“With all their faults, trade unions have done more for humanity than any other organization of men that ever existed. They have done more for decency, for honesty, for education, for the betterment of the race, for the developing of character in man, than any other association of men.” Clarence Darrow

Consumer-Directed Health Care (CDHC) Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Michigan

By Gary Jerry

On Thursday Sept. 28th 2006 Jim Tharp, Dawn Wilder, and I attended the Fall 2006 Labor Conference at the Holiday Inn in Marquette. The topic at this year’s conference was Consumer-Directed Health Care (CDHC) by Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Michigan and was presented by Diane Costigan. The information below came from her Power Point presentation, which is on our union Web site.

Some of the CDHC advantages to members are that they allow members to:
- better manage health benefit costs
- have more choice and control over their health care spending
- customize their own benefit package using pretax dollars

Some of the CDHC advantages to employers are that they allow employers to:
- save tax and health care premium dollars (1926)
- provide a wider variety of benefits to meet individual needs
- encourage a healthier, productive, and satisfied workforce

We were introduced to IRC Section 125 plans (flexible spending accounts aka cafeteria plans), IRC Section 105 plans (health reimbursement arrangements -HRA), and IRC Section 223 plans (health savings accounts). Diane was a very knowledgeable person. She explained in detail what each plan was. She also covered the pros and cons of each plan.

(Cont. p. 6)

Wreaths recognize our heroes

By Dorthy Brush
Source: http://www.canadafreepress.com/2006/brush010706.htm

Rest easy, sleep well my brothers. Know the line has held, your job is done. Rest easy, sleep well. Others have taken up where you fell, the line has held. Peace, peace, and farewell...

Like bright red candles lighting the dark are the wreaths placed each year at the gravesites in Arlington National cemetery. These wreaths—some 5,000-are donated by the Worcester Wreath Co. of Harrington, Maine. The owner, Merrill Worcester, not only provides the wreaths, but also covers the trucking expenses. He’s quietly and patiently done this since 1992. Also, most years, groups of Maine school kids combine an educational trip to DC with this event to help out. Making this even more remarkable is the fact that Harrington is in one the poorest parts of the state.
EMPLOYMENT CHANGES

Patricia Wooldridge filled the 30 hour per week Account Clerk II 4D position in Human Resources effective 11/13/06. She replaces Rachelle Misun, who is now in the Bookstore.

Jennifer Lauren returned to work effective 11/15/06.

Gina O’Donnell’s position was reclassified as a Principal Secretary 4B in Housing and Residence Life effective 10/18/06.

Terry Johnson received an additional assignment from 8/1/06-11/30/06.

Barbara Lantz will retire effective 1/1/07.

Jana Nichols was placed on a leave without pay from 12/5/06 through 12/21/06.

Melinda Carlson filled the Secretary 4E position in the NMU Foundation effective 12/13/06. She replaces Linda Johnson.

Maria Coursey filled the Senior Clerk 4E position in the NMU Foundation effective 12/11/06. She replaces Georgia Tillotson.

Julie Bonner accepted the Principal Secretary 4B position in the Controller’s Office effective 12/14/06. She replaces Lori Pelkola.

Good and Welfare

A sympathy card was sent to Tom McManus (art and design) on the loss of his mother; a sympathy card was sent to Janet Biolo (financial services) for the loss of her father-in-law; Chryl Hemmila (communication & marketing) was sent a retirement card and service award; Krystal Rintala (housing and residence life) received a retirement card and service award; and Jana Nichols (geography) a gift basket to celebrate her baby boy.
Thank You

Dear UAW Local 1950,

Thank you for thinking of us and for the beautiful plant you sent for the birth of our son, Grady. I sure am enjoying my time at home with him - what a blessing!

Christi Etelamaki

Friends and Fellow Workers of Local 1950

Thank you so much for remembering me and my family on the birth of our newborn son, Levi. The gift basket with a rattle, tub toy, and bath/body shower gel and spray were very much appreciated.

