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Vol. 3 / No. 8

AUGUST 2000

THE WORK FORCE

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION **CSEA** Local 1000, AFSCME, AFL-CIO

Didn't Quit in DeWitt

**Town of DeWitt
workers to enjoy first
CSEA contract**

See Page 3



Photo of the Month



Marc Galarneau, a CSEA member at the state Department of Audit and Control in Rensselaer, inspects the steady stream of state employee bonus checks being printed by a computer. The negotiated \$500 bonus appeared in the July 13 and July 19 paychecks for more than 77,000 state employees.

For three consecutive pay periods, CSEA members working in state government have seen their pay rise.

CSEA members who are on the institutional and administrative payrolls saw their prescription drug contribution rolled back on their June 29 and July 5 checks, respectively.

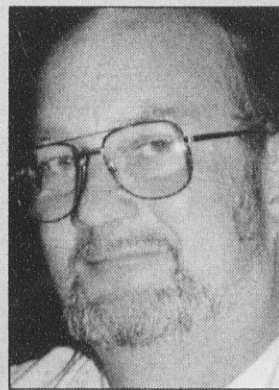
The July 27 and Aug. 2 paychecks included retroactive salary money and the negotiated salary increase.

Legislative action brings reaction

"I'm shocked and ecstatic by what CSEA achieved. I'm more happy with the outcome of the contract fight than I've been with anything since I've been a CSEA member.

"COLA will have far-reaching impact for all CSEA members.

"These accomplishments will make CSEA stronger in the local workplace. No one should be asking what has CSEA done for me?"



— Bill Curtin
Helen Hayes Hospital
Will benefit from veteran buy-back
legislation, pension contribution elimination
and eventually, COLA.
(See Page 18 for COLA wrap-up)

Olympic Authority, courts, canals, ink new contracts

CSEA has reached deals for thousands of workers in the state court system, the canal system and at the authority which runs the Olympic sites and ski areas in northern New York.

"Our members' persistence at the bargaining table paid off," said CSEA President Danny Donohue about the three contracts.

A four-year pact for about 4,600 CSEA members in the state court system mirrors the deal 77,000 state workers ratified earlier this year.

Across-the-board salary increases and improvements in many benefit areas are included in the new court pact.

Improvements were also made in areas such as family sick leave, total sick leave accruals, sick leave donations and other leave benefits.

Uniform and equipment allowance will be increased for court security workers and non-security workers who are required to wear uniforms.

In northern New York, members ratified a

Long Beach Hospital workers fire salvos

LONG BEACH — CSEA members and supporters at the Long Beach Medical Center are keeping the heat up and the pressure on hospital managers and trustees this summer in their year-long quest for a first contract.

The most recent show of force in what the workers call their "Summer of Action" was when scores of workers distributed a flier at the hospital board of trustees meeting.

They also staged a rally, which drew 200 workers and supporters to the Long Beach streets, and vowed both actions were just the beginning.

"The longer negotiations are dragged on by the administration's unreasonable demands; the louder, harder and hotter our efforts will become," CSEA members said in the flier.

"Hospital workers are staying strong. We care about the hospital, our work and our patients. We care about ourselves, our families and our futures," they added.

Because of unrealistic demands by management such as eliminating longevity payments and reducing sick leave and vacation time, negotiations drag on. Managers also want to freeze workers' wages for the next three years.

Labor parades, festivities scheduled around New York state

Here is a list of Labor Day events as of press time:

Metropolitan Region: Parade will be held Saturday, Sept. 9 in Manhattan. Meeting time and place for CSEA members has not been determined. Contact the Metro Region office for more information.

Capital Region: Picnic to be held Labor Day, Sept. 4 at the Ganser-Smith Park in Menands. Hours will be announced.

A labor parade will be held Saturday, Sept. 24. The parade route has not been established.

Central Region: Labor Day, Sept. 4 there will be a 10 a.m. blessing of the workers at the New York State Fairgrounds, followed by lunch in the Empire Room at the fair. Lunch cost is \$10 per person. Make reservations by Aug. 1 by calling 315-422-3363. A parade and rally will be held at 2 p.m.

Western Region: Buffalo area: Parade begins at noon, Sept. 4, at Walden and Harlem roads (Thruway Mall). Lineup begins at 10:30 a.m. near the starting point.

Rochester area: Parade begins at 11 a.m. Sept. 4 at Meigs Street and East Avenue. Lineup begins at 9:30 a.m.

new contract with the Olympic Regional Development Authority (ORDA).

The contract provides for increases in the starting rates of new ORDA employees ranging from 10 to 20 percent and provides a series of salary increases which are in line with the CSEA state government contract.

Since ORDA employees are part of the New York State Retirement System, they will also benefit from the recent changes in retirement calculations achieved by CSEA in recent state contract negotiations.

CSEA members who work for the state Canal Corp. overwhelmingly approved a contract recently.

Salary increases of 10.5 percent over four years, and fully paid health insurance and prescription drug coverage after four years of employment, are included in the contract.

"We've waited over a year (for a contract) and it is a good deal," said Brook Bean, a welder in the Waterford canal shop."

Meanwhile, the battle for justice is being fought on other fronts.

"We are fighting the injustice that union workers are being forced to pay more than double what their nonunion co-workers are paying for health insurance," said CSEA Attorney Mike Ortiz.

