



Questions

President Deb Bittner addresses some of the questions we've received lately, p. 3.



CTU picnic

Join CTs, our families and our friends for the much anticipated annual picnic, p. 5.



Executive Board

A report on some of the Board's recent actions, p. 6.



CT news

The voice of the Clerical-Technical Union of Michigan State University

May/June 2013

CTU Solidarity Lunches



May 21, Spartan Stadium Tower—CTU Member Sue Blonde, Vice President Kim Smith and UR Brenda Bailey review the union's contract with MSU at one of several CTU Solidarity Lunches being held in districts across campus and in our outlying areas.

Our Solidarity Lunches have turned out to be quite a hit with members. [Sharon Mills]

We've already held several, where we touched on a wide range of union-related topics, from current health care negotiations, to the possible impact of the Affordable Care Act on our benefits, to our response to the new "right-to-work" legislation, to situations members are facing in their individual work sites.

The lunch meetings provide a convenient opportunity for us to get together and share our questions, ideas and solutions in a timely manner—just what we need in this highly volatile environment.

The lunches are provided by the union and are for members only. Most of us will probably choose to attend meetings

Lunches continued on p. 3

Lunch with the union

Our opportunity to meet, break bread & develop working strategies for a hostile environment

To request a Solidarity Lunch in your area, contact your Union Representative. Don't have a UR? Contact CTU Vice President Kim Smith at Kim@ctumsu.org. Lunches will be posted on our website at www.ctumsu.org as they are scheduled, so check back regularly.



CTnews

The voice of the Clerical-Technical Union
of Michigan State University

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Organized and
independent
since 1974!

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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.

CTclassifieds

For sale:

▼ **2004 Mitsubishi Endeavor:** Charcoal gray, AWD, SUV, power everything, AC, CD player, cloth interior, 126,000 miles (highway), very clean. MPG city 17, highway 22-23. Excellent in the snow and rain. Comfortable on long trips. \$6,500. Call 517-420-0428, michelleketzler@gmail.com.

▼ **Prestini alto sax:** \$250; **TV:** 19" Insignia, \$50; **Malibu electric guitar:** Greg Bennett Design, with case and Rage amp, like new, \$250; **Leather sectional:** 12', navy blue, cost \$3,000, selling for \$300. Call Shirley at 517-230-9752.

▼ **Own a piece of the rock—Drummond Island:** Six acres on a paved county road yet close to State land and trail. Great potential for building a cabin or year-round home. Land contract available with good terms. Please call to inquire (517-290-2058) or email moserk6@gmail.com.

▼ **Carriage House Furniture and Antiques:** We buy & sell furniture and estates, antiques. We have Murano, Lladro, Lalique, Waterford, Baccarat, Hummels, Disney, Royal Dalton, twig furniture, slab wood coffee table, Longaberger, chandeliers, dining room sets, costume jewelry, pottery,

jelly cupboards, chairs, coffee tables, and more. Check out our website or visit in person! Mon & Tues 5:30-8; Thur 11-3 and 5:30-8, Fri 1-5, Sat 10-4, Closed Wed & Sun or by appointment only. Proprietors: Martha & Barry Bernath, 108 N. Main Street, Ovid, MI 48866. Phone: 989-834-0440. www.carriagehousefurnitureandantiques.com / carriagehouse@frontier.com.

Services:

▼ **Quality Carpet and Upholstery Cleaners:** Warmer temperatures and Spring flowers are reminders to start to think about our Spring cleaning needs. It is a good time now to schedule and make your appointment early for those upcoming graduations, showers, and weddings or just to have a sparkling clean fresh house to start the Spring season. Give us a call at 517-694-0497 and we will be happy to help you with all your carpet and upholstery Spring cleaning needs.

▼ **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).

Wanted:

▼ **Portable basketball hoop:** Used. Photos to Patricia@ctumsu.org or call 675-7649.

Free:

▼ **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.

▼ **Advertise** to your colleagues in the CT News. Contact Cherylee Finney at Cheryl@ctumsu.org. We accept ads from CTU members on items for sale and/or services provided by CTU members and/or their household family members.

Membership Meetings

Meetings for the rest of 2013 will be held in 252 Erickson Hall on Tuesday, July 16 and Wednesday, October 23. 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

The only Board Meeting in July will be held July 16, from 3 until 5 p.m.

We get questions!

President Deb Bittner

With Solidarity Lunches, the new member meeting, and the April Membership Meeting, I've had lots of opportunities lately to meet with members. It's been great, and I thank everyone who has taken the time to attend. These experiences have left me hopeful for our union's future and humbled by the strength and resourcefulness of our CTs.

