



## Humor

*These days, we all need a laugh, so share your funny workplace stories with us, p. 5.*



## Ratification vote Aug. 13

*Need an absentee ballot or a ride to the polls? p. 6.*



## More picnic photos

*Can't get enough of those cute picnic photos? p. 7.*



# CT news

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

July 2013

## Union's annual solidarity picnic

**B**efore we were rained out near the end of the evening, around 200 people, including CTs, our friends and our families, had a great time getting to know each other a little better, playing games and feasting on the great picnic spread provided by the union.

Union, local and/or Michigan products were featured, including MSU ice cream, Turkeyman turkey, Better Made chips, and Koegel's hot dogs.

In addition to our ever-popular cake walk and children's games, this year we had Apples the Clown on hand to entertain the children (and several adults) with face painting and balloon animals.

Thanks to everyone who helped make the picnic a success, and be sure to check out the photos on page 7.



*Apples the Clown entertained children and adults alike at our union picnic.*

## CTU members to vote on health care TA August 13



*June 24—MSU Employee Relations Director Jim Nash (left) and Charlie Heckman, one of CLO's chief negotiators, shake hands after reaching a tentative health care agreement at 11:50 p.m.*

**C**Ts and other support staff employees are preparing to vote on the latest health care agreement.

"The unions have secured a sound four-year tentative agreement [TA]," said CTU President Deb Bittner. "We kept a fully funded, high quality health care plan. We established a matrix that secures increases in total com-

pensation. We fought off all concessions. And we won consideration—monetary consideration—for some of the sacrifices made by support staff employees in the last several years."

The TA also establishes autism coverage for children through 8 years of age, effective January 1, 2014.

"We expect our members

to be pleased with the TA and to vote yes," she said.

If approved, the new contract will start January 1, 2014 and end December 31, 2017.

### Total compensation increase

The TA secures an average increase in total compensation of 2.36% in each of the four

**Agreement continued on p. 6**

# CTnews

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

PUBLISHED MONTHLY

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Organized and  
independent  
since 1974!

## CTU Executive Board

### President:

Deb Bittner [Deb@ctumsu.org](mailto:Deb@ctumsu.org)

### Vice President:

Kim Smith [Kim@ctumsu.org](mailto:Kim@ctumsu.org)

### Treasurer:

Jan Wallace [wallac12@msu.edu](mailto:wallac12@msu.edu)

### Secretary:

Tracy Rich [richt@msu.edu](mailto:richt@msu.edu)

### Directors:

Pamela Brock [brockp@msu.edu](mailto:brockp@msu.edu)  
Liz Owen [owene@msu.edu](mailto:owene@msu.edu)  
Willie Paulsen [paulsenw@msu.edu](mailto:paulsenw@msu.edu)  
Walt Peebles [peeblesw@msu.edu](mailto:peeblesw@msu.edu)  
Jeanette Robertson [robertso@msu.edu](mailto:robertso@msu.edu)  
Janet Roe-Darden [jroe@msu.edu](mailto:jroe@msu.edu)  
Norma Teague [teaguen@msu.edu](mailto:teaguen@msu.edu)

## CTU Staff

### Contract Administrators

John Klusinske [John@ctumsu.org](mailto:John@ctumsu.org)  
Dan McNeil [Dan@ctumsu.org](mailto:Dan@ctumsu.org)

### Financial Manager

Patricia Shackleton [Patricia@ctumsu.org](mailto:Patricia@ctumsu.org)

### Organizational Manager

Barb Harris [Barb@ctumsu.org](mailto:Barb@ctumsu.org)

### Communications Specialist

Cherylee Finney [Cheryl@ctumsu.org](mailto:Cheryl@ctumsu.org)

## 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:

### ▼ Great recreational cabin: \$28,000.

Close to lake and state land. On 1.3 acres, 2 miles north of Higgins Lake. Great for boaters, hunters, and snowmobilers (marked trail about 1 mile west of cabin). 1 bedroom, 1 bath, upstairs loft with pull down stairs is dry walled and finished with electric, sleeps 3-4. Knotty pine interior, open kitchen, dining, and living area. Completely furnished. Berber carpet, vinyl windows, L.P. gas forced air heat, 40 gallon electric hot water heater, crawl space, conventional septic field (tank), approximately 330 sq. ft, 10'x12' shed. Pictures available upon request. Please contact Steve at 517-712-4664 between 3 p.m. and 10 p.m. You can also contact Linda at [baughman1981@gmail.com](mailto:baughman1981@gmail.com).

