



GEU defends its contract

Can the employer get away with raising the health care costs of TAs? p. 4.



Now we're rolling

After a few weeks of inconvenience, we have a new parking lot, p. 7.



CT notable

CT Betty Walther appears on the cover of a Computer Store publication, p. 8.



CT news

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

July 2014

Chillin' with the union



The Annual CTU Picnic and 40th Anniversary Celebration on June 26 was a great success. Members, staff and visitors enjoyed the seventies theme as well as the food, fun and opportunity to catch

Picnic continued on p. 5

U R essential

Vice President Kim Smith

"I've always received good reviews, but the new supervisor appears to be targeting me for discipline."

"My department just sent out a memo that we all are

being reduced to part time because of the budget."

"I made a mistake at work and I'm being called in for discipline."

"My child has a chronic illness causing me to miss work, and I'm worried."

Representatives continued on p. 7



URs Stephen Stofflet and Amber Feasal-Bartling make presentations at a union training session in January 2014.

CTnews

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

PUBLISHED MONTHLY

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Organized and
independent
since 1974!

"Forced vacation, medical and dental coverage, a safe workplace, overtime pay, retirement security, a set work schedule, sick pay, due process and pay increases all shielded from unilateral changes?!"
Oh, those darn unions!



CTclassifieds

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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.

▼ **House** (515 Lexington, East Lansing): My son and daughter-in-law are selling their East Lansing home (4 blocks from MSU). They are about to list it with a realtor for \$109K; if you or someone you know is interested & can reach me before they list, the asking price would be less commission (\$102K). Approximately 1000 Sq. Ft, 3 bedrooms, 1 bath, finished attic & part of basement. Many upgrades, including new furnace, hot water tank, windows, driveway, electric upgrades, etc. Great house for MSU student. Call Jim at 517-487-4701



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Established 1989

"YOU GET THE MOST WHEN WE HOST"

Membership Meetings

The final meeting of 2014 will be held in 252 Erickson Hall on Wednesday, October 29. The meeting begins 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

Members welcome!

For rent:

▼ Suite or individual office. 2990 East Lake Lansing Road in East Lansing. Will work to meet your specifications. Contact the CTU, 517-355-1903.

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. 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. [Sarah Carapellucci]

President's corner

How we succeed: get involved

President Deb Bittner

Our 40th anniversary has given us lots of opportunities to reflect on where we've been as an organization.

While this "historical review" has been both fun and celebratory, it has also underscored the point that union work has never been an easy struggle.

For 40 years, we have used our union to advance our interests, improve our lives and make a positive impact on the community. Even though there have been a few setbacks over the years, we have seen monumental successes.

Every benefit, every contract, every win for every CT in conflict with management was the result of CTs' diligence, forethought and wisdom.

Those first CTs knew what they were doing when they realized that—as individuals—they were vulnerable to the whims of managers and they were not getting the recognition and compensation they deserved. That is why—with the employer fighting them every step of the way—they formed a union.

They quickly moved to make sure the organization was financially secure, hired professionals, elected officers, set up a system of communications and feedback, and then fought for a contract.

Throughout it all, they were well aware that the most important element for their success was membership involvement.

"Any organization is only as strong as the support its members provide," wrote Mark Phillips, our union's first contract administrator, in the third issue of our newsletter. "If there is little support, the organization will be weak."

Still true!

As members, we always seem to step up when needed. But, if the union isn't in the formal negotiating phase and "I" am not having trouble in "my" job, the union can seem far away. It's not.

In fact, I would argue that many of us have decent jobs precisely because this union has shown it will stand up for every member.

And each time a CT stands up for her or his rights and insists on proper treatment, the union is made stronger. [Elizabeth Moore]

But the union cannot stay strong without proper care and crafting. Those members who came before us (a few are still here!) laid the foundation and built this tool for us. We are in their debt, and the best way to show our appreciation is to keep forging ahead. We have a responsibility to ourselves and our families to make sure we keep this tool sharp and in our toolbox so it is ready when needed.