The union is also fighting for better health and safety conditions on the job and for workers to have the right to wear union stickers at work without fear of retribution.

"The negotiating committee and the workers at LBMC are flexing their muscles and joining the fight for fairness. It is these workers who will make the "Summer of Action" successful," said CSEA Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte.

CSEA Long Beach Local President Marcene Sutton said the union is considering more advertising in the Long Beach area as part of the "Summer of Action" plans.

"We are going to keep the pressure on. We want management to be reminded of our determination and strength each and every day," said Sutton.

— Sheryl C. Jenks

After three years of battle:

Organizing, political action forge DeWitt pact

DEWITT — David collided with Goliath in this small town that shoulders Syracuse, the first blood drawn with a hail of pink slips from the town supervisor three summers ago.

With their first contract recently inked and the anti-union town board and supervisor put out to political pasture, CSEA members in DeWitt are finally enjoying the relative calm this August offers.

But what a long, strange trip it's been for the about 70 members who were at first rattled, yet undaunted, by the firing blitz three summers ago.

They stuck together in a model of union organizing, political action, solidarity and perseverance.

"Now there's a real sense of relief that it's finally over and we can move on," said White Collar Unit activist Brenda Morgan-Manley. "Now a foundation has been laid for future contracts," she added.

Hostile workplace

Parks & Recreation Department Senior Program Coordinator Susan Ferris remembers the sleepless nights in DeWitt after former Town Supervisor Kelly Dellas announced layoffs and said more could be on the way.

"When she was talking about cutting everyone's hours back, I was thinking to myself, 'how the heck am I going to make all the bills?'" Ferris said.

"We had a level of anger. It was a very hostile environment," she added.

Mechanical Equipment Operator Dan

Schantz of the Town Highway Department said employees felt betrayed by the sudden loss of job security.

"You'd come into work for years and do a good job and then it was laid on you that you could be gone at a moment's notice," Schantz said.

It was then the workers came to CSEA looking for representation and a change.

A right to organize

Town workers met with CSEA Central Region Organizer Will Streeter, who got a large majority to sign cards designating CSEA as their union. Streeter then asked the town to voluntarily recognize CSEA as the bargaining agent for workers.

Supervisor Dellas and the Democratic town board members responded by hiring an attorney and earmarking \$25,000 in taxpayer money to fight CSEA's organizing drive.

The battle intensified. The town tried to bust the union and wear down the employees' resolve. Hours in the highway department and health care options for workers were unilaterally changed.

CSEA filed improper practice charges and galvanized community support.

A huge turnout at a union-sponsored "Right To Organize Day" bolstered morale.

CSEA Central Region President Jim Moore promised the union would use its political clout to defeat anyone who blocked the workers' right to organize.

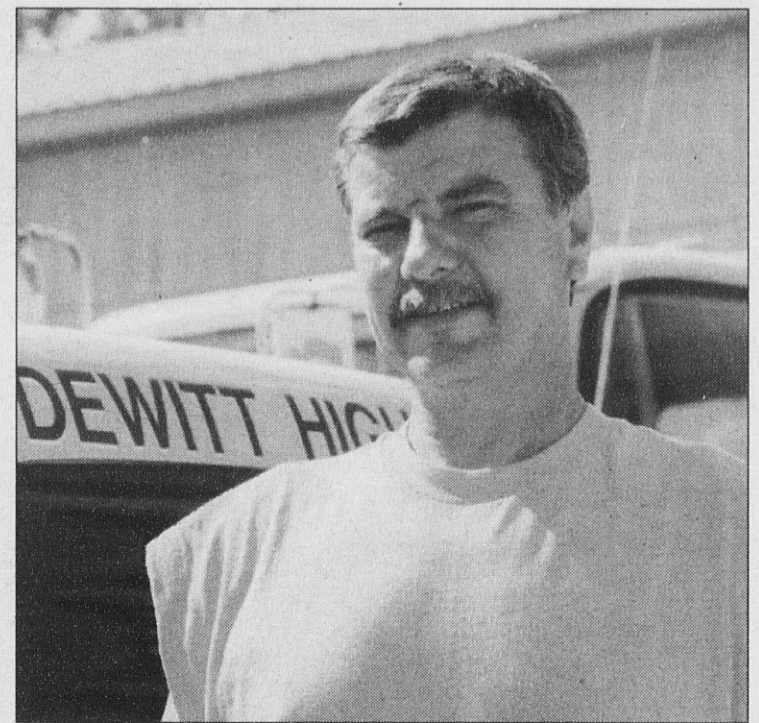
After the state Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) established three bargaining units and the town recognized them as CSEA members, both sides went to the contract table.

Taking political action

With contract talks stymied, CSEA's political action machine kicked into overdrive to support pro-union candidates.

Phone banks, advertising and door-to-door efforts put union-endorsed candidates onto the town board and into the supervisor's job.

Progress at the contract table, elusive for months, was finally



Above, blue collar Unit Vice President Mark Bendura; below left, the contract is "OK" for supervisory Unit Secretary Susan Ferris.

made. Each of the town's three CSEA units got its first contract with raises in each of the three years, a signing bonus, and no givebacks or changes in their health insurance.

Labor/management and safety and health committees were established.