▼ "Own a piece of the rock" Drummond Island: 6 acres of vacant land 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 517-290-2058 to inquire or email [moserk6@gmail.com](mailto:moserk6@gmail.com).

## For rent:

▼ Beach side cottage: Drummond Island. 2 bedroom, 1 bath log cabin on the south shoreline. Beautiful spot for

swimming! Secluded, ranch style, "Up North" waterfront cabin. RARE white, sandy beach! Wood fireplace, VCR with some movies, DVD player, charcoal grill, and 2 kayaks. Pet friendly. Time available in September. For vacancy and reservation information, contact us at 906-493-6799 or [drummondislandhotel@alphacomm.net](mailto:drummondislandhotel@alphacomm.net).

## 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.

## Wanted:

▼ Portable basketball hoop: Used. Photos to [Patricia@ctumsu.org](mailto:Patricia@ctumsu.org) or call 675-7649.



# CTclassifieds now online

We have expanded the CT Classifieds section to our website. CTs are encouraged to use both the newsletter and website to freely advertise items or services offered by CTU members and/or their household family members. We will assume you wish to publish all submissions in the newsletter. Please indicate if you wish to publish your ad online in addition to, or instead of, the newsletter. Send ads to [Cheryl@ctumsu.org](mailto:Cheryl@ctumsu.org). See our online classifieds section at <http://www.ctumsu.org/news/ct-classifieds/>.

## Membership Meetings

The last meeting of 2013 will be held in 252 Erickson Hall on 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 September  
will be held September 17 at 5:15 p.m.*



# Why we need the union

By Deb Bittner

**A**t one of the Solidarity Lunches, a member told me that she read an article that said unions are a thing of the past. The author stated that unions just aren't needed anymore.

I disagree!

I can list many reasons why unions are still needed in the workplace and why working people still need an advocate.

But anyone searching for an example of the usefulness of unions need look no farther than the new health care tentative agreement that the MSU unions just signed with the university. We won:

- ▼ quality health care coverage with a premium-free choice,

receive pay increases during the life of the contract.

As a member of the health care bargaining team, I can tell you that working in a coalition is not always an easy process. We had nine very different

unions, sometimes with conflicting needs and agendas. However, by identifying and working together for common goals, we all won.

The unions at MSU have

worked hard to convince our employer that we can be valuable partners in achieving one of their goals—reigning in health care costs. We have brought our knowledge, our experience and our expertise to the table and shown the university that merely transferring costs to employees is not a long-range, viable solution, and that we can find a better way.

Unfortunately, the MSU experience is largely the exception. Most employers—along with anti-worker politicians—think escalating health care costs can be countered only by cutting benefits, eliminating health care coverage, shifting costs to the employees, or doing some combination of all three!

This agreement continues to exemplify the value unions have for members and for employers. It is a fair agreement and in no way represents “greedy” public employees. Quite the contrary! Union

members at MSU have sacrificed and worked hard to keep health care costs down. We have shown that we are knowledgeable health care consumers who value this partnership and understand the worth of our benefits. Another successful health care bargain is proof of our commitment to MSU—as individuals, as a union and as a member of the Coalition of Labor Organizations.

In keeping with that commitment, the unions continue to contribute to the goal of a strong MSU that remains capable of providing quality education and community service. The benefit of our efforts to our employer, the students and the taxpayers of Michigan cannot be overstated. We continue to wring savings out of health care while, at the same time, protecting workers from the impact of major cost-shifting or benefit-cutting measures being employed by other institutions. [Brenda Franklin]

Without the creativity and hard work of both the unions and the employer, MSU and its employees would be paying far more for health care. I think that is still pretty relevant. I am glad that our union, the other unions on this campus, and our employer don't believe that unions are a thing of the past.