Thanks, Jana Nicholls

Thanks to all of you who are still sending printer cartridges to me for Redeemer’s youth.

Phyllis Zaenglein

This is a way to say thanks to a service person in Iraq ‘… Something that Xerox is doing. If you go to this web site, (2390) http://www.letssaythanks.com/ , you can pick out a thank you card and Xerox will print it and send it to a Soldier who is currently serving in Iraq. You can’t pick out who gets it, but it will go to some member of the armed services. How amazing it would be if every soldier would receive one!

Grammar Watch

The purpose of this column is to help us recognize and correct mistakes in speech and writing. Please share your questions, ideas, and or peeves!

stationary - not moving
stationery - writing materials
grey - mixture of black & white
gray - British spelling of grey
capital - most important or serious; principal
capitol - a building in D.C.
principal - first in rank, authority, importance; a person
principle - the ultimate source, origin, or cause of something

Source: Webster’s New world Dictionary of the American Language, etc. etc. etc.

“It” is never possessive.
Incorrect: She gave the column it’s final edit.
Correct: She gave the column its final edit.

“It’s” is always a contraction of “it is.” “It’s okay to question the decisions of our political leaders,” or “Return the book to the library when it’s due.”

CAP and Marquette County Labor Council meeting minutes are now available in the “members only” section of the UAW Local 1950 Web site.
http://uaw1950.nmu.edu/
**2004-2005 Officers**

President - Sue Tolleson  
Vice President - Dawn Wilder  
Secretary - Michelle Kimball  
Treasurer - Rita Leppanen  
Sergeant at Arms - Phyllis Zaenglein  
Guide - Karen Smith  
Tustees - Kelly Dore', Joann Jordan, and Rhonda Peterson  
Bargaining Team - Grace Albert, Gary Jerry, Jeff Roo, and Pat Woods  

**District Representatives**  
Chief Steward - Grace Albert  
District 1 - Jan Crawford - Cohodas, UC, A&D, and Gries  
District 2 - Beth Sanderson - Services Building, Jacobetti Center, PEIF, Superior Dome, and Berry Events Center  
District 3 - Susie Piziali - West Science, Learning Resources, Magers, New Science Facility, and Whitman  
District 4 - Kimber Olli - McClintock, Thomas Fine Arts, and Hedgcock  

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**Levi Boone Nicholls** at 10 weeks old. Born September 30, 2006 to Jana (geography) and Mark Nicholls, Levi weighed 8 lbs. 11 ounces and was 21 1/2" long. Baby and family are doing very well.

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**Banana Bread – D.W. (Double Recipe)**

1 cup butter  
4 eggs  
2 cups mashed bananas  
2 tsp vanilla  
1 tsp salt  
1 cup chopped nuts (walnuts)

2 cups sugar  
1 cup sour cream  
3 cups flour  
2 tsp baking soda

Directions: Preheat oven to 350°  
Grease and flour two (2) loaf pans  
1. Mix dry ingredients (flour, salt, baking soda) in a separate bowl. Set aside.  
2. Cream butter and sugar in a large bowl.  
3. Add eggs.  
4. Add sugar, sour cream, vanilla and mashed bananas.  
5. Add dry ingredients to wet mixture.  

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December Happenings

December 1, 1956 - Rosa Parks arrested in Montgomery, Alabama for refusing to surrender her seat to a white rider launching an important early struggle of the Civil Rights Movement.

December 3, 1847 – Frederick Douglass and Martin Delaney start the anti-slavery newspaper the North Star.

December 3, 1946 – 100,000 join Oakland general strike and win recognition for department store clerks.

December 4, 1969 – Chicago Black Panther chairman Fred Hampton killed in his sleep by police squad.

December 4, 1970 – United Farm Workers president Cesar Chavez jailed for 20 days for refusing to end grape boycott.

