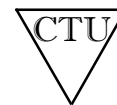


CT News



CLERICAL-TECHNICAL UNION OF
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Volume XXXVII, Issue 4

Organized and Independent since 1974!

April 2010

Health care update

Open Enrollment

The Open Enrollment period, when we choose our health care plan and options for 2010, is April 19 through May 10. Our options will include the changes we approved when we ratified our Health Care Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) earlier this year. Because of the number of changes, it is important that we get all of the information before making personal decisions about our health care coverage.

Community Blue will continue to be one of the plans offered. The other option is Blue Care Network (BCN), this year's fully funded plan. Full-time employees will not have a premium deducted from their paychecks for the BCN option. Those choosing Community Blue will pay the difference between the two plans. See the table on page 5 for a breakdown of contributions.

Detailed information about the health care plans is available in the 2010-2011 Employee Open Enrollment Packet available on the MSU Human Resources website at www.hr.msu.edu. The packet gives the schedule for Benefits Fairs where vendor representatives and MSU Human Resources Benefits staff members will be available to answer questions as well as the two dozen one-hour informational sessions that are being offered to discuss the new BCN plan.

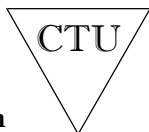
One difference this year is our ability to

Update continued on p. 5



Photo by Tim Potter, MSU Bikes Service Center

Spring is the time to ride! MSU Bike Service Manager Tim Potter provides some timely information to assist members of the MSU community in getting across campus quickly and efficiently (see page 4).



Clerical-Technical Union
of Michigan State University
2990 East Lake Lansing Road
East Lansing, MI 48823-2281

PUBLISHED MONTHLY

Phone: (517) 355-1903

Fax: (517) 353-3284

Website: www.msu.edu/user/ctumsu

CTU EXECUTIVE BOARD

President:

Deb Bittner ctupres@msu.edu

Vice President:

Nancy Gray grayn@msu.edu

Treasurer:

Jan Wallace wallac12@msu.edu

Secretary:

Willie Paulsen paulsenw@msu.edu

Directors:

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Walt Peebles peeblesw@msu.edu

Jeanette Robertson robertso@msu.edu

Janet Roe-Darden jroe@msu.edu

Norma Teague teaguen@msu.edu

Duferia White whitedu@msu.edu

Jennifer Woods woods@msu.edu

CTU STAFF

Contract Administrators

John Klusinske ctuca2@msu.edu

Dan McNeil ctuca1@msu.edu

Financial Manager

Patricia Shackleton ctumngr@msu.edu

Organizational Manager

Barb Harris ctustaff@msu.edu

Communications Specialist

Cherylee Finney ctnews@msu.edu

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:

◆ **Cockatiel and cage.** This pretty bird wolf whistles and mimics. Harley is approximately one year old. \$85 includes cage. 989-640-1078.

◆ CTU tees &

hoodies: T-shirts, various colors, \$5. Light heather gray hoodies w/green logo, \$20. Both available in various sizes. 355-1903, ctustaff@msu.edu.



◆ **2002 Chevy Trailblazer LS:** 4 w/d, 133000, dark blue, power windows, power door locks, seats 5, trailer hitch, very clean interior, no rust, new brakes, new battery, tinted windows, cold a/c, rear temp control. \$6,900. Contact mikesmom715@yahoo.com or call 517-449-7625.

◆ **Breast pump:** Medela Pump-In-Style Advanced electric backpack model. Used for 2 months—like new. Includes pump, bottle cooler, bottles, nipples, battery pack, A/C adapter and pump accessories. Purchased for \$279.99. Selling for \$200/OBO. Inquire to Waterchild@hotmail.com.

◆ **2007 Aprilia SR50 Ditech scooter:** Great shape, like new. 100+ mpg, 50cc, 2 stroke engine, no motorcycle license needed, \$5 per year registration, 45 mph+ top speed, new Michelin tires, all weather cover included. 2,500 miles, hardly used. Asking \$2,500 OBO. Call 517-833-9670.