Worth the fight

For workers like Mark Bendura, a motor equipment operator for the Town Highway Department and CSEA Unit vice president, as important as getting raises was the fact the workers gained equality.

"The work force is now on an equal basis. We follow seniority now, instead of the work going to a choice few. It also has given us ... a voice in our employment," Bendura said.

White Collar Unit activist Brenda Morgan-Manley said the key to the union's success was keeping the workers together.

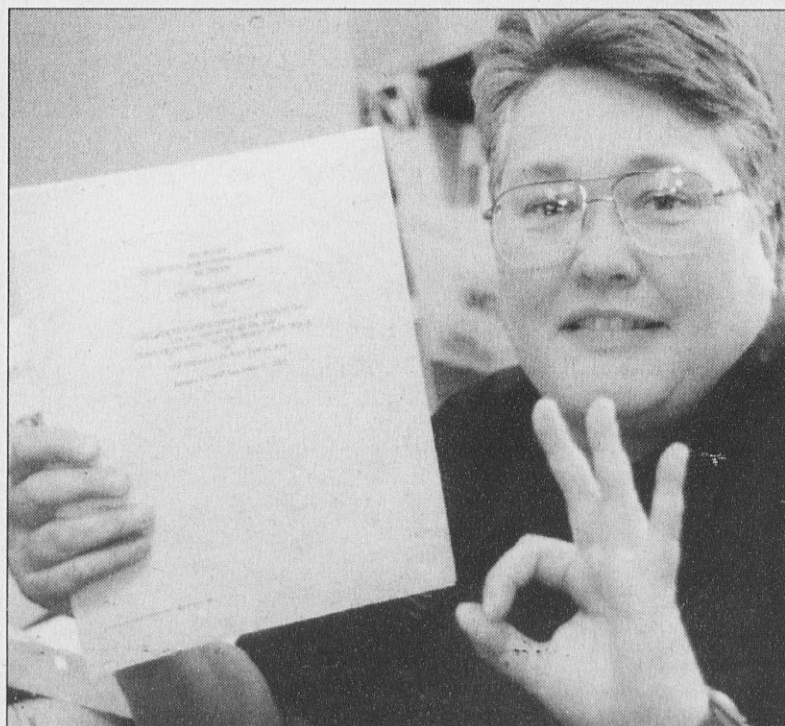
"We had a long hard fight, but it's been worth it. We just hung in there and continued doing our jobs well and supported each other. We encouraged each other to hang in there, to fight against poor morale and people leaving," she said.

CSEA Central Region President Moore said the DeWitt victory is a classic case of how working together in solidarity pays off.

"We're so proud of what these workers were able to accomplish by sticking together, and working with the union," Moore said.

"We were really able to come through for them, because they came through for each other. They fought a tough fight, and we all came out as winners," he said.

— Mark M. Kotzin



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143 Washington Ave.
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Danny Donohue, President

STEPHEN A. MADARASZ
Communications Director & Publisher
STANLEY HORNAK
Deputy Director of Communications
RONALD S. KERMANI, Executive Editor
LOU HMIELESKI, Assistant Editor
CATHLEEN HORTON
Graphic Design & Support Services
RALPH DISTIN, Graphic Artist
JANICE M. KUČSKAR
Communications Production Coordinator
BETH McINTYRE
Communications Secretary

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Readers:

Send any comments, complaints, suggestions or ideas to:
Publisher, *The Work Force*, 143 Washington Avenue,
Albany, NY 12210-2303.

COMMUNICATIONS ASSOCIATES

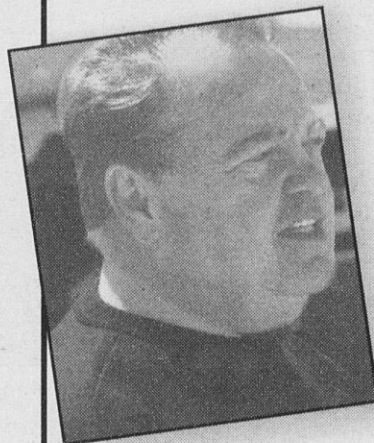
SHERYL C. JENKS	Long Island Region (631) 462-0030
ANN CARROLL	Metropolitan Region (212) 406-2156
VACANT	Southern Region (845) 831-1000
DAN CAMPBELL	Capital Region (518) 785-4400
MARK M. KOTZIN	Central Region (315) 433-0050
RON WOFFORD	Western Region (716) 886-0391
ED MOLITOR	Headquarters (518) 257-1272

The Publications Committee

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IN TOUCH WITH THE
WORK FORCE
CSEA President Danny Donohue



There's no way to adequately put into words the excitement and enthusiasm demonstrated by delegates to the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employee's (AFSCME) recent international convention in Philadelphia.

It was what unionism is supposed to be all about.

Delegates had a lot to get excited about. There were speeches that moved and inspired us from some of the nation's most influential leaders including President Bill Clinton and Vice President Al Gore.

There was activism of all kinds in evidence. There was a call to arms for union organizing and political involvement to ensure a better future for working families.

Through it all, the spirit of the delegates stands out most vividly. It was on display for all to see throughout the week's activities but most especially in the celebration of the union's recent accomplishments and in the solidarity march on Philadelphia City Hall in support of our Philadelphia brothers and sisters in their contract fight.