December 5, 1955 – The two U.S. labor federations, the AFL and the CIO merge.

December 8, 1930 – Thousands attend funeral of labor heroine Mother Jones at Mt. Olive, Illinois.

December 9, 1869 – Knights of Labor founded

December 14, 1890 – 350 members of Chief Big Foot’s Minneconjou Lakota band killed by U.S. troops at Wounded Knee, south Dakota in ethnic cleansing campaign.

December 17, 1943 – U.S. Congress repeals the Chinese Exclusion Act.

December 25, 1921 – Labor leader Eugene Debs released from prison following amnesty campaign.

December 30, 1936 – Flint sit-down strike to prevent outsourcing of work begins. It ends in February when General Motors Corporation recognizes the United Auto Workers.

Mark your Calendar

December 1 - World AIDS Day
December 5 – International Volunteers Day
December 7 – Pearl Harbor Day (1941)
December 10 – Human Rights Day
December 12 – Poinsettia Day
December 16 – Chanukkah Begins
December 21 – Winter Solstice
December 24 – Christmas Eve
December 25 – Merry Christmas
December 26 – Kwanzaa
December 31 – New Year’s Eve
The birth flower for December is the Narcissus. The birth stones for December are the Turquoise and the Zircon.

Senior Corner

Long ago and far away in a land that time forgot,
Before the days of Dylan or the dawn of Camelot.
There lived a race of innocents and they were you and me,
Long ago and far away in the Land of Sandra Dee.

Oh, there was truth and goodness in that land where we were born,
Where navels were for oranges and Peyton Place was porn.
For Ike was in the White House and Hoss was on TV,
And God was in his heaven in the Land of Sandra Dee.

We learned to gut a muffler, we washed our hair at dawn,
We spread our crinolines to dry in circles on the lawn.
And they could hear us coming all the way to Tennessee,
All starched and sprayed and rumbling in the Land of Sandra Dee.

We longed for love and romance and waited for the prince,
And Eddie Fisher married Liz and no one’s seen him since.
We danced to “Little Darlin’” and sang to “Stagger Lee”
And cried for Buddy Holly in the Land of Sandra Dee.

Only girls wore earrings then, and three was one to many,
And only boys wore flat-top cuts, except for Jean McKinney.
And only in our wildest dreams did we expect to see
A boy named George with lipstick in the Land of Sandra Dee.

We fell for Frankie Avalon, Annette was oh, so nice,
And when they made a movie, they never made it twice.
We didn’t have a Star Trek Five or Psycho Two and Three,
Or Rocky-Rambo Twenty in the Land of Sandra Dee.

Miss Kitty had a heart of gold and Chester had a limp,
And Reagan was a Democrat whose co-star was a chimp.
We had a Mr. Wizard but not a Mr. T,
And Oprah couldn’t talk yet in the Land of Sandra Dee.

We had our share of heroes, we never thought they’d go,
At least not Bobby Darin or Marilyn Monroe.
For youth was still eternal and life was yet to be,
And Elvis was forever in the Land of Sandra Dee.

We’d never seen the rock band that was grateful to be fed,
And airplanes weren’t named Jefferson and zeppelins weren’t led.
And beatles lived in gardens then and monkees in a tree,
Madonna was a virgin in the Land of Sandra Dee.

We’d never heard of microwaves or telephones in cars,
And babies might be bottle-fed but they weren’t grown in jars.
And pumping iron got wrinkles out and “gay” meant fancy-free,
And dorms were never coed in the Land of Sandra Dee.

We hadn’t seen enough of jets to talk about the lag,
And microchips were what was left at the bottom of the bag.
And hardware was a box of nails and bytes came from a flea,
And rocket ships were fiction in the Land of Sandra Dee.
OPINIONS

I don’t have the exact numbers, but approximately 300,000 Michiganders lost their jobs in the last 4 years. Many of those in the auto industry will have to find jobs in new occupations; occupations currently filled by underpaid illegals.

