



The Flame



Northern Michigan University Clerical/Technical Union Local 1950

May 2004

LOCAL 1950 NEWS

Spring Luncheon and Meeting
Wednesday, May 19, 2004
Lakes Rooms

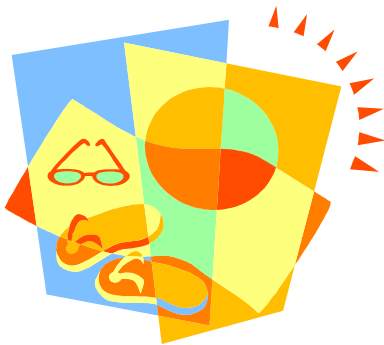
MENU

**Choice of Chicken Oscar,
Roast Sirloin of Beef au
Jus, or Stuffed Ravioli with
Tossed Salad, Rolls, Coffee/
Tea/Milk/Pop and
Strawberry Shortcake**

Cost: \$1.00

**Send your money to Rita by
Wednesday, May 12**

Our donations will again be personal
items for the Women's Center.



ENJOY!

UAW LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE REPORT

by Sue Tollefson

The conference this year, "Fighting to Keep Good Jobs for American Workers", was attended by over 1,700 delegates. It was held February 1-4, 2004 in Washington, DC.

The plenary session on Sunday night usually is highlighted by a keynote speaker. Speakers in the past have included U.S. Rep. Richard Gephardt; former First Lady Hillary Clinton, Rep. Al Gore, etc. This year, however, the session was moved up an hour and there was no keynote speaker. I am not sure if it was because UAW had not endorsed any presidential candidate or it was Super Bowl Sunday (9955). I think it may have been a combination of both. President Gettelfinger, however, opened the conference and gave an overview of the agenda for the days to follow.

Monday started bright and early with President Ron Gettelfinger reporting that the focus of this conference would be on trade, labor law, and health care reform. Throughout the day, several speakers and panels (UAW Legislative Department, a media panel, Prof. Harley Shaiken - UC Berkley) expounded on these topics. At noon, all the Michigan delegates met for a luncheon where we heard our U.S.

How the Electoral College Works

- Each state is allocated a number of electors equal to the number of its U.S. senators (always 2) plus the number of its U. S. representatives, which may change each decade, according to the size of each state's population as determined in the Census.

- The political parties, or independent candidates, in each state submit to the state's chief election official a list of individuals pledged to their candidate for president and equal in number of the state's electoral vote. Usually, the major political parties select these individuals either in their state party conventions or through appointment by their state party leaders while third parties and independent candidates merely designate theirs.

- Members of Congress and employees of the federal government are prohibited from serving as an elector in order to maintain the balance between the legislative and executive branches of the federal government.

- After their caucuses and primaries, the major parties nominate their candidates for president and vice president in their national conventions traditionally held in the summer preceding the election. Third party and independent candidates follow different procedures according to the individual state laws. The names of the

(Continued on page 6, col. 1)

(Continued on page 7, col. 1)

Current Representation Districts

Chief Steward - Grace Albert

District 1 - *Jan Crawford* - Cohodas

District 2 - *Beth Sanderson* - Services Building, Quad II (except Magers), Jacobetti Center, PEIF, Superior Dome, Berry Events Center

District 3 - *Gary Jerry* - West Science, Learning Resources, Magers Hall, New Science Facility, Whitman

District 4 - *Vacant* - University Center, Lee Hall, Art & Design North and South, Gries Hall, McClintock, Thomas Fine Arts, and Hedgcock.

MAY, JUNE, JULY and AUGUST BIRTHDAYS



May 4	Kimber Olli	May 15	Leslie Herman
May 5	Christi Etelamaki	May 16	Cheryl LaJoye
May 9	Tina Simula	May 18	Terry Johnson (50)
May 9	Karen Smith	May 21	Susan Laforais
May 9	Ryne Richards	May 28	Raymond Liubakka
		May 29	Darlene Rantala
June 7	Janet Koski	June 21	Keith Greising
June 8	Jean Paquette	June 23	Marsha Bartle
June 10	Gina O'Donnell	June 23	Barbara Munson
June 11	Lorraine Deshambo	June 23	Kathy Maki
June 14	Vicki Hedstrom	June 24	Pauline Gould
June 17	Roxanne Rastello	June 26	Tina Sehl
June 18	Carolyn Basal	June 27	Carol Schirtzinger
		June 30	Linda Meldrum

2002-2005 Officers

President - Sue Tollefson

Vice President - Dan Leppanen

Secretary - Pat Frenn

Treasurer - Rita Leppanen

Sergeant at Arms - Phyllis Zaenglein

Guide - Karen Smith

Trustees - Maddie Anderson, Mary Bourdeau, Joann Jordon

Bargaining Team - Grace Albert, Penny Hubble, Kimber Olli, Pat Woods

President Search Committee

Rep - Sue Henderson

Stewards - Grace Albert, Chief

District 1 - Jan Crawford

District 2 - Beth Sanderson

District 3 - Gary Jerry

District 4 - Vacant

Have a wonderful day!