I am so very proud our CSEA delegation helped lead the way and represented you well by demonstrating the very best in AFSCME membership.

The convention left no doubt at all about why AFSCME is the largest and best union in the country today.

I hope you will take the time to review the coverage of this event on pages 14 and 15. I also hope you will seek out your AFSCME delegates and ask them about their experience.

Events like this can only make our union stronger.

Danny

Crisis unit in crisis at Bronx Psych

BRONX — The crisis unit at Bronx Psychiatric Center is a unit in crisis.

Renamed the Transitional Community Residence, the unit has been sorely understaffed and is becoming a dumping ground for the mentally ill who need more care than the unit can provide, CSEA activists said.

Short staffing at the huge Bronx

Psychiatric Center has spawned dangerous problems over the years.

CSEA members are battling unresponsive managers and a dwindling staff — factors that have further burdened an already overworked work force.

Workplace dangers abound, said CSEA member Michelle LaRue, a mental health therapy aide who works nights at the community residence which is the last stop for about 60 patients before they re-enter society.

Another 100 beds will be added in August.

Residents are considered outpatients, and leave the psychiatric center grounds during the day for programs but must return at night.

“There is no attendance enforcement (for the day programs), so there is little we can do if they spend their days wandering the streets,” LaRue said.

Because there aren't enough employees, residents are not frisked when they return at night as required, LaRue said.

“Residents bring contraband into the ward. They come back drunk. There have been arrests for weapons. One guy was arrested on the (hospital) grounds with 25 joints (of marijuana), in a few days he's through the court system and back in the hospital. Another patient attacked a safety officer and a therapy aide with a huge lock he had brought back with him,” LaRue said.

Wrong people in the program

Since the residents are in theory only a step away from living on their own, staffing levels at the community residence are low.

But hospital administrators have not properly screened patients sent to the

community residence, and they consequently need more hands-on care that can't be provided because of short staffing, union leaders said.

“Residents are supposed to meet certain criteria (to be enrolled in the community residence program): their discharge papers should be complete; they should be mobile and self-sufficient and need only minor supervision; and they should be enrolled in a program. Unfortunately, this is not the reality of the situation,” LaRue said.

Wearing out their welcome

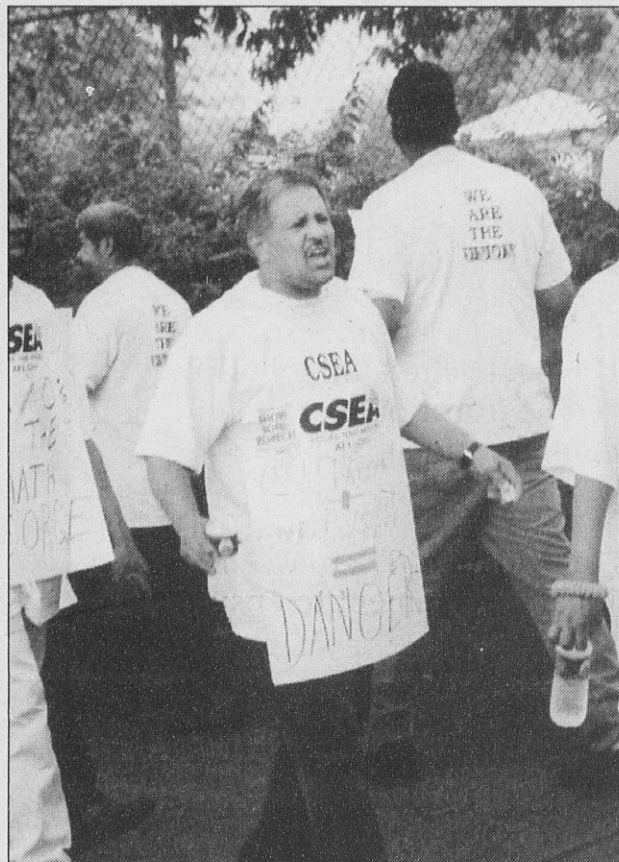
The length of stay in the community residence program was originally supposed to be 21 days.

“I have patients here for over a year,” LaRue said. “Some become so accustomed to it they become discharge resistant,” she added.

“Instead, (the program) acts as a dumping ground,” said Alex Couret, president of the CSEA Local at Bronx Psychiatric Center and mental health therapy aide.

“In the rush to empty inpatient beds, patients who do not meet the criteria are dumped into transitional units. This type of treatment doesn't meet their needs and the low level of supervision could wind up hurting them,” said Couret.

— Ann Carroll



CSEA members picket short staffing at the Bronx Psychiatric Center.

Union, nursing home managers eye staff shortage

Short staffing is a problem for both labor and management, and CSEA is teaming with managers in a ground-breaking effort to solve the problem at county-run nursing homes.

Working with an organization of public nursing home administrators called County Nursing Facilities of New York, the union has developed a program designed to attract qualified employees to existing nursing home jobs. The plan will also address the issues of staffing, retention and training.

“Rather than beat each other up over staffing issues, the only way to resolve the staffing problem is to find real and concrete solutions,” said CSEA President Danny Donohue.

“We have to be practical as possible in finding ways to bring workers into entry-level jobs and then get them to stay and move up the ladder. To do that, both labor and management have to be involved. We both recognize we can't solve this problem alone,” Donohue added.