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**“This is a great agreement, and I join the rest of MSU’s labor leaders in wholeheartedly recommending a yes vote.”**

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- ▼ new coverage for autistic children,
- ▼ raises,
- ▼ the disbursement of some of what we have saved in health care costs over the four years of our current agreement, and
- ▼ the ability to continue meeting with the university to address the ever-changing health care climate.

This is a great agreement, and I join the rest of MSU’s labor leaders in wholeheartedly recommending a yes vote. Members of the CTU will have the chance to ratify the agreement on August 13. (Please see page 6 for details.)

With all of the unions continuing to work together, we showed that there is strength in solidarity. Through the contributions of all of the groups, we were able to achieve our goals of quality health care coverage with the ability to

# Leadership duties

The terms of our president, treasurer, three directors and two Audit Committee members will be up this October.

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 (<http://www.ctumsu.org/about-the-ctu/constitution-of-the-ctu/> 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.

**The 2013 CTU Elections will be held Tuesday, October 22.**

## President

The 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 President also is expected to:

- keep the Executive Board and organization on track between meetings;
- structure Board meetings;
- provide a long-range view of the organization;
- act as official spokesperson for the CTU, internally and externally;
- remind people of deadlines;
- balance a 40-hour week through the use of flex and comp time, and report to the Board if work demands overload status;
- report activities to the Board and members;
- use full-time released time from MSU position;
- chair Executive Board meetings

## 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;

- 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.

## 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.

## Treasurer

The Treasurer 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 Treasurer also is expected to:

- oversee fiduciary responsibilities, pay bills, cooperate with the auditor, research community solicitations, report

- on the financial impact of decisions;
- chair the Finance Committee;
- prepare the budget with the Finance Committee;
- make quarterly reports to the membership;
- use 25% released time from MSU position in order to fulfill duties.

- and negotiations, and sit as *ex officio* member on all internal committees;
- supervise staff;
- chair the Personnel Committee and

- report personnel issues to the Board for decision-making;
- vote only to break a tie in an Executive Board vote.

# URdistricts

**D**istrict 2 (Administration Building [Floors 2, 3, 4]): **Kathy Kirby** resigned from her UR position. We thank her for her service to our union and wish her the best in her future endeavors.

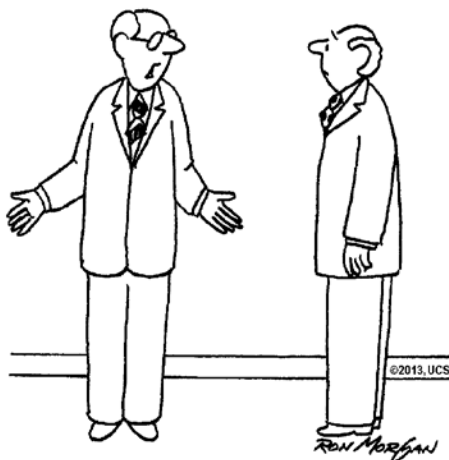
The following members have been appointed to UR positions:

- ▼ **District 7** (East and West Fee, Hannah Technology Building): Contact **Stephanie Six** at 353-1998 or [six@msu.edu](mailto:six@msu.edu).
- ▼ **District 24** (International Center, Wells, Central Services): **Lori Thomas**. Contact her at [thoma657@msu.edu](mailto:thoma657@msu.edu) or 432-4347.

The following CTs have requested appointment to the union representative position in their respective districts. If no other CTs in these districts express interest in the positions before August 5, the following individuals will be appointed.

- ▼ **District 2** (Administration Building [Floors 2, 3, 4]): **Stacey Patton**.
- ▼ **District 8** (MSU Grand Rapids Campus): **Amber Feasal-Bartling**.
- ▼ **District 13** (Anthony, Meats Lab, Engineering): **Mary Mroz**.