July 7	Tina Vandezande	July 13	Linda Cleary
July 7	Luann Dagenais	July 14	Phyllis Zaenglein
July 10	Erin Baldwin	July 20	Sue Ann Salo
July 11	Juliana Clement	July 22	Jodee Larsh
August 2	Craig Buchanan	August 20	Annette Brown
August 3	Beverly Pasco	August 22	Sarah Woods
August 4	Denis Johnson	August 24	Linda Hares
August 4	Lori Rintala	August 25	Rhonda Peterson
August 13	Lisa Alto	August 25	Kay Schwartz
August 16	Stephen Brisson	August 26	Jan Biolo
August 17	Kathy Solka	August 26	Sandra Klabor
August 17	Patti Cooke	August 29	Judy Hopper

Happy Retirement, Sisters

Diane Mankamyer

I will have 22 years at NMU in May. I started at the Jacobetti Center in December 1981 working in a temporary position in the administrative offices. I then worked for the Police Academy for about a month before being hired as clerk in the Construction Cluster at Jacobetti. I went from there to the Conference Department as a senior secretary, where I worked about 4 1/2 years. I also spent about a couple months in the Purchasing Department. In August 1987 I started as Principal Secretary in the Placement & Career Planning Office—now the JOBSearch Center—and have been here ever since—almost 17 years.

I have so many things I want to do when I retire, I just don't know where I'll start. This summer I am hoping that my oldest granddaughter from Colorado Springs might be able to come and visit me. Along with my hobbies that I haven't had time for in recent years (rosemaking, sewing, reading), I may travel to see my sons and grandchildren. They are spread out from Tennessee to Colorado Springs, to Portland, Oregon, and back to Ontonagon where my great granddaughter lives. I have to admit to being a real homebody, so this traveling thing would be a big adventure for me. I didn't even make my annual visit to Hancock last summer to visit my friend who lives there. Although I will certainly miss all the wonderful people at NMU that I've known and worked with, I know I will

keep busy and wonder how I had time to go to work all those years. The possibilities are unlimited and I'm looking forward to them.

Jean Paquette – I began working at NMU during the summer of 1987 at which time I was in the clerical pool. My first assignment was filling in for Grace in Psychology for a month. That was a neat experience as I learned a great deal about working with computers, performing word processing, and spreadsheets for the department. I then filled in a semester assignment working in the College of Business for Karen Stulz who left temporarily to do her student teaching. What a great experience that was! Then in March 1988 a job opening came up in Engineering & Planning. I was interviewed for the position and was awarded the job. This position has been a very rewarding learning experience as it has many areas that I could excel in regarding meeting the public, working on contracted projects with office staff who were overseeing the multi-million dollar projects on campus. This venture has been ongoing since that time. I had a wonderful boss, John Bekkala, who was exceptional to work with. I now work for Kathy Richards, who is another excellent boss.

I have very many plans upon retiring which include camping and fishing with the new boat and trailer my husband and I just purchased within the past year; gardening; finishing up on my house renovations; intermittent traveling to see family members;

working on projects at church; and just enjoying spending time with my children, and grandchildren who are growing up so fast. Most of all, I will be able to spend time with my best friend, my husband, Bruce; who has been patiently waiting for me to retire. Over the years we have been separated in distance with him sailing on the Great Lakes ore boats for 28 years. He has retired twice and also took a part-time job waiting for me to finish my career.



Beverly Pascoe - I have worked in several departments over the years, English, Poli Sci, Education and then WNMU-TV/FM for a total of 30 years. I plan to do a lot of reading, playing with my grandson (Aidan), and have more lunches with my mother (Orva). I also have children (Rick, Coda and Ariel) I don't see enough of, so I will do more with them too. NMU has been a good place to work, great benefits, good people. I will miss the people, but not getting up and putting makeup on every morning of my life. Will be nice to relax, go to the beach, organize things and sit on my patio. Bye!