◆ **1987 Schult mobile home:** Webberville, Hamlin Park. 14 x 70; 2 bedroom, 1 bath, washer & dryer included with appliances, snowblower, electric lawn mower. Cathedral ceiling; china cabinet in dining area as well as walk in pantry & linen closet. Very well cared for and in very nice spot in the park. \$6,500 or best offer. Call 517-347-1523; after 6 pm 517-468-3469.

For rent:

◆ **Townhouse condo:** Available 6/1/2010. 2 bedroom, bath and 1/2, two story, full basement, sheltered reserved parking, deck, patio. New, newer 95.5% efficient furnace, AC, carpeting, glass top stove, dishwasher, deck, paint, blinds. Great location near campus, Lake Lansing Meijer & highway interchange. \$810/mo. 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 website (www.cata.org/cleancommute/index.html).

Free: Advertise to your colleagues in the *CT News*. Contact Cherylee Finney at ctnews@msu.edu. *CT News* accepts ads from CTU members on items and services provided by CTU members and/or their household family members.

General Membership Meetings in 2010

Quarterly Membership Meetings for the rest of 2010 will be held on Wednesdays—April 28, July 28 and October 27—in Room 252 Erickson Hall. Meetings begin at 5:20, but the doors open at 5, so come early to socialize. These 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.

The cost of security

By Deb Bittner

Have you heard? The economy is turning around. Yeah, right! Look around our state, and the problems seem to be getting worse, not better. Must be that “jobless recovery” I’ve heard about.

I heard a tax preparer say recently that a lot of people in our community are getting higher state and federal tax refunds. Great news! Then she clarified that the higher refunds were the result of lower incomes and unemployment. That kind of puts a damper on it.

These are hard times. Those of us who have a job are anxious about losing it and we struggle for something to say to neighbors, friends or family members who might not. It is easy to complain and be angry. It is really easy to complain about taxes, school millages, rising costs, and the bills that seem to nag at us from every corner of our lives. We are bombarded.

I heard a quote today that’s relevant: “Taxes are the price we pay for civilization.” It’s true. Our taxes pay for our roads, our bridges, our street lights, our police officers, our courts, our fire fighters, our paramedics, our public libraries, and a whole lot more. You can really tell the trouble we are in when our tax payers—home owners, consumers, businesses—are struggling. Taxes go down and our cities and municipalities cannot balance their budgets. Our infrastructure crumbles. Our social systems start to deteriorate.

It is a tough act to balance. We want our communities to be pretty, safe and wonderful places to live. We are tired of paying bills and stretching dollars. We just want to have a good standard of living, nothing extravagant. (Okay, if we

win the lottery we will splurge a bit!) . Yet we know that security and decent communities come with a cost.

Some people think of union dues in much the same way as they do taxes (sometimes with much of the same re-

sentment). Members have asked me why they have to pay dues and what they get for them. Well, the union—democratically created, run and financed by the members for their own benefit and protection—is a small business.

Union continued on p. 7



Photo by Harley Seeley, University Relations (Courtesy of the MSU Bikes Service Center)

The staff of the MSU Bikes Service Center (L to R): Tim Potter, Fai Mok, Jon-Marc Eyer, Mike Weigand, Melissa Stewart, Rachel Jacobson

Spring is for biking!

The flowers are popping and the streets are snow free, so that means it's time for biking! There's no better way to enjoy the spring weather, save some \$\$ and burn off some winter calories.

If your bike was in good riding shape in the fall or end of last summer chances are it just needs some air in the tires and oil (use proper chain oil sold in a bike shop) on the chain and you'll be off and riding.

If your trusty steed has been languishing in the garage or basement for longer, it'd be a good idea to have it checked over by a bike shop, like your friendly shop on campus, the MSU Bikes Service Center. A tune-up once a year is good preventative maintenance to avoid more costly repairs and aggravation down the road, not to mention giving you a more enjoyable ride. We also have a free air-station outside our Center available 24-7.

If you don't have a bike, consider buying or renting one from MSU Bikes where they restore/recycle old abandoned or privately donated bikes and get them back on the road either through sales or rentals. Or, if you've

got an old bike that you're not using any longer and would like to see it go to someone who's needing a bike, please consider donating it to MSU Bikes (you'll get a tax credit and MSU Foundation donor points).