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



"My one worry about busting the union is that we'll no longer have anyone to blame but us."

# Sometimes you gotta laugh

## Murphy's laws on work



- ▼ Don't be irreplaceable, if you can't be replaced, you can't be promoted.
- ▼ The more you put up with, the more you are going to get.
- ▼ You can go anywhere you want if you look serious and carry a clipboard.
- ▼ Never ask two questions in a business letter. The reply will discuss the one you are least interested in, and say nothing about the other.
- ▼ When the bosses talk about improving productivity, they are never talking about themselves.
- ▼ There will always be beer cans rolling on the floor of your car when the boss asks for a ride home from the office.
- ▼ Mother said there would be days like this, but she never said there would be so many.
- ▼ Everything can be filed under "miscellaneous."
- ▼ Anyone can do any amount of work provided it isn't the work he is supposed to be doing.
- ▼ Important letters that contain no errors will develop errors in the mail.
- ▼ There is never enough time to do it right the first time, but there is always enough time to do it over.
- ▼ If you are good, you will be assigned all the work. If you are really good, you will get out of it.
- ▼ You are always doing something marginal when the boss drops by your desk. [Julie Pozega]
- ▼ If it wasn't for the last minute, nothing would get done.
- ▼ When you don't know what to do, walk fast and look worried.
- ▼ You will always get the greatest recognition for the job you least like.
- ▼ Machines that have broken down will work perfectly when the repairman arrives. [Fayelene Spencer]
- ▼ Once a job is fouled up, anything done to improve it makes it worse.
- ▼ All vacations and holidays create problems, except for one's own.

—Excerpted from an email joke on *Murphy's Workplace Laws*

We are looking for funny, work-related stories, graphics and photos for publication in the *CT News* "Sometimes You Gotta Laugh" section. Contact *Cheryl* [@ctumsu.org](mailto:@ctumsu.org) or 517-432-9580.

I call B.S. The Hostess bankruptcy was blamed on "labor being too costly." The price of a box of twinkies both before and after bankruptcy? \$3.99. So, if costly labor was to blame, shouldn't the consumer cost now go DOWN?! Wake up y'all...



**ROTTEN CARDS**



@unions4workers



/unions4workers



# Agreement continued from page 1

years of the contract. Basically, total compensation is determined by balancing salary increases with increases in the cost of health care. The matrix for this TA is illustrated in the chart below.

A matrix is nothing new. We utilized similar matrices in previous contracts (2001-05 and 2006-09).

## Savings disbursement

Due to the effective stewardship of the University and the CLO in keeping the health care spend well below the 5% cap of our current contract (final numbers still to be calculated), employees have put aside over \$7 million during the four years of our current contract. The new agreement would disburse those savings to employees who are benefits eligible within the CLO.

Health care savings accumulated during the period between July 1, 2010 and June 30, 2013 will be paid in January 2014 to employees who are on the payroll as of January 1, 2014.

Health care savings for the period between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2014 will be paid in January 2015 to employees who are on the payroll as of January 1, 2015.

Part-time employees will receive a proportional disbursement.

## Ratification

The TA will be mailed to all members

so that they can see the details and take advantage of opportunities to ask questions before voting on ratification.

Question and answer meetings are being set up that will be open to members of all the unions covered by the agreement. We will announce the meetings via email, our website and our facebook page.

Each union will follow its own ratification process. **CTU members will vote on ratification August 13.** The vote will take place from 7:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. on the MSU campus at the Auditorium Building on Farm Lane. Both absentee voting and rides to the polls will be available (information on this page).

Unions worked through the Coalition of Labor Organizations at MSU to achieve the tentative agreement. In addition to CTU, the other unions participating in the agreement are Administrative Professional Association, MEA/NEA; Administrative Professional Supervisors Association; AFSCME Local 999; AFSCME Local 1585; Fraternal Order of Police—FOP, Lodge 141; IATSE Local 274; and IUOE Local 324.