(Cont.on page 11, col. 3)

HEALTH AND WELFARE

The following article explains what the Communication Disorders Department trains our students to do. They become certified speech-language pathologists only after completing a graduate (MA) degree. Each May is better speech-language-hearing month.

HOUSE RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE MONTH OF MAY, 1996 AS BETTER SPEECH-LANGUAGE-HEARING MONTH

WHEREAS, Most people with communicative disorders can be helped. Rehabilitation for these impairments includes medical and surgical treatments, hearing aids, and hearing and speech rehabilitation; and

WHEREAS, An estimated 24 million people in the United States, about 10 percent of the population, suffer from hearing, speech, or language handicaps. A common cause of permanent hearing loss is repeated exposure to loud noise. Of the 21 million people in the United States who suffer hearing impairment, many suffer from uncorrected hearing loss; and

WHEREAS, Between 1980 and 2050, the number of people with hearing and speech impairments will increase at faster rates than that total United States population as a direct result of the aging of the population. Hearing loss is most common among the elderly. More than one out of ever four people over the age of 65 has a hearing disorder; and

WHEREAS, An estimated three million people in the United States suffer from speech or language disorders, articulation disorders, difficulties with the way sounds are formed and strung together, are the most common of all speech disorders. Stuttering, one of the most widely recognized speech disorders, affects more than one million people in the United States, half of whom are children; and

WHEREAS, Each year, over 84,000, Americans suffer from Aphasia (the loss of the ability to use speech and language) due to a stroke or hear injury; and

WHEREAS, When hearing, speech, or language impairments cannot be medically corrected, the audiologist or speech-language pathologist can help. Audiologists specialize in the prevention, identification and assessment of hearing disorders and provide rehabilitation services for children and adults with hearing problems. Speech-language pathologists are specialists in human communication, its development, and its disorders ...



Mountain Dew Salad

2 small pkgs of lemon jello
2 cups of boiling water
1 cup of COLD Mt. Dew
1 can lemon pie filling
12 oz. Cool Whip

Dissolve jello in boiling water. Add Mt. Dew. Chill until set. With mixer, beat in pie filling and cool whip until creamy. Chill again until set.

Thanks to *Kathy Solka*

3 Ways with Ramen Noodles

Vegetable Tofu Soup - Add cooked frozen oriental mixed vegetables and cubed firm tofu to prepared ramen noodle soup mix. Top with sliced scallions.

Tuna Noodle Salad - Break in half noodles from two 3-oz. bags. Boil until soft. Cool under running cold water; drain well. Whisk 1/3 cup mayo, 1 Tbs each lemon juice and water, and seasoning packets in a large bowl. Stir in 1 cup of sliced cucumber, 1/4 cup diced onion, 1 drained 6-oz. tuna and the noodles. Serve on lettuce. Serves 4.

Beef Lo Mein - Brown 8 oz. ground beef and 1 chopped onion in a large skillet. Add 2 1/2 cups of water; bring to a boil. Crumble in noodles from two 3-oz. bags and add seasoning packets and 2 cups thawed frozen broccoli florets. Simmer covered 3 minutes, uncover and simmer 3 minutes or until liquid evaporates and noodles are tender. Serves 4.

Source: November 1, 2003 Woman's Day

(Recipes continued on page 7, col. 3)

Truly a tax loophole for the rich...

If you are a small business owner and happen to own any of these or 56 other eligible SUVs, don't forget to deduct up to **\$100,000** of their price on your taxes this year.

For the full story, see http://www.suvtaxloophole.org/what_happened.htm

Thanks to *Kimber Olli*

Tribute to Mothers

For those who are fortunate enough to still be blessed by having your Mom with you, this is beautiful. For those who aren't, it is even more beautiful.

The young mother set her foot on the path of life. "Is this the long way?" she asked.

And the guide said, "Yes, and the way is hard. And you will be old before you reach the end of it. But the end will be better than the beginning."

But the young mother was happy, and she would not believe that anything could be better than these years. So she played with her children, she fed them and bathed them, and taught them how to tie their shoes and ride a bike and reminded them to feed the dog, and do their homework and brush their teeth. The sun shone on them, and the young Mother cried, "Nothing will ever be lovelier than this."