Established by Vice President of Finance and Operations Dr. Fred Poston in the fall of 2006, MSU Bikes is one of just a small number of university-owned bike shops in the country. It was built to encourage more bicycle use on our campus to help keep us more "green," improve the health of our community and reduce motor vehicle traffic and parking congestion.

We're here year-round, Monday through Friday. Please visit our web site at <http://www.bikes.msu.edu> for our current hours and more information on our services!

This article was submitted by Tim Potter, Manager, MSU Bikes Service Center. The center is located at B10 Bessey Hall (along the North River Trail, 300 feet west of Farm Lane Bridge). To contact the Center, phone 517-432-3400, fax 517-432-2743, email bikes@msu.edu, or visit the website.

Spelling Bee

Submitted by Audrey Smith, CT

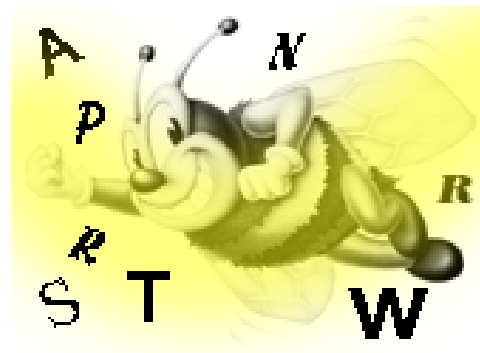
The Parents Action Committee on Minority Academic Concerns (PACMAC) will hold its Twenty-Second Annual Community-Wide Spelling Bee on Saturday, May 8, 2010, in the MSU Kellogg Center Auditorium at 10:45 a.m.

Students from around the Greater Lansing area in the first through eighth grades participate in this contest. All contestants receive a "goody bag" and Certificate of Participation. Also, their names are entered into the Grand Prize Drawing for a bicycle.

First through fourth prize winners in each grade level receive cash prizes and a trophy, and they will be recognized by the Lansing City Council in May. In addition, the school with the most enrolled students will receive the 2010 Plaque of Recognition.

In preparation for the spelling bee, one rehearsal has been scheduled for Wednesday, April 28, from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Specific information about the rehearsal along with general spelling bee information will be shared upon receipt of the registration fee.

Registration forms are available by contacting Audrey Smith via email (smithau910@yahoo.com), by telephone (517-887-2118), or at www.msu.edu/~ctumsu/PACMAC.pdf. The registration fee is \$10/student. The deadline is May 1.



Update

continued from p. 1

enroll an “Other Eligible Individual,” or OEI. The criteria for qualifying as an OEI are detailed in the packet. Support staff who have covered same-sex domestic partners in the past need to be aware that there is no automatic transfer of Same-Sex Domestic Partnership Agreements into the OEI program. Members must meet the OEI program criteria in order to enroll someone for benefits under the OEI program. The form is available at www.hr.msu.edu/forms.htm. OEI benefits are taxed, so anyone interested in this program should be aware of the tax impact.

As in past years, anyone making changes in coverage—such as adding or removing a dependent, switching health or dental care plans, or changing life insurance options—must participate in Open Enrollment. Staff members who wish **to continue coverage** for a spouse or OEI must participate by filling out the affidavit.

You do *not* need to go through Open Enrollment if 1) you are not making changes, and 2) you are not covering a spouse or OEI. [Teryl Hall]

Anyone currently enrolled in PHP who does not want to be automatically switched to BCN must participate.

To access Open Enrollment, go to the Human Resources Website and then sign on under “eHR Login.” Click on “Benefits Enrollments & Information.” Select the appropriate link and proceed. Direct questions or problems associated with enrolling to the Benefits office at benefitsinfo@hr.msu.edu or 353-4434. For long distance, call toll-free 1-800-353-4434.

To see if your health care provider participates in BCN, or to find a BCN provider in your geographic area, visit <http://mybcn.org/>, where you can fol-

2010-11 unionized employee monthly health plan contributions

Both Blue Care Network and Community Blue include CVS/Caremark prescription drug coverage.