How do we do this? How do we fit one more thing into our daily lives? Well, we just do. It doesn't have to be hard or difficult. Simply talking to friends, family and coworkers about the benefits of the union is one way to be supportive. It is important to challenge the negative comments and myths about union workers.

Letting people know you are a CT when you volunteer in the community is another way to strengthen our union's reputation. Consider participating in MSU's "What's your 110?" community service challenge. Check it out on our website under "60/50+40."

Sure, the picnic was fun, but it also represented our solidarity and commitment to the community. Showing up and participating in meetings (they aren't that bad and they aren't that long either!) and other union events helps energize the union and each other. It also shows management that we are strong and committed.

Of course, we always need members who are willing to take on additional



responsibilities within the organization.

Page 1 of this publication talks about the role of our union representatives and provides information about serving in this way. By the time our union's first newsletter went to print in August 1974, we had a cadre of URs (we called them "area representatives"). As an organization, we have always relied on URs as a "vital link between the executive board and the membership." Currently, we have 20 districts without a UR.

Another opportunity: We are getting ready for our October elections. Any member interested in helping to set policy for our organization can self-nominate to be a candidate.

Want to participate but don't want to run for office? Great! You can volunteer to be on our Elections Committee or for one of the many tasks that go into making our elections a success. Just give me a call or send an email.

In addition to preparing for the elections, the union also needs to start preparing for next year's negotiations. This is our first time doing so under the state's new right-to-work laws. There are a lot of unknowns, but one thing we do know is that our demonstrations of strength and solidarity will mean a lot.

After 40 years, we deserve a pat on our collective backs for all of our successes. But as always, there is more to be done. And if we want things to go well, we need to be ready to show our union support.

We need you.

GEU fighting for health care

Employees in the Graduate Employees Union at MSU are fighting to keep the health care benefits they negotiated as part of their contract.

The GEU does not have the same health care as CTs and other MSU unions covered by the Health Care Memorandum of Understanding. Their plan is with AETNA. (The other organized MSU employees who do not have our plan are those with the Union of Non-Tenured Faculty; they have the faculty plan.)

According to GEU Contract Administrator Jacque Lloyd, the employer informed the union that their health care

copays would be increased because the requirements of the Affordable Care Act are less generous than those provided under their contract. The insurer and employer claim that this change is required for individual student plans, according to Lloyd.

However, "our plan is not an individual plan," Lloyd said. "Individual health insurance coverage is purchased by individual enrollees who do not receive job-based coverage. We, on the other hand, receive our health benefits as a result of our employment by the university. It is what the ACA calls a group plan, and under the ACA, group plans are not required to conform to set actuarial values."

"Second, the benefits levels that we all [GEU] enjoy were negotiated and ratified by the GEU. . .," she added.

"As such, the university is obligated to uphold the terms of that collective bargaining agreement. It's a binding contract that can't be changed by one side."

Lloyd said that if the employer makes the change unilaterally, the GEU is prepared to file both a grievance and an unfair labor practice (breaking the law by not doing what the contract says) against the employer. The union is also preparing to respond with collective action.

CTs can help by letting teaching assistants in our various units know that we support them. GEU will host a public forum August 26 at 5 p.m. CTU will post additional information on our website (www.ctumsu.org) and facebook page. GEU also plans to address the MSU Board of Trustees on August 29.



With time at a premium and several educational opportunities no longer available, many of us are looking for work-related training that fits into our schedules and our budgets.

If this describes you, check out MSU's newest e-learning initiative, known as elevateU. It is an educational resource offered at no cost to faculty and staff, and it is not part of our negotiated educational assistance benefit.

Conveniently available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, the program includes thousands of courses and simulations, videos, books and test preparation materials. The resources cover a wide range of topics, such as leadership, business skills, project management, desktop applications, web development and much more. Many of the courses are approved for Continuing Education credits.

elevateU is accessible through single sign-on via EBS. Visit <http://ebs.msu.edu/> click EBS Login, log in using your MSU NetID and password, select your ESS tab, click Professional Development, and then click elevateU. For questions, please contact HR Professional Development Services at 517-355-0183 or prodev@hr.msu.edu.



October 28, 2014 CTU elections

Your union needs you!