Then the nights came, and the storms, and the path was sometimes dark, and the children shook with fear and cold, and the mother drew them close and covered them with her arms, and the children said, "Mother, we are not afraid, for you are near, and no harm can come." And the morning came, and there was a hill ahead, and the children climbed and grew weary, and the mother was weary. (8692) But at all times she said to the children, "A little patience and we are there." So the children climbed, and as they climbed they learned to weather the storms. With this, she gave them strength to face the world. Year after year, she showed them compassion, understanding, hope, but most of all.....unconditional love. When they reached the top they said, "Mother, we would not have done it without you.

"The days went on, and the weeks and the months and the years, and the mother grew old and she became little and bent. But her children were tall and strong, and

walked with courage. The mother, when she lay down at night, looked up at the stars and said, "This is a better day than the last, for my children have learned so much and are now passing these traits on to their children."

When the way became rough for her, they lifted her, and gave her their strength, just as she had given them hers. One day they came to a hill, and beyond the hill, they could see a shining road and golden gates flung wide. The mother said: "I have reached the end of my journey. Now I know the end is better than the beginning, for my children can walk with dignity and pride, with their heads held high, and so can their children after them." The children said, "You will always walk with us, Mother, even when you have gone through the gates." They stood and watched her as she went on alone, and the gates closed after her. They said: "We cannot see her, but she is with us still. A Mother like ours is more than a memory. She is a living presence."

Your Mother is always with you. She's the whisper of the leaves as you walk down the street, she's the smell of certain foods you remember, flowers you pick and perfume that she wore, she's the cool hand on your brow when you're not feeling well, she's your breath in the air on a cold winter's day. She is the sound of the rain that lulls you to sleep, the colors of a rainbow, she is Christmas morning. Your Mother lives inside your laughter. She's crystallized in every tear drop. A mother shows every emotion..... happiness, sadness, fear, jealousy, love, hate, anger, helplessness, excitement, joy sorrow.....and all the while, hoping and praying you will only know the good feelings in life. She's the place you came from, your first home, and she's the map you follow with every step you take. She's your first love, your first friend, even your first enemy, but nothing on earth can separate you. Not time, not space... not even death!

Happy Mother's Day!

Each issue of the Flame contains the last 4 digits of member's social security number. This month there are 5 hidden in the newsletter. If you see your number, call Rita Leppanen@2495, who will issue a check to you for \$5.00. Della Cheney, Julie Genore, Jana Nicholls, Lori Rintala, and Nina Thomas were the winners in the April issue.

Contributions to the FLAME from our members are greatly welcome.

"The Flame" is a member of the Local Union Press Association and the Michigan Labor Press AFL/CIO. "The Flame" is published monthly (Sept-April) by the Education Committee, UAW Local 1950, Northern Michigan University, Marquette, MI 49855.

Submissions may be made to the Education Committee Chair, Dan Leppanen or the Asst. Editor, Phyllis Zaenglein.

CONFERENCE REPORT

from page 1, col. 2)

Senator, Debbie Stabenow, speak.

Tuesday morning we all boarded buses to join the Industrial Union Council Legislative Conference, which was held at the Washington Hilton, the hotel where President Reagan was shot. Again speakers, including Richard Trumka, Industrial Union Council Chair and Secretary-Treasurer of AFL-CIO; Senator Tom Daschle, Minority Leader, U.S. Senate; Bill Lucy, President of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, among others, spoke to the three issues of trade, labor law, and health care reform.

The afternoon was set aside for visits to the Hill. That morning we learned the Senate and Capitol were closed because Risen (a chemical agent) was found. The Michigan delegates from the first congressional district were still able to meet with U.S. Rep. Bart Stupak in his office on the Hill. We had worksheets to record his position on the focus topics of the convention. We are very fortunate to have a congressman who supports our positions and works hard for the rights of working people. Rep. Stupak also wanted us to convey to our membership that he needs to hear from us on issues.

Tuesday evening a legislative reception was held in the hotel. All delegates were asked to invite their congressmen and women. It is another opportunity to meet and discuss issues with our senators and representatives.

Wednesday morning we began bright and early again with speakers from the AFL-CIO and a few more legislators.

All delegates were given a wealth of information, not only on the three topics highlighted during the conference, but on all issues related to working men and women. The binder of material we received contains just about everything you would want to know about our government, both State and national. I will have some of the things I believe would be of most interest to our membership printed in our newsletter and/or on our Web site.

You can't come away from this conference and not feel a renewed energy to fight for the things you believe in. It's easy to feel like a small fish in a big ocean and that what you believe doesn't matter; but it does. Both Senator Stabenow and Rep. Stupak emphasized how important it is for us to let them know how we feel on issues. Phone calls, emails, snail-mail - whatever the form - they need your voice.