The unions' chief negotiators were AFSCME 999 President Charlie Heckman and APA Uniserv Director Melissa Sortman. [Catherine Rusnell]

Along with Bittner, the CTU was represented by Attorney Nancy Pearce and Contract Administrator Dan McNeil.



## Need a ride?

**P**arking issues? Disability? Whatever makes it difficult for you to get to the polls on Tuesday, August 13, have no fear—the CTU Elections Express is on the way.

Van rides to and from the polls at the MSU Auditorium will be coordinated through the CTU office. Just call 432-5665 or email [Patricia@ctumsu.org](mailto:Patricia@ctumsu.org) on or before August 13 to schedule a ride. Rides are scheduled on a first come/first served basis.

Want even more fun? Reserve the whole van and come with a group of coworkers!



*Unable to get to the polls August 13? Contact Barb Harris (355-1903, [Barb@ctumsu.org](mailto:Barb@ctumsu.org)) to request an absentee ballot. The deadline for the request is 3 p.m., Wednesday, August 7.*

## Total Compensation Matrix January 2014 - December 2017

HEALTH CARE COST EXPERIENCE			BASE WAGE FACTOR AVERAGE	HEALTH CARE COST EXPERIENCE			BASE WAGE FACTOR AVERAGE
0.00%	-	1.00%	2.60%	6.01%	-	7.00%	1.70%
1.01%	-	2.00%	2.50%	7.01%	-	8.00%	1.50%
2.01%	-	3.00%	2.30%	8.01%	-	9.00%	1.30%
3.01%	-	4.00%	2.20%	9.01%	-	10.00%	1.20%
4.01%	-	5.00%	2.00%	10.01%	-	11.00%	1.00%
5.01%	-	6.00%	1.90%	11.01%	-	+	0%



Members Lori Mann and Jacqueline Guyton model the CTU jackets they won as door prizes.



# PHOTOS from the PICNIC



CTU President  
Deb Bittner  
and MSU  
Employee  
Relations  
Director Jim  
Nash



Year after year, the CTU cakewalk delivers excitement and sweet prizes.

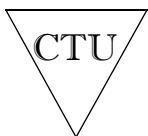


CTU Attorney Nancy Pearce  
(left) and Financial Manager  
Patricia Shackleton



Shelter from the storm: Picnic attendees take refuge from the rain under the CTU awning.

Additional photos on the CTU Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/CTUofMSU?ref=hl](http://www.facebook.com/CTUofMSU?ref=hl).



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

**CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED**



**THURSDAY, AUGUST 1, 2013**

Bring the family to a day of  
**CARNIVAL FUN ♦ FOOD ♦ RIDES**

\$12 Ride Bands good for ALL DAY  
1 p.m. – Close

Entry donation: \$3 per person (includes entry into general admission Grandstand) if purchased in advance. \$8 at the gate. Children 2 and under are free.

Ride Tickets: \$12 per person if purchased in advance. \$22 at the fair.

**Advance tickets available until Friday, July 26, from Deb Bittner at [Deb@ctumsu.org](mailto:Deb@ctumsu.org) or 355-1903.**

## CTcalendar

**August 6.** CTU Executive Board meeting. C-T Union Hall, 5:15 pm. Members welcome.

**August 20.** CTU Executive Board meeting. C-T Union Hall, 5:15 pm. Members welcome.



### CTU Educational Loan

It's time to register for CTU's Gerri Olson Educational Loan Program for fall semester 2013. Call or email Patricia Shackleton (432-5665, [Patricia@ctumsu.org](mailto:Patricia@ctumsu.org)) **July 24 to August 2** to register for a loan. [Kathleen Jones]

Registrations received after August 2 will be considered as space permits.

**September 6.** "Being Flint: Life and Labor in the Shrinking City," Gordon Young. Our Daily Work/Our Daily Lives Brown Bag Series presented by the Labor Education Program. MSU Museum Auditorium, 12:15–1:30. Free.



"We over-downsized and are now under-hiring."

Don't forget to check out the CTU Solidarity Lunches schedule at [www.ctumsu.org](http://www.ctumsu.org).