When employers hire illegals, they often don’t even pay the illegals minimum wage in many occupations. Regardless of the hourly pay, the employer escapes paying social security tax, federal tax, state tax, unemployment tax and any other applicable business taxes. Why are these employers getting away with it? I believe that all aspects of government are turning their collective heads the other way and letting business do their own thing. Why? For the sake of the economy? . . . at the working middle class tax payers expense.

It is interesting that the law makers have stepped back on immigration reform. Did it occur to them that illegals can’t vote them out of office? At least not until they give them drivers licenses and the right to vote.

Has any one been to a restaurant in Chicago lately?

Kimber Olli
gerstrar’s office

Next year when minimum wage goes up to $7.25/hr., the senior clerk (4E) position recently advertised will be only $.85/hr. over minimum wage. There’s something seriously wrong with this picture when students are making almost as much as we are. This WILL be addressed in the next negotiations. Your input to the (8857) bargaining committee is greatly appreciated.

Dawn Wilder
math and computer sciences

CDHC (conclusion)

We discussed self-funding plans and how they are administered, and what stop loss coverage is and how it works. We also discussed what is negotiable by the union, and where to go to get more information on FSA’s, HRA’s, and HSA’s.

With the rising cost of health insurance, I feel it’s very important for all of our members to become as well informed of their health insurance plans as possible. This is especially important to our bargaining team members, who are negotiating these benefits. By being better educated about health care, we can all make wiser decisions about our health insurance and hopefully keep our health insurance costs down.

____________________________________

Christmas Traditions

Why is there a tree in our living room?
This is a German tradition, started as early as 700 A.D. In the 1800s the tradition of a Christmas tree was widespread in Germany, then moved to England and then to America through Pennsylvanian German immigrants.

Why is mistletoe hanging over the front door?
For Scandinavians, the goddess of love (Frigga) is strongly associated with mistletoe. This link to romance may be where our tradition of kissing under mistletoe came.

Why do we drape holly over the mantel and staircase?
Mistletoe has apparently been used as a decoration in houses for thousands of years and is also associated with many pagan rituals.

According to the book “Extraordinary Origins of Everyday Things,” by Charles Panati: The church forbade the use of mistletoe in any form, mindful of its idolatrous associations. As a substitute, it suggested holly. The sharply pointed leaves were to symbolize the thorns in Christ’s crown and the red berries drops of his blood. Holly became a nativity tradition. The Christian ban on mistletoe was in effect throughout the Middle Ages. Surprisingly, as late as the 20th century, there were churches in England that forbade the wearing of mistletoe sprigs and corsages during services.

Source: http://christmas.howstuffworks.com/christmas.htm

2007 COLA 3.3%

The Social Security Cost-Of-Living Adjustment (COLA) will increase benefits 3.3% in 2007. That’s about $33 a month for someone with an average benefit of $1011. But for the first time for many beneficiaries, a substantial portion, if not all, of the increase will be completely offset by the increases in Medicare Part B and Part D premiums. In fact, next year some seniors may even see their Social Security benefits shrink, a downward spiral that, without changes, is likely to continue into the future according to Medicare actuaries. To get the details go to http://www.tscl.org/.
Four-Year Program Applicants:

STEVEN SHIRKEY
Parent: Gloria Alexander
Narrative: I am currently a senior at NMU with 98 earned hours. My major is Business-CIS with a minor in Alternative Energies. My mom has been a member of UAW for over ten years and has been the sole supporter of my college career. This scholarship would help tremendously with the extra expenses I incur as a student.

I am really excited NMU has implemented a minor in alternative energies. I have really enjoyed the courses I have already taken and will try to in the future to find an internship that would give me hands on experience. My hope is to someday have a home that is totally “off the grid”. I am not exactly sure what kind of employment I will pursue after I graduate, but I really hope it will combine both of my interests.