		Full-time	3/4 time	1/2 time
BCN	Single	\$0.00	\$107.35	\$214.70
	2 person	\$0.00	\$225.47	\$450.92
	Family	\$0.00	\$264.76	\$529.52
Community Blue	Single	\$55.50	\$162.85	\$270.20
	2 person	\$116.53	\$342.00	\$567.45
	Family	\$135.90	\$400.66	\$665.42

low the steps to search for providers by name, geographic location or type of service. [Theresa Iadipaolo]

All unions on board

We are happy to report that the MSU members of the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 324 (IUOE) will be joining the rest of the unions in our ongoing health care talks with the University. The Operating Engineers held another ratification vote which resulted in their accepting the Health Care MOU.

In addition to working to keep health care costs down and quality up at MSU, the unions will be investigating the impact of the newly passed “Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act” on our health care plans, and they will share this information as it becomes available.

Retiree health care

On April 13, we received President Lou Anna Simon’s statement that MSU intends to eliminate employer-paid post-retirement health benefits for employees hired on or after July 1, 2010.

This change applies only to individuals hired *after* July 1 of this year.

The unions did not agree to the elimination of these benefits during health

care negotiations. However, expecting the University to pursue this path, the unions did sign a letter of agreement requiring both sides to meet “to bargain over the terms of an exit strategy” in the event that MSU found it necessary to eliminate the benefits. The unions will now meet with the University to discuss options for new hires that would provide health care assistance upon retirement.

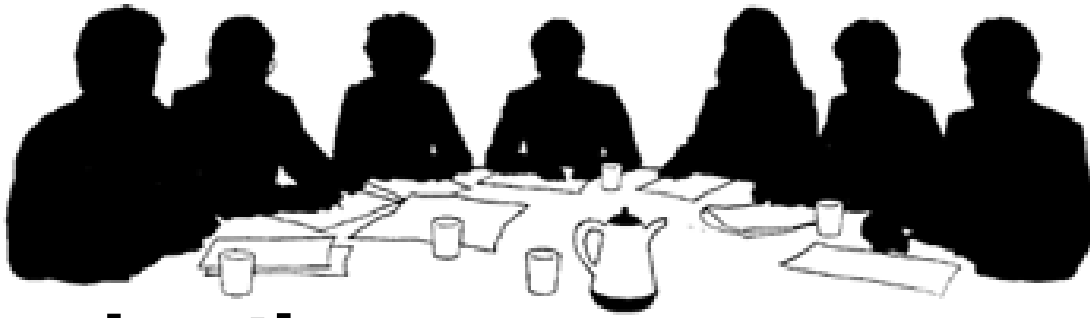


Farm Stand now open Thursdays

The Student Organic Farm Stand is now open every Thursday on Farm Lane in front of the MSU Auditorium, 11 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Ten minute parking is available.

Save the date!

Join your colleagues at the C-T Union Hall for our annual picnic on Thursday, June 10. CTU will provide the hotdogs, drinks and games. We will start gathering at 4 p.m. and enjoy each other’s company until 7. Families and friends welcome!



Board actions

Mid-December 2009—March 2010

The following CTU Executive Board discussions took place mid-December 2009 through March 2010. 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.

December 15, 2009

Agreed to send both Contract Administrators to Labor Law and Arbitration Conference in Chicago, at a cost of \$395 each plus lodging of \$165 each and transportation at the lowest rate available.

Purchased eight tickets for a total of \$200 to attend the Greater Lansing Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration luncheon.

Agreed to send up to two CTs to the Michigan State AFL-CIO/UAW-CAP/Labor Council Community Services class for \$30 each. *[Editor's note: No one attended and funds were not spent.]*

Authorized up to \$300 toward purchasing a portable printer with blue tooth adapter.

January 5, 2010

Agreed to recommend approval of Health Care Tentative Agreement. Set ratification for February 3 with vote counting on February 4.

Turned meeting over to a union leadership presentation on the Health Care Tentative Agreement by members of the Coalition of Labor Organizations (CLO) bargaining team.