I would like to thank the membership for allowing me to go to the conference this year. I truly enjoyed the experience and brought back a ton of information.

SPELL CZECH

Eye halve a spelling chequer. It came with my
pea sea.

It plainly marques for my revue miss steaks
eye kin knot sea.

Eye strike a key and
type a word and
weight four it two say
Weather eye am wrong
oar write. It shows me
strait a weigh.



As soon a mist ache is maid,
it nose bee fore two long
And eye can put the error rite. Its rarely every
wrong.

Eye have run this poem threw it, I am shore
your pleased two no.
Its letter perfect in it's weigh. My chequer
tollled me sew.

REMINDER: Check the Local
website periodically for messages.
<http://uaw1950.nmu.edu/>

What is a BILLION?

The next time you hear a politician causally use the word "billion", think about whether you want that politician spending your tax money. A billion is a difficult number to comprehend, but one advertising agency did a good job of putting that figure into perspective in one of its releases:

A billion seconds ago, it was 1959.

A billion minutes ago, Julius Caesar was alive.

A billion hours ago, we were in the Stone Age.

A billion dollars ago was only 8 hours and 20 minutes, at the rate Washington spends it.

Electoral College

from page 1, col. 3)

duly nominated candidates are then officially submitted of each state's chief election official so that they might appear on the general election ballot.

- On the Tuesday following the first Monday of November in years divisible by 4, the people of each state cast their ballots for the party slate of electors representing their choice for president and vice president (although as a matter of practice, general election ballots normally say "electors for" each set of candidates rather than list the individual electors on each slate).

- Whichever party slate wins the most popular votes in the state become that state's electors so that, in effect, whichever presidential ticket gets the most popular votes in a state wins all the electors of that state. The two exceptions to this are Maine and Nebraska where 2 electors are chosen by statewide popular vote and the remainder by the popular vote within each congressional district.

- On the Monday following the second Wednesday of December (as established by federal law), each state's electors meet in their (7202) respective state capitals and cast their electoral votes, one for president and one for vice president.

- In order to prevent electors from voting only for "favorite sons" of their home state, at least one of their votes must be for a person from outside their state (though this is seldom a problem since the parties have consistently nominated presidential and vice presidential candidates from different states).

- The electoral votes are then sealed and transmitted from each state to the president of the Senate who, on the

following January 6, opens and reads them before both houses of Congress.

- The candidate for president with the most electoral votes, provided that it is an absolute majority (one over half of the total), is declared president. Similarly, the vice presidential candidate with the absolute majority of electoral votes is declared vice president.

- In the event no one obtains an absolute majority of electoral votes for president, the U.S. House of Representatives (as the chamber closest to the people) selects the president from among the top three contenders with each state casting only one vote and an absolute majority of the states being required to elect. Similarly, if no one obtains an absolute majority for vice president, then the U.S. Senate makes the selection from among the top two contenders from that office.

At noon on January 20, the duly elected president and vice president are sworn into office.

SINGLE FEMALE seeks male companionship, ethnicity unimportant. I'm a very good looking girl who LOVES to play. I love long walks in the woods, riding in your pickup truck, hunting, camping and fishing trips, cozy winter nights lying by the fire. Candlelight dinners will have me eating out of your hand. Rub me the right way and watch me respond. I'll be at the front door when you get home from work, wearing only what nature gave me. Kiss me and I'm yours.
Call ... and ask for Daisy.

Over 15,000 men found themselves talking to the owner of an 8-week old black Labrador retriever.

More recipes ...

Good Morning ~ I love fresh Asparagus and thought I would send a couple of recipes that looked delicious!
Have a Blessed Week!
~Chris Ducsay (former CT) ~

Springtime Asparagus

1 cup (about 4 oz.) sliced mushrooms
1/4 cup KRAFT LIGHT DONE RIGHT! Italian Reduced Fat Dressing
1 tsp. lemon juice
1 lb. asparagus spears, ends removed
2 Tbsp. PLANTERS Sliced Almonds

MIX mushrooms, dressing and lemon juice in large nonstick skillet; cook on medium heat 3 to 5 minutes or just until mushrooms are tender, stirring frequently. **TOP** with asparagus; cover. Reduce heat to medium-low; simmer 5 minutes or until asparagus is crisp-tender. **SPRINKLE** with almonds.