I've heard CTs express appreciation for the assistance they have received from our union and witnessed their support and suggestions for coworkers who are experiencing outrageously increased workloads or other pressures that interfere with their on-the-job effectiveness. We even had some great suggestions on how the CTU office can better serve members.

And there have been *lots* of questions, many of them repeated from meeting to meeting. I'd like to take this opportunity to respond to some of the concerns.

Let's start with "right to work." Not surprisingly, we had a lot of questions on this topic.

How will "right to work" affect us?

CTU's contract expires March 31, 2015. Until then, we keep the status quo.

If RTW is still law when we negotiate our new contract, we will not be able to renew parts of Article 26, our union security clause. CTs who resign from the union after that point will no longer be charged for the services and protections provided by the union. However, non-members will continue to receive union representation along with union negotiated raises and benefits.

While this is unfair and could be divisive, I believe the vast majority of CTs support our union and recognize its value. We have a good, strong contract and a history of tenacious support for our members. Our contributions, both

financial and as volunteers, have helped secure our reputation as a cornerstone of both MSU and the larger community. I don't think many CTs will walk away from what we have built or stick their coworkers with the entire financial cost.

How will the union make sure that my supervisor doesn't target me because I remain an active union member?

The CTU vigorously defends any CT who is targeted by a supervisor for supporting—or not supporting—the union, regardless of whether or not RTW is law. The law has always required us to defend members and non-members equally, and RTW doesn't change that. The law also says an employer cannot target or discriminate against workers based on union activity. Most importantly, we are protected by Article 27 of our contract.

What happens to CTs who decide to not be members of the union?

Non-members will continue to receive the same benefits, wages and representation as members. In these areas, the CTU will not discriminate.

However, non-members can't vote in CTU elections or the ratification of contracts. They are barred from union meetings and have no say in union decisions.

Also, we currently have a few member-only benefits, such as free use of the union's conference room and free ads in the newsletter. These sorts of benefits can be denied to non-members.

Why do we have to represent CTs who don't pay their fair share?

It's the law. Some anti-union groups and politicians are saying that unions can negotiate member-only contracts under which they would not need to represent



non-members. However, that is not the law—we checked with our attorneys.

Can we reduce dues to keep members?

Sure. Dues are set by the membership and can be changed.

I would personally oppose cutting dues, especially now. We own a modest but decent union hall and pay for a dedicated, experienced and well-trained staff to provide the level and quality of services that we, the membership, have decided is necessary. We also maintain a decent financial reserve in case of contingencies. We must always look for ways to economize, but we also have to realize that we get what we pay for. A weak and ineffective union won't be helpful.

Wow! I'm out of space and still haven't addressed questions about other anti-worker legislation, health care negotiations, the impact of the Affordable Care Act, overwork, and how to counter some really bad supervision.

Why not come to a Solidarity Lunch to get the answers to these and some of your own questions? I also hope to see you at our June 13 picnic and the July 16 Membership Meeting.

Lunches continued from page 1

in our immediate districts, but we are welcome to attend any of the meetings.

The schedule of upcoming meetings is available on our website at www.ctumsu.org. [Mark McGee]

Join us in solidarity! In order to help in planning for the food, RSVPs are appreciated but not required.

April Membership Meeting *UR*districts

Finances were at the top of the agenda at CTU's April 25 Membership Meeting. Certified Public Accountant Jim Nyquist presented the audit for 2012 and 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. CTU Treasurer Jan Wallace presented the 2013 budget.

President Deb Bittner reported on health care negotiations, which have just opened between the Coalition of Labor Organizations at MSU (CLO) and the university.

She also explained that health care open enrollment covers a six-month period this time, rather than the usual 12 months, in order to synchronize the various benefits offered by the university. Although we will have to go through open enrollment again in the fall—to cover 2014—our choices of plans and options will remain the same. From now on, open enrollment will take place near the end of every year and cover January through December.

Although the layoff situation "is the best I've seen in years," CTU Contract Administrator Dan McNeil said that many CTs are concerned about increasing work loads. Although we need to make sure CT work is not going to students, temps and on-calls, he emphasized that we need to take our breaks and lunch hours and take care of ourselves.

"Make sure you're not working for free," he said, adding that CTs who feel stressed by their workloads can talk to



April 25—Thirty-three members attended the Spring Membership Meeting.

their URs or call the CTU office to strategize about changing the situation.