CSEA and the nursing home administrators recently applied for a \$100,000 grant from the state's Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)

program. The grant, which is scheduled to be awarded in the fall, would be used to research the staffing issues and devise solutions.

CSEA would recruit unemployed or underemployed individuals and give them the training necessary to be certified to work in a nursing home.

Managers would then place the newly-qualified individuals into existing direct-care jobs.

Grant money could also be used to help current employees advance in their career ladders, which both sides said will help retain experienced workers, union leaders said.

Because of the cooperative nature of the program, traditional barriers, such as management reluctance to allow employees time off for training during the work day, won't be a problem, union officials said.

If all goes according to plan, the program should begin in winter.

“If everything works out in terms of grant money like we hope it will, this will be a big program,” Donohue added.

— Ed Molitor

CSEA REPRESENTS

Health Care Services

60,000 WORKERS IN THIS INDUSTRY

Voices of the Work Force



“There's a lot of pressure in this job. You are on a tight schedule. The meal has to be done and you have to do the normal jobs and prep work. It's a typical workday.”

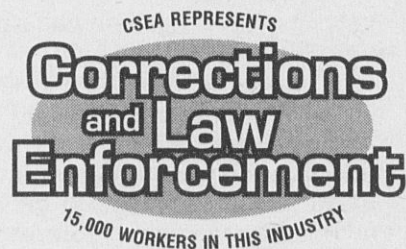
— Steve Turon, cook, Maplewood Manor, Saratoga County nursing home and former restaurant chef

New state law beefs up protection for probation workers from inmates

State lawmakers have heeded CSEA's lobbying and passed a bill which will penalize inmates who douse county probation workers with dangerous concoctions of blood, urine, feces and other body fluids.

Since 1996, employees who work in the state corrections and mental health departments and the state Division for Youth and Division of Parole have been protected by the law which makes it a class E felony for inmates to throw body fluids.

"Probation officers are often required to visit correctional facilities and have been subject to the



same types of assaults as corrections officers," said CSEA President Danny Donohue.

The probation workers also regularly come into contact with inmates in dangerous settings, and the bill will provide increased security and protection, union leaders said.

"Considering the fact that probation officers must handle the criminal population as part of their important job, they are justly entitled to equal protections,"

Donohue said.

A welcome bill

Union members at the state Division of Parole and in county probation departments lauded the bill's passage.

"We are pleased that fellow law enforcement brothers and sisters can be protected as we at parole are," said CSEA parole Local president Harnetha DeGroff.

"This is an excellent opportunity to bring us all together under the same protection," DeGroff added.

"This is extremely important because we are in the jails every day," said Sheryl Zuna, a probation officer in Dutchess County, CSEA member and president of the 800-member state Probation Officers Association.

"This bill is another way to acknowledge the commitment probation officers have to their community and acknowledge the dangers probation officers face in serving the community," Zuna added.

Probation officers, she said, are exposed to the same criminals — who may be mentally ill or addicted to drugs — which the police and parole officers encounter.

Moving on up

While Zuna has spent 15 years as a probation officer, DeGroff said many probation officers leave

their jobs and move into higher-paying state parole jobs.

Mary Ann Jagiello worked for a year as a probation officer for Orange County then jumped ship to the higher-paying job at the Division of Parole.

"I know what problems probation officers and parole officers deal with every day," Jagiello said, listing the many hazards of working in county jails or state prisons.

Those hazards, probation officers said, include the exposure to HIV, hepatitis, tuberculosis and other infectious diseases.

WORK FORCE FACTS

- **The New York State prison system serves 74,000 inmates, while county probation departments serve more than 200,000 persons.**

- **Of the 200,000 persons on probation in New York State, 184,000 are adult offenders. Half of those adult offenders are convicted felons.**

- **Nationally, one of 50 adults is on probation or parole. That means more than 4.1 million citizens are under government supervision.**

— National Center for Policy Analysis

- **Gov. George Pataki declared the week of July 23 statewide probation, parole and community correction officers week.**

Voices of the Work Force



"If Schenectady County Social Service management would allow us to have flex time in child protective services, we could cut down on overtime costs and probably improve the morale of the employees and the unit's operation. But management doesn't want to listen."

— Sue Iona, Schenectady County Child Protection Unit

Low pay + high turnover yield caseworker burnout

DELHI — Late at night, at home — that's where the anxiety from staffing shortages gets personal for Delaware County Child Protective Caseworker Tasha Ritchko.

That's when she bolts upright from a sound sleep, drenched in a cold sweat from a nightmare about the families she's trying to help.

The nightmares are just one manifestation of a larger problem for her and many other social services workers in the Delaware Valley region — the problem of hiring and retaining qualified staff and the increased burden it puts on the workers who must fill the gaps.

"I feel like I don't have any control. I feel that I'm not doing my job. I have nightmares at night about my families, but it's humanly impossible to keep up with what I and my supervisor feel are effective casework," Ritchko said.

Turnover a culprit

One of the biggest problems, she noted, was the high level of staff turnover.

"I think turnover is a huge problem. Since November we haven't had a full unit. There should be eight of us. In March, when we had a record of about 80 reports, there were three of us plus one senior caseworker to handle it. It was stressful and overwhelming," she said.