I feel I deserve this scholarship because I hope that during my career I can and will stand for what is right and the United Auto Workers ideals.

One-Two Year Program Applicants:

ANDREW TANKKA
Parent: Susan Henderson
Narrative: I hope to be a recipient of a UAW Local 1950 scholarship to help pay for my college expenses. My mom has my first semester tuition, books, and fees on her credit card, and I hope to be able to help lift some of that strain from our family. Unfortunately, I do not qualify for any of her employee benefits.

I have worked in the construction business since graduating from high school and have even attempted to take some classes before. But because I had to work full-time to support myself, needless-to-say, I could not give school 100%. This time, my mom insisted I go to school full-time, which meant I would have to give up my full-time job. The entire family has tried to help make this happen, and I am proud to say, right now I am at the top of my class. Even though the financial strain is very difficult for not just me, but for my whole family, this decision was the correct one, and I see a huge difference in my ability to excel in the program.

Thank you for even considering me for your scholarship. I assure you, if you do award one to me, you will be very pleased with my final ranking in the class!

Congratulations to all of you!

Movie Review:

NORTHERN COUNTRY

In 1975 iron mines in northern Minnesota hired their first female miner. By 1989 men still outnumbered females 30:1. This movie is about the sexual harassment experienced by the women, their involvement in the union, and the class action suit the women won against the miners. (9722) The women were awarded a modest financial settlement, but more importantly, a sexual harassment policy, that protected them and all who followed, was put in place. This landmark action resonated around the world. The DVD is available at Family Video.
CHAPLAINCY CORNER

Celebrating family honors God
Do not worship the Lord your God in the way these pagan people worship their gods. Rather, you must seek the Lord your God at the place he himself will choose from among all the tribes for his name to be honored. There you will bring to the Lord your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, your special gifts, your offerings to fulfill a vow, your freewill offerings, and your offerings of the firstborn animals of your flocks and herds. There you and your families will feast in the presence of the Lord your God, and you will rejoice in all you have accomplished because the Lord your God has blessed you.
- Deuteronomy 12:4-7 NLT

Count God in
Family celebrations are an effective way to bond family members to each other and to God.

Within God’s laws and rules for his people in the land of promise we find this wonderful insight: God is a God of joy and gladness. For those who think that God is somber and expects us to always go into his presence in a somber mood, this is a great passage to study.

God wants us to worship him with joy and gladness. Families come together for feasting and food, joy and delight, fun and games. “Count me in,” God is reminding us. “Use these occasions to praise and honor me and to thank me for what I have done for you.” Remember this when you get together for family feasting and fun.

Content is derived from the Holy Bible, New Living Translation and other publications of Tyndale Publishing House

OUTLOOK ON LIFE

Now that I have reached the age of eight-five, Boy, am I glad to be alive!
I really enjoy reading “The FLAME”,
Here and there I recognize a familiar name.
Great thought of UAW I can recall,
Our Christmas parties were always a “ball”.
May the UAW “FLAME” keep burning every so bright,
Capturing the “wrongs” and making them “right”.

Please keep me on your mailing list. Reading the FLAME gives me a lift for the day.

Sincerely,
Ione Bernard (retired and living in Nevada)

We enjoy hearing from our retirees and will print your letter in the FLAME.

Dorothea Barshaw, retired, school of education, was in an automobile accident on Friday, October 27. She was hospitalized for more than a week but is now home and doing well. If you would like to send a card, her address is 219 Genessee, Marquette.

Christmas Stamps!
A woman goes to the post office to buy stamps for her Christmas cards. She says to the clerk, “May I have 50 Christmas stamps?”

The clerk says, “What denomination?”

The woman says, “God help us. Has it come to this? Give me 6 Catholic, 12 Presbyterian, 10 Lutheran and 22 Baptists.”

FYI - This is the last year we will have the option of using religious Christmas stamps.