Easy Spring Frittata

Prep Time: 5 min | Total Time: 30 min
2 Tbsp. *Kraft Light Done Right!* Italian

Reduced Fat Dressing
1 bunch asparagus spears, cut in 1/2-inch pieces
8 eggs
1/4 cup milk

1 cup *Kraft* 2% Milk Shredded Reduced Fat Cheddar Cheese, divided

HEAT dressing in a large nonstick ovenproof skillet. Add asparagus; cook 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. **BEAT** together eggs, milk and 1/2 cup cheese in a medium bowl until well blended. Pour over asparagus and stir gently. **BAKE** at 350°F for 25 minutes or until set, sprinkling with remaining 1/2 cup cheese after 20 minutes. Cut into wedges to serve. Makes: 4 servings

Two Ways the United States of American Could Deal With Other Nations

THE ROBIN WILLIAMS PEACE PLAN

This may very well be the best thought out item we have read since 9/11/01. Leave it to Robin Williams to come up with the perfect plan ... what we need now is for our UN Ambassador to stand up and repeat this message.

I see a lot of people yelling for peace, but I have not heard of a plan for peace. So, here's one plan.

1. The US will apologize to the world for our "interference" in their affairs, past & present. You know, Hitler, Mussolini, Tojo, Noriega, Milosovich and the rest of those good ol' boys: We will never "interfere" again.

2. We will withdraw our troops from all over the world, starting with Germany, South Korea and the Philippines. They don't want us there. We would station troops at our borders. No one sneaking through holes in the fence.

3. All illegal aliens have 90 days to get their affairs together and leave. We'll give them a free trip home. After 90 days the remainder will be gathered up and deported immediately, regardless of who or where they are. France would welcome them.

4. All future visitors will be thoroughly checked and limited to 90 days unless given a special permit. No one from a terrorist nation would be allowed in. If you don't like it there, change it yourself and don't hide here. Asylum would never be available to anyone. We don't need any more cab drivers or 7-11 cashiers.

5. No "students" over age 21. The older ones are the bombers. If they don't attend classes, they get a "D" (for "deport") and it's back home baby.

6.. The US will make a strong effort to become self-sufficient energy wise. This will

include developing non-polluting sources of energy but will require a temporary drilling of oil in the Alaskan wilderness. The caribou will have to cope for a while.

7. Offer Saudi Arabia and other oil producing countries \$10 a barrel for their oil. If they don't like it, we go some place else. They can go somewhere else to sell their production. (About a week of the wells filling up the storage sites would be enough.)

8. If there is a famine or other natural catastrophe in the world, we will not "interfere." They can pray to Allah or whomever for seeds, rain, cement or whatever they need. Besides, most of what we give them is stolen or given to the Army. The people who need it most get very little, if anything..

9. Ship the UN Headquarters to an isolated island some place. We don't need the spies and fair weather friends here. Besides, the building would make a good homeless shelter or lockup for illegal aliens.

10.. All Americans must go to charm and beauty school. That way no one can call us "Ugly Americans" any longer. The language we speak is ENGLISH.....learn it...or LEAVE...

Now, ain't that a winner of a plan.

The Statue of Liberty is no longer saying "Give me your poor, your tired, your huddled masses." She's got a baseball bat and she's yelling, "You want a piece of me?"

Thanks to [Sue Tollefson](#)



WOULD IT NOT BE GREAT TO TURN ON THE OLE' TV TONIGHT AND SEE **G.W. BUSH** GIVE THE FOLLOWING SPEECH....

My fellow Americans:

As you all know, the defeat of Iraq's regime has been completed. Since congress does not want to spend any more money on this war, our mission in Iraq is complete.

This morning I gave the order for a complete removal of all American forces from Iraq. This action will be complete within 30 days. It is now time to begin the reckoning.

Before me, I have two lists. One list contains the names of countries which have stood by our side during the Iraq conflict. This list is short. The United Kingdom, Spain, Bulgaria, Australia, and Poland are some of the countries listed there. The other list contains everyone not on the first list. Most of the world's nations are on that list. My press secretary will be distributing copies of both lists later this evening.

Let me start by saying that effective immediately, foreign aid to those nations on List 2 ceases immediately and indefinitely. The money saved during the first year alone will pretty much pay for the costs of the Iraqi war. The American people are no longer going to pour money into third world hell-holes and watch those government leaders grow fat on corruption. Need help with a famine? (8739) Wrestling with an epidemic? Call France. In the future, together with Congress, I will work to redirect this money toward solving the vexing social problems we still have at home.