President Deb Bittner is asking for members to volunteer for the 2014 CTU Executive Board and Audit Committee elections.

She would also like to hear your thoughts on our elections process (likes, dislikes, etc).

We need volunteers to oversee the elections as part of the Elections Committee. We also need people to do other elections-related tasks such as preparing mailings and ballots, driving vans,

working the polls, counting votes, etc.

The terms of our vice president, secretary and four directors, as well as a member of the Audit Committee, will expire in October. Every member is encouraged to consider running for one of these positions.

Candidates, however, are not eligible to volunteer for elections activities.

To volunteer or provide input, contact Bittner at Deb@ctumsu.org or 355-1903. [Jacqueline Smith]

Picnic continued from p. 1

up with colleagues and friends we don't have a chance to see often.

The Picnic Committee sourced prizes, food and other items from unions, local merchants and U.S. manufacturers. We had cookies from the MSU Bakers, wraps and kabobs from Grand Grillin and frosty treats from Kona Ice. Our hot dogs came from Koegel's and our chips from Better Made—both union companies in Michigan. The member gift bags held popcorn from Cravings in Okemos, chocolates from Fabiano's in Lansing and union produced coffee from USA Coffee in Hawaii as well as union/U.S.-made CTU items that we ordered through Custom Promotions.

Our appreciation goes out to the picnic committee, the vendors, our families and guests who came out to celebrate with us—everyone who helped make this event such a success.

Page 1 photos, left to right: UR Lori Thomas helped with the cakewalk; CTU Treasurer Jan Wallace, Director Pamela Brock and Financial Manager Patricia Shackleton showed their '70s spirit; plants were a coveted prize in the cakewalk.



Fortieth anniversary cookies from MSU Bakers.



Left: Apples the Clown kept the kids entertained with face painting and balloon animals.



Contract Administrator Dan McNeil grilled up those old picnic favorites—hot dogs.



Retirees Jean Rooney and Marian Erickson make their choices at the Grand Grillin food truck.



Our cakewalk is always the most popular event at the picnic.



President Deb Bittner with MSU Trustee Dianne Byrum.



Left: MSU Executive Vice President for Administrative Services Satish Udpa stopped by.



—by Fabiano's



Rondy Murray, former CTU president and contract administrator, posed with her family for a portrait by Looking Glass Photo Booth, a company owned by CT Kristine McClintic and her partner Mark.



Almost too many choices at the Kona Ice truck.



Cheryl (Mostosky) Melvin, our contract administrator from 1976 to 1993.