January 19

Transferred \$50,000 from Operating Savings to Operating Checking.

Voted to send up to four individuals to the Labor Education Program's

Employment Law Update Conference at a cost of \$125 per person.

Received reports on Martin Luther King, Jr. luncheon and Labor and Employment Relations Association (LERA) presentation.

February 2

At the request of a member, donated \$50 to TJ's Thunder fundraising dinner for Juvenile Arthritis Donation to go to the Arthritis Foundation, Michigan Chapter.

Discussed CTU fund transfers, preparations for the vote on the Health Care Tentative Agreement, progress of suing individuals delinquent in paying back Gerri Olson Lottery Loans, the upcoming Executive Board retreat, and the successful fundraiser for Ingham County Animal Shelter.

February 16

Agreed to purchase OPAC Office Skills, Clerical Skills Software Assessment Testing program so CTU members can practice the specific placement tests utilized by MSU.

Agreed to send up to two people to the Labor Notes Conference at a cost of \$85 per person, \$115 lodging, plus reimbursement for meals and mileage.

Approved \$100 sponsorship of The Michigan Summit 2010: "A Blueprint for Change." Sponsorship allows a vendor table and five attendees.

March 2

Received report from CTU Investment Advisor Fred Schaad on our investments for the past year. Our investments showed a gain of over \$300,000 in value last year. We are receiving an 8% return on our investment portfolio at this point and have outperformed the index.

Transferred \$20,000 from operation savings to operations checking.

Purchased a \$35 ticket for a Board member to attend the Annual Ingham County Animal Shelter Humanitarian Awards Banquet.

Received Treasurer's report that \$6,000 in delinquent Gerri Olson Lottery Loans has been collected.

March 16

Accepted the 2010 CTU Operating Budget as presented by the Finance Committee with some modification.

Received announcement that CTU President Deb Bittner will serve as interim president for the CLO until an election can be held in June.

Received reports on new Union Representatives (URs) stepping forward, employee training at University Services, union training, and building repairs. *[Edyth Holland]*

Decided to limit regular, ongoing attendance by CTU board and staff to monthly LERA lunch meetings to two individuals (down from five).

Union

continued from p. 3

Like all small businesses, we have bills to pay that are not getting smaller. We pay taxes. We maintain a facility. We try to be a good employer. However, with fewer members we have less money coming in. The CTU membership has fallen to approximately 1,700 from a high of 2,500 in 1988. And that means less dues revenue. However, we still demand the highest quality services. We still need to negotiate contracts (like the recently ratified Health Care Memorandum of Understanding). We still need to demonstrate that CTs are an integral part of the campus and the community.

And we still need to save money wherever we can and in any way that will not compromise our high level of service. It is a tough balance. Just as almost every other business and government agency in the state, CTU has been looking closely at expenditures and cutting where possible. We discuss thoroughly why or why not to contribute to a cause or buy new equipment. We look at purchasing building supplies from low cost, but still union and "made-in-America," companies. We especially like to purchase items from MSU Stores or the new Surplus Store. We rent vehicles from MSU's Motor Pool to cut costs. We do our best to make the dues dollars go a long way.

However, the formula that allocates money to operations never seems adequate for the work that we need to do. Layoffs, workplace issues, contract enforcement—these duties haven't decreased with the bad economy or declining membership. We still need to be the strong union our founders created us to be.

Therefore, the CTU Executive Board will propose a transfer of funds from our contingency fund to operations at

the Membership Meeting on Wednesday, April 28. Additional information about the proposal will be distributed before the meeting.

A few years ago, we decided that this is the best way to manage our budget—come before the membership, lay out the budget and our expenses, discuss all of it and then ask the members to vote to transfer money. This process has served us well, as long as we have enough people present to do the business of the union. Fifty members are required for a quorum.

Please try to make this meeting and help us with these discussions. We will also have our annual audit review by our long-time chief accountant, Jim Nyquist of Maner Costerisan, P.C.