On that note, a word to terrorist organizations: Screw with us and we will hunt you down and eliminate you and all your friends from the face of the earth. Thirsting for a gutsy country to terrorize? Try France, or maybe China. To Israel and the Palestinian Authority. Yo, boys. Work out

a peace deal now. Just note that Camp David is closed. Maybe all of you can go to Russia for negotiations. They have some great palaces there. Big tables, too.

I'm ordering the immediate severing of diplomatic relations with France, Germany, and Russia. Thanks for all your help, comrades. We are retiring from NATO as well. Bon chance, mes amis.

I have instructed the Mayor of New York City to begin towing the many UN diplomatic vehicles located in Manhattan with more than two unpaid tickets to sites where those vehicles will be stripped, shredded and crushed. I don't care about whatever treaty pertains to this. Pay your tickets tomorrow or watch your precious Benzes, Beamers, and limos be turned over to some of the finest chop shops in the world. I love New York.

A special note to our neighbors: Canada is on List 2. Since we are going to be seeing a lot more of each other, you folks might want to try not pissing us off for a change. Mexico is also on List 2. President Fox and his entire corrupt government really need an attitude adjustment. I have a couple extra tank and infantry divisions sitting around. Guess where I'm gonna put 'em? Yep, border security. So start doing something with your oil.

Oh, by the way, the United States is abrogating the NAFTA treaty—starting now. It is time for America to focus on its own welfare and its own citizens. Some will accuse us of isolationism. I answer them by saying darn tootin'. Nearly a century of trying to help folks live a decent life around the world has only earned us the undying enmity of just about everyone on the planet. It is time to eliminate hunger in America.. It is time to eliminate homelessness in America. It is time to eliminate World Cup soccer from America.

To the nations on List 1, a final thought. Thanks guys. We owe you. To the nations on List 2, a final thought. Drop dead.

God bless America. Thank you and good night.

Medicare Web Site to Shine Light on Drug Prices

by ROBERT PEAR

Published: April 12, 2004 in the *New York Times*

WASHINGTON, April 11 — Medicare will soon publish detailed information comparing the prices of most prescription drugs, shining a bright light on some of the biggest secrets in the health care industry.

Economists and federal officials say the information, intended to help Medicare beneficiaries, could also be immensely useful to other consumers, as well as to private insurers and employers who provide drug coverage to employees and retirees.

The data will be available late this month on a government Web site, Medicare.gov. The site will list the prices charged for various dosages of specific drugs at retail pharmacies in or near a given ZIP code. If a brand-name drug has generic equivalents, their prices will be displayed as well.

Medicare officials said the Web site would also show prices for competing brand-name drugs used to treat the same condition. Thus, a person shopping for Lipitor could see the prices for other cholesterol-lowering agents like Zocor and Crestor.

Ana Nunez-Poole, Web site manager at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, said the main purpose of providing such information was to help beneficiaries compare the merits of the drug discount cards issued by private entities and approved by the government.

Beneficiaries will be able to sign up for the cards next month. Card sponsors have negotiated discounts with drug manufacturers. The site will list the retail prices for different drugs under different cards, so beneficiaries can choose the card that best meets their needs.

Through the federal Web site, consumers and government officials will have access to prices for more than 60,000 products sold at nearly 75,000 pharmacies around the country. "That has never happened before," said James L. Yocum, executive vice president of DestinationRx, a contractor that helped develop the site.

The process of setting drug prices is notoriously secretive. Ten people buying the same drug at a retail pharmacy may pay 10 different prices, depending on what insurance coverage they have, if any.

Comparison shopping is difficult. "This type of information is hard to get today," said John C. Rother, policy director of AARP, the lobby for older Americans. "Most consumers don't have access to it."

Tommy G. Thompson, the secretary of health and human services, said the act of making the data public would "help drive down drug prices," as "companies will have to reduce prices to compete."

Americans without drug coverage pay some of the world's highest prices for their medicines. The Bush administration says the sponsors of drug discount cards have negotiated savings of 10 percent to 25 percent off retail prices. Democrats are generally skeptical and predict savings at the lower end of that range. Elderly people who are not comfortable using the Internet will be

able to call a toll-free telephone number, 800-MEDICARE (633-4227), to obtain prices for the medicines they use. About 22 percent of Americans 65 and older regularly use the Internet but the number is growing rapidly, according to the Pew Internet and American Life Project, a research organization.