Member Robert Kerr asked about the dependent health care audit, in which we were required to provide documentation for our family members who are covered by MSU's health care plans. Across campus, including all faculty and staff, 280 total dependents were removed as a result of the audit, with a total savings of about \$830,000 in the first year, including the \$150,000 cost of the audit.

Other discussions included the impact of "right to work" on CTU and our relationship with our employer, the differences between the university's and the CLO's vision plan, and the annual picnic on June 13.

Door prizes went to Pam Sloan and Diane Hernandez-Wolja (\$50 each), Wendy Baker and Melinda Kochenderfer (CTU computer bags), and Susan Kwiatkowski, who was attending via Polycom from the MSU Detroit Medical Center (gift bag).

Supervisors—give them what they deserve

Good supervisors, they're out there, and some of them deserve a reward.

Nominations for the 12th annual Outstanding Supervisor Award are due Wednesday, July 10. The nomination form and additional information is available at www.frc.msu.edu/Worklife/

OutstandingSupervisor.htm. For questions call the Family Resource Center at 517-432-3745 or email Strom@hr.msu.edu.

This award honors supervisors who have consistently demonstrated work/life sensitivity and support of the professional/personal needs of the employees in their unit.

The following CTs have requested an appointment to the union representative position in their respective districts. If no other CTs in these districts express interest in the positions before June 14, the following individuals will be appointed.

▼ **District 7** (East and West Fee, Hannah Technology Building): **Stephanie Six.**

▼ **District 24** (International Center, Wells, Central Services): **Lori Thomas.**

The following URs have resigned. We thank them for their valuable service to the union and wish them the best in their future endeavors:

▼ **District 19** (MSU Macomb University Center Campus): **Simone Jennings.**

▼ **District 31** (North and South Kedzie, Bessey, Computer Center): **Betty Walther.**

District 17 (Grounds, Physical Plant, Wilson, Holden, Case, Wonders, Duffy Daugherty Football Building): **Karen Jakus** has been appointed UR. Contact her at 884-5483 or jakuska@msu.edu.

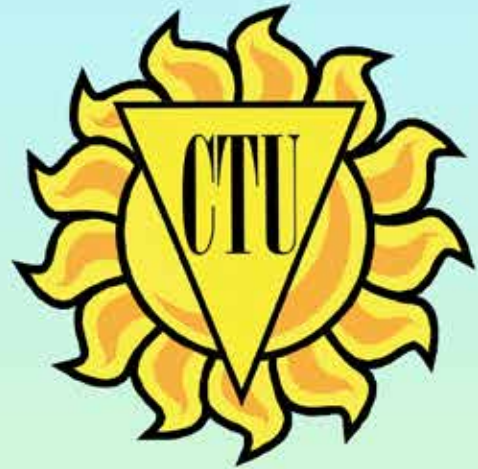
If you are interested in becoming a UR, contact URCC Chairperson **Becky Sullivan** (884-3374 or sulli306@msu.edu) or CTU Vice President **Kim Smith** (355-3784 or Kim@ctumsu.org).

*CT*notables

Congratulations to CTU member **Sarah Davis**, winner of the 36th annual Jack Breslin Distinguished Staff Award in April.

She was recognized for her commitment to her job in the Office of Diversity Programs in the College of Veterinary Medicine and for taking a leadership role in planning and organizing an MLK event on the inclusion of diversity within veterinary medicine.

CTU Annual Picnic



**Thursday, June 13, 2013
4–7 p.m.**

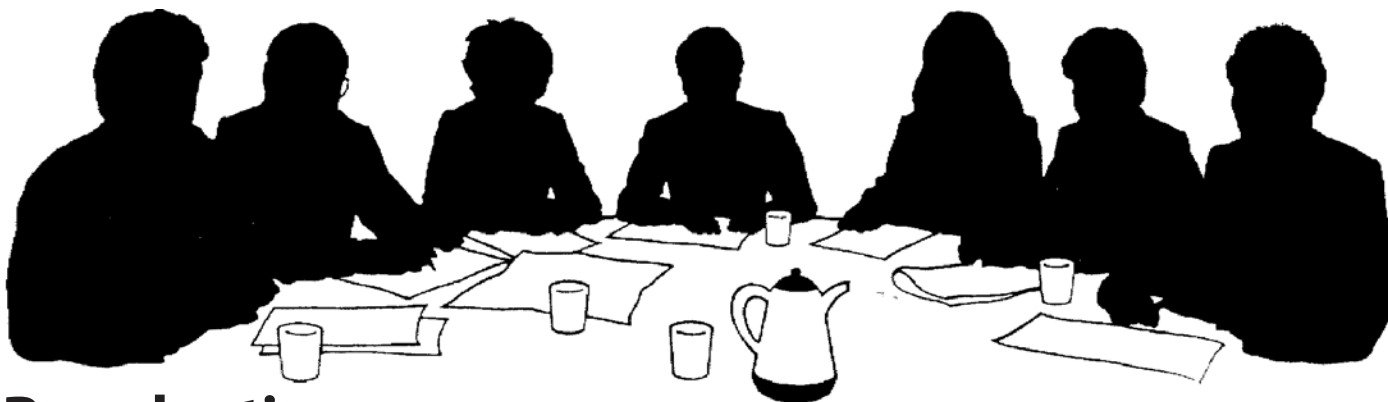
**C-T Union Hall
2990 East Lake Lansing Rd.
(Corner of Lake Lansing & Hagadorn.
Look for the big Sparty.)**