The Membership Meeting will also provide an opportunity to discuss issues of concern to CTU members and to provide feedback on ideas that the Executive Board has for increasing member involvement. Because April 28 is Workers Memorial Day, we will spend a little time discussing the increase in workplace injuries that seems to be running parallel to a decrease in the enforcement of safety regulations, a situation made grimly apparent by the recent deaths of miners in West Virginia. [Josette Pashkowsky]

The Membership Meeting does have its bright spots. Light refreshments, courtesy of our Solidarity Committee, will be available. And the door prizes and other giveaways are always a hit. More important, however, is the fellowship of meeting other CTs and hearing how they have handled problems in the workplace. It is a real stress reliever to be with others in the same boat who understand what we're going through. There is, after all, strength in numbers! Hope to see you on April 28!

UR district news

District 8. (MSU Grand Rapids Campus): **Amy Henner** was elected UR by acclimation. She can be contacted at 616-234-2648 or hennera@msu.edu.

District 25 (Spartan Way, IM West, Demonstration Hall, Jenison, Circle IM, Breslin, Munn Ice Arena): **Brenda Bailey** submitted a petition for reappointment. If no other members from her district step forward before May 6, she will continue as UR.

The following members were appointed UR in their districts.

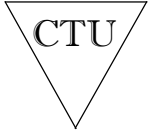
▼ **District 31** (North and South Kedzie, Bessey, Computer Center): **Betty Walther** can be reached at 432-5353 or walther@msu.edu.

▼ **District 36** (Linton, Eustace, Chittendon, Marshall, Morrill): Contact **Kelli Kolasa** at 355-7500 or kolasa@msu.edu.

District 39 (Communication Arts): **Rachel Iseler** won election for UR. She can be contacted at 432-3676 or rachel@msu.edu. We thank former UR **Pam Brock** for her service to the CTU and look forward to continuing to work with her in other capacities.

Want more information about becoming a UR? Contact URCC Chairperson Colleen Drake (432-6123 or drakec@msu.edu) or Vice President Nancy Gray (353-8632 or grayn@msu.edu).





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

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Calendar

April 19–May 10 Health Care Open Enrollment. [Theresa Sattazahn]

April 28 CTU Membership Meeting, 252 Erickson Hall, 5:20 p.m., doors open at 5 p.m. for socializing. See page 3 for details.

April 30 “Rocking Blood River: Songs of Working Class Detroit,” Don “Doop” Duprie and the Inside Outlaws. Free. MSU Library, Room 449W. LEP Brown Bag Series.

May 4 CTU Executive Board Meeting, 5:15 p.m., C-T Union Hall. Members welcome.

May 14 Deadline to submit nominations for the 2010 CT Recognition Award. Forms available at www.hr.msu.edu/news.asp. Direct questions to Jackie Mussell at 517-884-0114 or mussellj@hr.msu.edu.

May 17 Deadline to submit items for the June 2010 CT News.

May 18 CTU Executive Board Meeting, 5:15 p.m., C-T Union Hall. Members welcome.

May 31 Deadline to enroll or renew enrollment in the voluntary, employee-paid vision care program through Michigan Employee Benefits Services. Benefits begin July 1, 2010. Go to <https://onlinemebs.com/> for questions or to enroll on-line. Or call 1-800-968-6327; press 1 at the prompt and then any of the following extensions: 367, 381, 355, 390 or 373.

June 5 (Saturday) “People Skills for Union Leaders.” Leaders at all levels—from activists to presidents—need the skills to work with a wide range of people in order to represent the union’s interest. This workshop will focus on two of those skills. One, oral communication (i.e., basic public speaking), will help anyone who has to make a case to an audience, whether it’s in grievance handling, bargaining, lobbying, running for office, or giving a report at a board meeting. The second skill, conflict resolution, will deal with handling conflicts informally and

can be used to deal with issues between members as well as handling issues with management outside the formal grievance procedure. \$75 includes lunch. C-T Union Hall, 9:30 am–3 pm. To register, go to www.lir.msu.edu/laborEd/workshops.php.

June 10 Annual CTU picnic (p. 5).



"I'm asking each employee to blacktop their own area in our parking lot."