CTunion representatives

1. Administration Bldg. (Floors B, 1)	April Moore (2/16), 2-3956, mooreap@msu.edu
2. Administration Bldg. (Floors 2, 3, 4)	Stacey Patton (8/15), 2-0127, pattons2@msu.edu
3. Diag. Center for Population & Animal Health, Basell Bldg (MBI), Henry Center, Alliance Dr.	No UR, contact the Union office at 5-1903
4. Biomed Phys Sci, Planetarium	No UR, contact the Union office at 5-1903
5. MSU Detroit Medical Center Campus	Wendi Winston (4/14), 313-578-9624, winst106@msu.edu
6. Baker, Geography, Snyder-Phillips, Mason-Abbot, Psychology Bldg, Kresge, Auditorium	Julie Detwiler (12/14), 3-5258, detwiler@msu.edu
7. E and W Fee, Hannah Tech Bldg	Stephanie Six (6/15), 3-1998, six@msu.edu
8. MSU Grand Rapids Campus	Amber Feasal-Bartling (8/15), 4-2769, feasalam@msu.edu
9. Life Sciences	Stephen Stofflet (2/16), 4-0409, stofflet1@msu.edu
10. Farrall, Chem, Biochem, Cyclotron	No UR, contact the Union office at 5-1903
11. Plant Biology Lab, Pesticide Rsch, Biology Rsch, Food Safety & Toxicology	No UR, contact the Union office at 5-1903
12. Natural Resources, Packaging, Trout Bldg	No UR, contact the Union office at 5-1903
13. Anthony, Meats Lab, Engineering	No UR, contact the Union office at 5-1903
14. Instr Media Ctr, Urban Plan & Landscape Arch, Audiology & Speech Science, Public Safety	Linda Blodgett (2/16), 2-0589, blodgett@msu.edu
15. Nisbet, Manly Miles, Univ Printing, Spartan Village Community Center	Rosario Garcia (3/16), 908-7273, garciar@msu.edu
16. U Housing, Old Purchasing, Food Stores, Laundry, U Serv, Power Plant, Angell Bldg, Surplus & Recycling	Angel Loveall (9/15), 4-3583, loveall@msu.edu
17. Grounds, Physical Plant, Wilson, Holden, Case, Wonders, Duffy Daugherty Football Bldg	Karen Spitz (4/15), 4-5483, jakuska@msu.edu
18. Kellogg Center, Brody Complex	No UR, contact the Union office at 5-1903
19. MSU Macomb University Center Campus	No UR, contact the Union office at 5-1903
20. Eppley, Owen, Shaw, N Bus Col Comp	Sierra VanDenHeuvel (3/16), 5-1741, vandenh8@msu.edu
21. Holmes, McDonel, Hubbard, Akers, Conrad, IM East	No UR, contact the Union office at 5-1903
22. Erickson	Linda Brandau (10/15), 2-7705, lbrandau@msu.edu
23. Plant & Soil Science, Wharton Center	No UR, contact the Union office at 5-1903
24. Int'l Ctr., Wells, Central Services	Lori Thomas (6/15), 2-4347, thoma657@msu.edu
25. Spartan Way, IM West, Dem Hall, Jenison, Circle IM, Breslin, Munn Ice Arena	Brenda Bailey (8/14), 4-1058, baileyb@msu.edu
26. Student Services, Horticulture	No UR, contact the Union office at 5-1903
27. Giltner, Natural Science	No UR, contact the Union office at 5-1903
28. Clinical Ctr (B,C,D Wings), Engn Res, Radiology	Becky Sullivan (1/15), 884-3374, sulli306@msu.edu
29. Olin Health Center, Berkey	No UR, contact the Union office at 5-1903
30. Campbell, Central School, Gilchrist, Landon, Mayo, Human Ecol, Union, Williams, Yakeley, Wills House	No UR, contact the Union office at 5-1903
31. N and S Kedzie, Bessey, Computer Center	No UR, contact the Union office at 5-1903
32. Library	Judy Redding (1/15), 4-0811, redding5@msu.edu
33. Vet Medical Center-1	No UR, contact the Union office at 5-1903
34. Agriculture Hall, Cook Hall	No UR, contact the Union office at 5-1903
35. Olds, Museum, Music	Amanda VanKoevinger (11/15), 5-5030, vankoeve@msu.edu
36. Linton, Eustace, Chittendon, Marshall	No UR, contact the Union office at 5-1903
37. Clinical Center (A-Wing)	Kimberly Baker (8/14), 2-7055, bakerk@msu.edu
38. Vet Medical Center-2	No UR, contact the Union office at 5-1903
39. Communication Arts	Rachel Iseler (3/14), 2-3676, rachel@msu.edu
40. Sparrow Bldg, Breslin Cancer Center, Lansing Medical Office Center, Downtown, Misc.	No UR, contact the Union office at 5-1903

Representatives

continued from p. 1

These are just a few of the many issues for which members seek assistance from our Union Representatives (URs).

Our URs—members who have stepped up to fill the role—are responsible for building a solid foundation at every worksite by creating an informed, unified and active membership. Their duties include assisting members with problems on the job and making sure that we are all communicating with each other. They are our “front line” in the workplace.

To be prepared and successful, URs

attend regularly scheduled training sessions. [Tamara Hicks-Syron]

CTU's mission is to empower members to exert control and choice over our own lives. This can only be accomplished if members' individual talents and skills, as well as our concerns and suggestions, are transformed into purposeful collective action for change.

As a UR, you can take a more active role in helping us achieve our mission. If you are interested in filling the position, contact me (355-3784, Kim@ctumsu.org) or the CTU Office (355-1903).