Friends and family welcome.

CTU provides the food and softdrinks.

Games! Prizes! Activities for the kids!

CTs, please check in at the welcome tent.



Board actions

January through March 2013

The following CTU Executive Board discussions took place January through March 2013. 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 15

Agreed to transfer \$25,000 from Operation Savings to Operation Checking.

Discussed individuals' participation in upcoming rally at the Capitol to show labor's disappointment and continued concern over anti-labor legislation, including the passage of "right to work."

Discussed the lack of URs in several districts.

Discussed CTU's participation in upcoming Martin Luther King, Jr. events.

January 15 (special meeting)

Appointed Stephen Stofflet and Heather Dover to the Audit Committee upon recommendation of the members attending the January 15 Membership Meeting.

February 5

In keeping with the consensus of members attending the January 15 Membership Meeting, agreed to 1) continue paying \$480 a month to help fight anti-labor legislation in Michigan, 2) be a sponsor of the Greater Lansing Food Bank "Empty Plate" Fundraiser by donating \$1,000, 3) donate \$1,000 to the MSU Student Food Bank, and 4) be a sponsor of the MSU Safe Place 19th Annual "Race for the Place" Fundraiser by donating \$500.

Agreed to pay \$149 for CTU Communications Specialist to attend a Photoshopper conference.

Agreed to send an additional four people to the LERA lunch meeting on "The Economic and Social Consequences of Right to Work" at a cost of \$20/person.

Agreed to send up to two people to the Labor Community Service Activist Training Class for \$30 a person.

Received report on the union's compliance with the state legislators' new law requiring the submission of an audit to the Michigan Employment Relations Commission.

Received report on upcoming Leadership Training Series for CTU staff, Board members and URs.

February 19

Voted to sponsor MSU's Department of Theater "Summer Circle Theater" at the \$250 "Silver" level, which will provide us with publicity at the event and on the organization's website.

Agreed to send up to four people to the MSU Labor Education Program "Labor Law Update" conference at a cost of \$125 each. *[Editor's Note: The CTU was reimbursed for the cost of one attendee because it was covered by educational assistance.]*

Received report that the Coalition of Labor Organizations at MSU sent a

request to bargain health care to MSU.

Discussed upcoming negotiations with the two CTU staff members who belong to the Teamsters. CTU's bargaining team will be composed of the president, vice president and two directors.

Witnessed Stephen Stofflet and Heather Dover take the Oath of Office to become Audit Committee Members.

March 5

Donated \$100 to the American Cancer Society Annual Fund.

Donated \$100 to the Capital Area Humane Society.

Tabled request for donation from Meridian Township Recycling Event. Further discussion needed.

Agreed to donate \$450 to send one child to the YMCA Mystic Lake Union camp. [Lisa Desprez]

Agreed to contribute to the Ingham County Animal Control and Shelter by purchasing two \$50 tickets to the 8th Annual Humanitarian Awards Dinner.

Discussed collective bargaining issues. MSU unions are preparing for health care bargaining. Michigan legislators are using blackmail and bullying to delay contracts until after right to work goes into effect.

March 19

Reviewed draft of the 2013 budget.

Board continued on next page

Annual AFP report

Only 5.66% of our dues in 2012 were “nonchargeable,” meaning that they were not directly related to CTU’s defense of members and the contract.

While low, the number is higher than last year’s 3.56% and almost twice as high as the 2.53% of 2010.

The increase is mostly due to CTU’s participation in efforts to protect Michigan workers, according to CTU’s Certified Public Accountant Jim Nyquist. We were involved in labor’s unsuccessful bid to pass Proposal A in November’s election as well as ongoing resistance to “right to work” and other laws unfriendly to labor in Michigan.