DestinationRx, a small company based in Los Angeles, developed the software needed for comparison shopping and will tabulate the prices reported by drug-card sponsors. "This is an enormous undertaking," said Mr. Yocum of DestinationRx. "It's as if the federal government were trying to find the price of milk at every supermarket in the country at the same time."

The company already operates a Web site that compares prices of drugs available through large online pharmacies.

"The market for prescription drugs has been largely opaque," Mr. Yocum said. "When markets become transparent, consumers see lower prices almost immediately."

Pharmacists say they expect to be deluged with questions from Medicare beneficiaries and from other consumers who want the same discounts. "We are already getting lots of questions," said Page Dunlap, the owner of a pharmacy in Hartselle, Ala., north of Birmingham.

Every state has a health insurance counseling program to help Medicare beneficiaries sort through their choices. Counselors who saw a demonstration of the new Web site here last week said they were impressed, but had many questions.

Robin S. Szwanek, (4787) a counselor with the Nebraska Insurance Department, said the price data could be a "savior" for elderly people and those who advise them on how to cope with soaring drug costs.

Tracey A. Borgmeyer, a trainer with Missouri's program, said the site would be useful to some Medicare beneficiaries, but confusing to others. "It's too much information, too much data, for some beneficiaries," she said.

Gail E. Shearer, a health policy expert at Consumers Union, said that "there is already a high degree of confusion and anxiety among seniors and the disabled about how to choose a drug discount card," and that the information on the Web site could compound that confusion.

Thanks to *Kimber Olli*

This month we contributed 15
inkjets to Redeemer's youth.
The total is now 118. Thanks.

CONGRATULATIONS

to our sisters who graduate May
7, 2004

Penny Hubble (USOEC)
BS, Marketing

Jeannie Wratschko
(Diversity Student Services)
BS, Psychology
Minor: Native American
Studies



LEGISLATIVE ALERT: Act now on Federal Matching Assistance Program (FMAP)

From a flyer from MGH

The temporary FMAP increase for Michigan and other distressed states, is about to expire. If it expires, health care services for thousands of Michigan children, single mothers, disabled and elderly citizens could lose coverage.

The state has already cut \$505 million from the Medicaid program since 1998. Worse still, Michigan is facing an additional \$500 million Medicaid budget shortfall for fiscal year 2005. If the FMAP increase expires, hundreds of thousands of Michigan citizens could lose their health care.

Please protect health care services for thousands of Michigan children, single mothers, disabled and elderly citizens: support legislation in Congress to extend by a least one more year, the federal matching assistance percentage (FMAP) increase for Michigan. This is a critical health care funding issue and MGHS needs a voice to talk to Washington. Be part of the solution to the health care problem.

Write or email your representatives, US Sen. Debbie Stabenow (D-Lansing), US Sen. Car Levin (D-Detroit), and our US Rep Bart Stupak. For more information, including sample letters, see www.hospitalsact.org.

Retirees (cont. from page 3, col 3)

Sue Cuth - Been going to school ever since kindergarden. Graduated high school in 1969. Got a two-year degree at Gogebic Community College in Ironwood, MI in 1971.

1971-1973 Bookkeeper for the Wakefield Township Schools
1974-1976 Secretary to the Principal at Marquette Senior High School (Bill Hart)
1976-1977 Secretary C4 to the Chief Accountant in the Controllors Office at NMU (Don Grisham and later Robert Kemp)
1977-1980 Secretary (C6 unclassified) to the Director of Auxilitary Services (Stan Walker)
1980-1987 Secretary (AP2) to the Director of Housing and Food Service (Bob Fisher and after a reorg. in 1987, Carl Holm)
1987-1989 Secretary (4C) to the Director of Public Safety & Police Services (Ken Chant)
1989-1999 Sectetary (4A) to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences (Don Heikkinen and Michael Marsden)
1999-June 30, 2004 Secretary (4A) in Academic Affairs (Leonard Heldreth)

What can I say? I've met and worked with a lot of great people over the years. Northern's been good to me.

Plans for the future...I'm not making any definite plans — Will probably spend more time in Wakefield assisting my folks, might pursue my hobby job (buy low and sell less low), might work part time somewhere, would like to get more involved in week day church activities, will look at volunteer opportunities, might finally weed my garden and spring clean the house :)

**See if you can pick out
the real penny:**

[http://www.exploratorium.edu/
exhibits/common_cents/
index.html](http://www.exploratorium.edu/exhibits/common_cents/index.html)

No cheating.