talk union and get to know one another a little better.

In coming months, the CTU plans to host similar get-togethers in other outlying areas where we have CTs as well as in various locations on the main campus.

"The union is facing a lot of difficult issues, especially with the political situation," said CTU President Deb Bittner. "We need to talk."

CTU notables

Congratulations to CT **Tanja Brady**, winner of the 2012 Ruth Jameyson Above and Beyond Award. Brady is pursuing a Masters of Public Health degree while working as a systems assistant in the Physiology Department.

The award recognizes a regular, active support staff member who is pursuing a post-baccalaureate degree while also performing "Above and Beyond" in the scope of her or his duties at MSU.

Sometimes you gotta laugh



"We're restructuring your job as a volunteer position."

Expectations

An applicant was being interviewed for admission to a prominent business school. "Tell me," inquired the interviewer, "where do you expect to be ten years from now?"

"Well, let's see," replied the student. "It's Wednesday afternoon. I guess I'd be on the golf course by now."

—reprinted from *Union Communications Services*

Send your labor related, humorous stories, emails, photos or graphics, to Cheryl@ctumsu.org.





CTU OF MSU
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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Dental news

For many years, MSU employees had only one dental insurance option: the Delta Dental base plan, just as it is now, with a low annual maximum and high out-of-pocket charges.

In the 1990s, the unions convinced the University to offer a Dental Maintenance Organization plan that provided coverage with no annual maximum and low or no out-of-pocket costs for most services. The University agreed, stipulating that the premium (which is paid by the University) could not exceed that of the base plan. As the years passed, we had so many complaints about the quality of dental care under the DMO that we closed it to new enrollees and sought an alternative.

About five years ago, we agreed on an Aetna DMO plan as an alternative to the base plan. Although it provided more options than the previous DMO, the network remained small.

Contractually, the Aetna premium must not be higher than the base plan. However, Aetna's premiums have exceeded Delta's for the past three years. For two of those years, Aetna agreed to cap its premiums at the Delta rate. As a result, fewer dentists participated in the Aetna plan, further restricting the network. This year, Aetna decided to increase its premiums.

As a result, CTU signed a letter of agreement with the University that requires meeting as a committee to

find a mutual resolution on dental coverage by October 1, 2012. This way any changes in dental benefits can go into effect July 1, 2013. The Committee is comprised of representatives from CTU (President Deb Bittner is our representative), APA, APSA, AFSCME 1585, AFSCME 999, Operating Engineers, UNTF, and IATSE along with MSU Benefits and Employee Relations.

The goal is to gain better access and quality of care for our members while keeping the costs down for both members and the University. The CTU will be meeting over the next few months with the University to reach mutual resolution on the issue.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your dental coverage, especially any problems getting access to dentists with either Aetna or Delta, please contact Deb at 355-1903.



"We think it's important to offer a dental plan because working here really bites."