Co-worker Cyndi Gridley, a caseworker in the school-based preventive unit, said turnover has gotten worse the last five or six years.

"We've had so much staff turnover, people are quitting faster than they can hire and train them," Gridley said.

Where's the training?

Gridley, a 10-year employee who works in schools with children, parents and school staff, said one cause of the high turnover is the lack of good training.

"We get bare minimal training and we get set loose and told to 'fix it,' and we don't even know what we're supposed to fix," Gridley said.

Low pay a problem

The workers said another huge factor that hurts their ability to keep qualified workers is the low pay.

"It's hard to find someone with a four-year degree who wants to be a caseworker. They use the job as a springboard for higher-paying jobs in the private sector," said Otsego County caseworker Fred Parshall.

"Nobody wants this amount of stress for

this amount of pay," said caseworker Lisa Hathaway of Otsego County's Foster Care Unit.

"You can probably go to work at Wal-Mart and make more money than we do. The public has a misconception that we're all highly-paid public employees. The bottom line is that we're here because we care, not for the money. But the staff here deserves more money for the job that they do," she said.

On-call creates stress

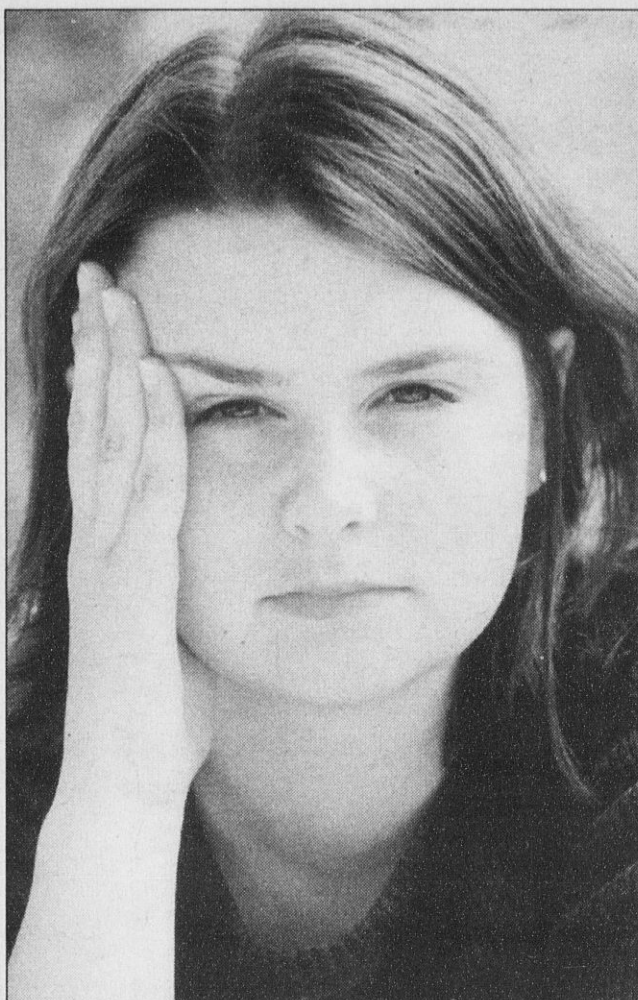
Parshall said another factor that causes stress for social service workers are the demands of being on call every few months.

"It's a very difficult job. It tends to be very exhausting, not only on the individual, but also on our families. Once every four months or so you have to be on call for seven days, 24 hours a day," Parshall said.

Hathaway said the heaviest toll from the high turnover, high stress and low pay is the workers really do care, but they are finding their ability to make a difference restricted.

"The stress comes from me caring too much. I care very much about the kids I work with and I tend to go above and beyond in wanting to provide them with the best quality of care," Hathaway said.

— Mark M. Kotzin



Above, Delaware County caseworker Tasha Ritchko shows her frustration with high turnover in her office; below right, Otsego County foster care caseworker Lisa Hathaway with a few of the many messages she had during the day.

Voices of the Work Force

"I transport clients to the clinic for appointments. The things that make it difficult are the traffic and some of the clients. We are supposed to bring them from their houses to the clinic, but some, they want to stop here, stop there, and when you explain that you can't do that, sometimes they're nasty."

"It's great being outside all day, and not stuck in the office. I've learned a lot of different routes around Staten Island."



— Mauricio Garcia
Institute for Basic Research,
Motor Vehicle Operator



CSEA grieves 13 days

DOT member run through wringer over drug test system glitch

RUSH —When long-time state transportation department worker Marty Klim was randomly asked to take a drug test, he willingly complied and went to the lab for the test.

"I concur 100 percent with the concept of testing," said Klim, who has an unblemished 24-year career with the state.

But after the drug test equipment didn't work properly, then being forced to see his personal doctor, a state



CSEA member Marty Klim, on the job for the state Department of Transportation in CSEA's Western Region.

doctor and a drug counselor, and be unnecessarily tested again and again, Klim wouldn't be blamed for having second thoughts.

CSEA stepped into the middle of Klim's problems by filing a grievance to retrieve 13 personal days he was forced to use to straighten out the resulting bureaucratic nightmare.

"When I went to the test facility (a private contractor named Safe Systems), I performed a urine test for drugs," said Klim.