From the CTU mission statement

The Clerical-Technical Union of Michigan State University (CTU) is committed to the empowerment and dignity of the individual; democracy; diversity; and social justice through pursuit of fair wages, safe and humane working conditions; and the right to have a voice in decisions that affect CT's lives.

CTU's mission is to empower its members to exert control and choice over their own lives. To do so, it develops leaders who direct CTs' collective resources and power to achieve the aims of the membership.

These aims are based on a foundation of values which include the affirmation of human dignity, respect for diversity, and promotion of justice.

This mission can only be accomplished if members' individual talents and skills, as well as their concerns, are transformed into purposeful collective action for change.

To that end, CTU is committed to achieving the highest possible standards of communication, education, and training throughout the organization.”

To see our Mission Statement in its entirety, go to <http://www.ctumsu.org/about-the-ctu/mission-statement-2/>.

Want to work on the front lines?

Our URs are a group of very special, very hard-working members. If you would like to join them, we have 20 districts without a UR at this time. See the vacancies on the UR District List on page 6.

If you are interested in being a UR, contact Kim Smith at 355-3784 or Kim@ctumsu.org.

UR districts

The following members have petitioned for appointment or reappointment to UR positions. If no other members from these districts express interest in a position by July 31, these individuals will be appointed.

- ▼ **District 5** (MSU Detroit Medical Center Campus): **Wendi Winston.**
- ▼ **District 31** (North and South Kedzie, Bessey, Computer Center): **Kathy Kirby.**
- ▼ **District 39** (Communication Arts): **Rachel Isele.**

Please review the open UR positions on page 6. If you don't have a UR in your district and are interested in more information about the role of the UR, contact Vice President Kim Smith.



The CTU parking lot was torn up for a couple weeks while it was being demolished and reconstructed.

Parking lot replaced

Ready to roll

Last winter's polar vortex chewed up our already crumbling parking lot, leaving us with collapsing drain basins, damaged landscape/light islands (required by Meridian Township) and large areas where the black top simply had disappeared. It wasn't repairable.

After members at the April meeting voted to release funds to replace the asphalt and fix the other parking lot problems, the Executive Board hired the local union construction company Rieth-Riley to do the job starting June 10.

Although the job was to be completed in time for our picnic on June 26, rain delays made it impossible. However, Rieth-Riley cleaned up the base coat and we went ahead with the celebration.

The final striping was laid on July 2 and the lot is now open and ready for business.



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

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

CTcalendar

August 5. Executive Board meeting, C-T Union Hall, 5:15 pm. Members welcome. [Juli Kerr]

August 6. Recipe for Health Cooking Series. Buy your lunch with cash or meal plan, select lunch from the vast array of options at Brody Square, then join Chef Kurt's demonstration of a recipe using red bell peppers, the featured item in August. Brody Square, 12:10–12:50 pm. Register at <http://health4u.msu.edu>.

August 19. Executive Board meeting, C-T Union Hall, 5:15 pm. Members welcome.

August 25. One Book/One Community kick-off with U.S. Congressman John Lewis and Andrew Aydin. Monday, 7:30 pm, East Lansing Hannah Community Center, 819 Abbot Road. Meet John Lewis as he discusses his experiences as a key figure of the Civil Rights movement, talks about "March Book One" and signs books. He will be joined by co-author

Andrew Aydin. Admission is first come, first serve. Doors open at 7 pm.

August 26. Public forum about the employer's unilateral move to violate GEU's contract and make health care more expensive for teaching assistants. CTU will post additional information on our website (www.ctumsu.org).

August 29. MSU Board of Trustees meeting, Administration Building, starting at 9:30 am.



CTU Educational Loan

It's time to register for CTU's Gerri Olson Educational Loan Program for fall semester 2014. Call or email Patricia Shackleton (432-5665, Patricia@ctumsu.org) **July 28 to August 8** to register for a loan.

Registrations received after August 8 will be considered as space permits.

CTnotables



Betty Walther, 27-year member and former union representative, was featured on the cover of the MSU Computer Store's Faculty and Staff Buyers Guide 2014. She is a customer service representative for IT Services. Looking good, Betty!