Currently, CTs who opt out of membership in the union are required to pay a fee equal to dues but are reimbursed for nonchargeable activities. These CTs, known as Agency Fee Payers (AFPs) 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.

Under Michigan’s right-to-work law, which passed in December, non-members in our bargaining unit will continue to receive the contractual benefits and representation secured by paying members of the union; they simply will not be required to help pay for them. This law will affect us directly starting April 1, 2015, when our current contract with the university expires.

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 our few community donations.

In total, we refunded \$258.17 to 14 AFPs in 2012, an average of \$18.44. We currently have 13 AFPs.

Sometimes you gotta laugh

The reward for a job well done . . . more work!

One day a fisherman was lying on a beautiful beach, with his fishing pole propped up in the sand and his solitary line cast out into the sparkling blue surf. He was enjoying the warmth of the afternoon sun and the prospect of catching a fish.

About that time, a businessman came walking down the beach, trying to relieve some of the stress of his work day. He noticed the fisherman sitting on the beach and decided to find out why this fisherman was fishing instead of working harder to make a living for himself and his family.

“You aren’t going to catch many fish that way,” said the businessman to the fisherman. “You should be working rather than lying on the beach!”

The fisherman looked up at the businessman, smiled and replied, “And what will my reward be?”

“Well, you can get bigger nets and catch more fish!” was the businessman’s answer.

“And then what will my reward be?” asked the fisherman, still smiling. [Dennis Shubitowski]

The businessman replied, “You will make money and you’ll be able to buy

a boat, which will then result in larger catches of fish!”

“And then what will my reward be?” asked the fisherman again.

The businessman was beginning to get a little irritated with the fisherman’s questions. “You can buy a bigger boat, and hire some people to work for you!” he said.

“And then what will my reward be?” repeated the fisherman.

The businessman was getting angry. “Don’t you understand? You can build up a fleet of fishing boats, sail all over the world, and let all your employees catch fish for you!”

Once again the fisherman asked, “And then what will my reward be?”

The businessman was red with rage and shouted at the fisherman, “Don’t you understand that you can become so rich that you will never have to work for your living again! You can spend all the rest of your days sitting on this beach, looking at the sunset. You won’t have a care in the world!”

The fisherman, still smiling, looked up and said, “And what do you think I’m doing right now?”



Board

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Donated \$75 to the Meridian Township Recycling Event.

Agreed to \$150 advertisement in the Cristo Rey Catholic Church Fiesta 2013 program.

Renewed the Assessment Testing service plan for \$295 a year.

Donated \$100 to help sponsor the MSU Successful Black Women 2nd Peace Summit.

Renewed rental of the Pitney-Bowes Postage machine for \$919.38 a year.

Agreed to send one person to the Michigan Labor-Management Associa-

tion Annual Spring Conference for \$245.

Agreed to be a sponsor of Progressive Michigan Labor Summit on campus, with no financial commitment at this time. [Catherine Sernick]

Received report on district meeting in Macomb and discussed need to move forward with additional meetings across campus.

Received reports on LERA lunch meeting about health care.

Discussed upcoming new member orientation, annual picnic, GEU chorus and negotiations with CTU’s Teamster staff.



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EAST LANSING, MI 48823-6219

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

CTcalendar

June 13. CTU Picnic, 4–7 p.m. See ad on page 5.

June 18. CTU Executive Board meeting. C-T Union Hall, 5:15 pm. Members welcome.

June 18. Ten-minute stress relieving chair massages by Health4U, Wills House, 11:30-1:30 pm. Click on “Upcoming Classes” at www.health4u.msu.edu to register. Let them know if you are interested in hosting a Chair Massage Sampler in your building.

July 16. CTU Executive Board’s only July meeting. C-T Union Hall, 3–5 pm. Members welcome.

July 16. CTU’s Summer Membership Meeting will be held directly following the Board meeting. The Membership Meeting will be held at 252 Erickson

Hall at 5:20 pm.

July 16. Ten-minute chair massages in the Engineering Building. See information under June 18 entry.

July 17. Change Without Stress. Practical strategies to minimize stress

while coping with change. Suite 10 Nisbet Building, 2:30 pm–4:30 pm. A free professional development class offered by Human Resources Employee and Organization Development.



**Celebrate
4th of
July!!!**

**Another paid holiday
secured by our
UNION!**

Thursday, July 4

Don't forget to check out the CTU Solidarity Lunches schedule at www.ctumsu.org.