Huffing and puffing

"Then I attempted to take the Breathalyzer test for alcohol. For an unknown reason, I was unable to produce a sufficient amount of air required to obtain a reading on the machine. Following my fourth attempt, the technician instructed me to stop, for fear that I would pass out," Klim said.

Did they check their machine for the insufficient result? No, the lab called Klim's supervisor, and Klim returned to work in a state vehicle, and completed his normal shift.

Later, at home, Klim's supervisor called and said he was being "taken out of work" until he could produce a doctor's note explaining why he couldn't blow enough air into the Breathalyzer.

"It took three days before I could get an appointment (with the doctor), and my doctor found no physical reason I couldn't produce sufficient air volume for the test," said Klim.

The physician gave Klim a clean bill of health, and suggested the drug testing company calibrate its machine and check the qualifications of its technician.

Bureaucracy takes hold

But the state transportation department bureaucracy had kicked in and Klim had to be

evaluated by a drug counselor before he could return to work.

"I'm positive the grievance we filed in his behalf will get his accruals back," said Chuck Parsons, Local vice president.

"It's ironic, but I raised the same concerns over this company's test accuracy several months ago to the regional personnel officer," Parsons said.

"This has been a stressful, humiliating experience" said Klim, whose wife, Kathy, is a 23-year transportation department employee.

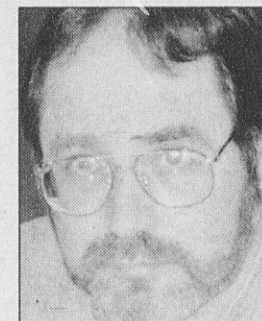
"I'm still considering legal action, because it has affected my unblemished record of nearly 24 years working for the state, which I have taken great pride in. I know I won't go back to that test facility, even if I am selected ever again for a random test," Klim said.

— Ron Wofford



Voices of the Work Force

"The most challenging part of my job is to keep the communication flowing and the grapevine trimmed. One rumor can undo what takes months to build up. In the absence of positive leadership, people sometimes listen to any kind of discordant note."



— Tom Horn, Unit president
Town of East Hampton

Did their homework:

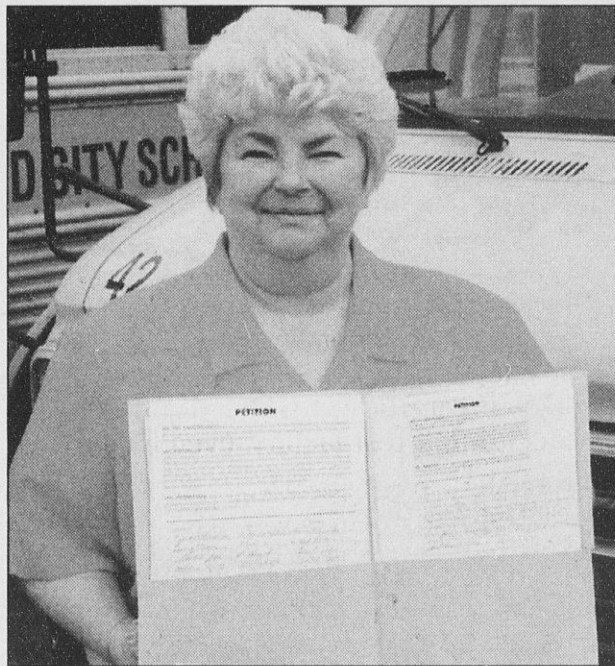
Auburn bus drivers repel contracting out

AUBURN — When bus drivers in the Auburn Enlarged School District learned the district had put their jobs out for bid, they got organized, got help from CSEA and got tough.

The dozen drivers who transport children with special needs also learned first-hand how to fight for themselves — and win.

Bus driver Diane Adams, a 14-year driver and vice president of the CSEA Unit, learned the district cut the drivers from the school budget and planned to hire a private transportation firm.

"We got together and started petitioning the parents" of the children they drive, Adams



Above, Auburn bus driver Diane Adams with petitions against contracting out. Above right, driver Josephine Vitale signs that she's "happy" with the unit's victory.

Union members exercise rights in Peru

PERU — School district officials are learning a valuable lesson about union rights and CSEA is doing the teaching after the district had its knuckles rapped for what union leaders said was harassing and ridiculing union activists.

CSEA withdrew its claim the school superintendent harassed and retaliated against union activists after the district promised to give all administrators and staff a remedial course in union members' rights which are protected by the state's Taylor Law.

Bulletin boards in the district will now sport notices to all district workers that CSEA employees, shop stewards, grievance representatives and other union

said. "We asked them to write letters and show up at board of education meetings to support us."

Parental support

"We wanted to make the parents aware that contracting out meant they could lose the drivers they've had for years," said driver Josephine Vitale, a 24-year driver.

When driving children with special needs, it's important for the drivers to know them and how to best deal with them.

"We know their habits, temperaments and their conditions. They've got problems that require special attention," Vitale said.

The drivers did their homework on the private bus companies, too.

They researched the records of the companies interested in the routes and presented facts about their employee turnover rates to the school board.

"Our job turnover is virtually non-existent," Adams said proudly.

"With us, we've stayed the long haul because of our union, our benefits, our increases in pay," she noted.

CSEA there to help

Adams and her co-workers asked CSEA for help and were given petition forms and fliers and some helpful suggestions on how to fight contracting out.

The rest they did on their own, hitting the pavement, going door to door and galvanizing community support.

More than 700 residents signed petitions and union members attended every school board meeting to read letters of support from parents.

The school board yanked the contracting

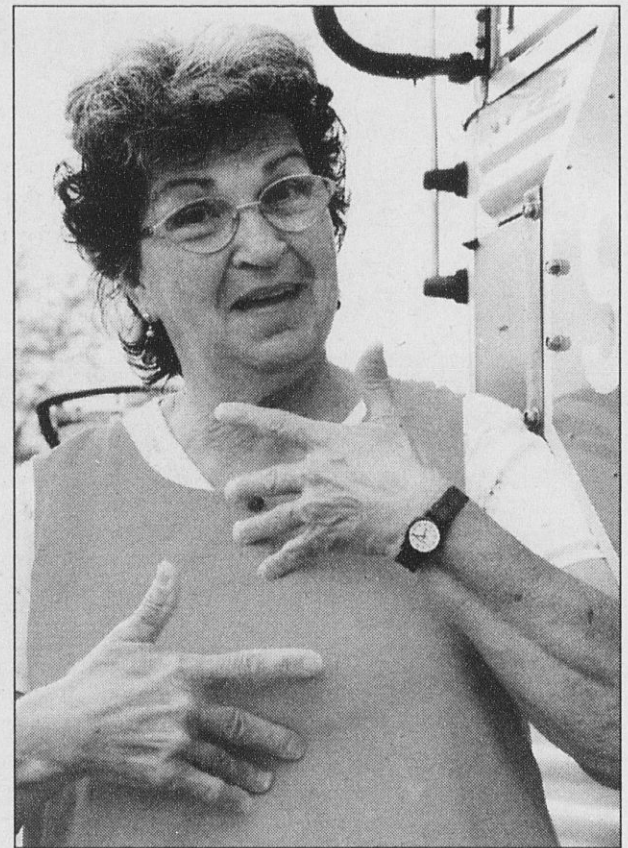
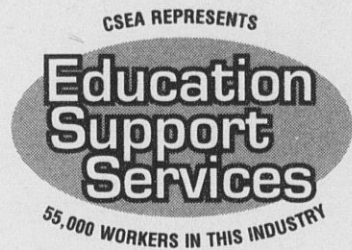
representatives have the right to conduct union business free from retaliation, harassment and ridicule.

The Peru Central School District will also train all managerial and non-bargaining unit supervisory staff about the rights of the more than 160 CSEA members to participate in union activities.

"CSEA believes this resolution will allow the union and the district to pursue a new relationship of mutual trust and respect," CSEA Capital Region President Kathy Garrison said.

The superintendent whom CSEA alleged made the threats against union members has retired.

— Daniel X. Campbell



out proposals and restored the drivers' jobs to the budget.

"It was a real sense of accomplishment for what we were able to do in a short time," Vitale added.

Their victory has been tempered by the district's announcement it wants to contract out summer bus runs and will again look at contracting out bus operations next year.

For now, the drivers are still driving — and they know they're ready for another fight with CSEA behind them all the way.

— Mark M. Kotzin

Voices of the Work Force

"I really like the people I work with, and I'm happy that through my job, I contribute to helping students receive safe transportation. I love spending time with my three kids and my husband, and I'm getting into a routine physical workout."



— Carolyn Blöse, student services secretary for four years, Niagara Falls School District

CSEA activists are organizing, negotiating

Benefits for part-time workers



Beatrice Walker

State: Part-timers have right to join CSEA

Part-time public employees may have a right to union representation even if they work only a few hours a week.

CSEA recently asked the state Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) for permission to represent about 70 part-time workers in Montgomery County.

Although some employees worked as few as six hours a week, they worked throughout the year and from year to year.

PERB ruled the employees had regular and continuous employment which gave them collective bargaining rights.

In the decision which CSEA attorneys said has statewide implications, PERB said the regularity and continuity of employment — not the number of hours worked a week — determine if employees can unionize.

They all have reasons: more time with the kids, more cash in the pocket, a foot in the door.

They are part-timers — one of the fastest-growing groups in today's work force that CSEA activists are organizing.

In three western New York counties, organizers are determined to bring union benefits and job security to about 1,800 part-time workers, many who work next to full-time employees represented by CSEA.

"Almost every CSEA member in Cattaraugus, Monroe and Livingston counties has the power to add to our union's strength by helping part-timers understand all the benefits they could achieve by unionizing and joining the CSEA family," said Robert Bradshaw, organizing supervisor.

"The example they see in our full-time members, who are recipients of hard-won union gains, can't be beat," he added.

Part-time organizing victory

Across the state in Montgomery County, union activists are negotiating contract issues for part-time workers for the first time, thanks to a decision by the state Public Employment Relations Board (PERB). (See story at left.)

CSEA Montgomery County Local President Gary China began his public service career as a part-time employee at Montgomery Meadows, the Montgomery County Nursing Home, in 1975.

"I was right out of high school, going to Fulton-Montgomery Community College. I worked weekends, holidays, days off," China said.

Twenty-five years later, he's negotiating the first pact for part-time workers in Montgomery County.

"The county knows that it needs to address the salary and benefits issues of long-term, part-time workers," China said.

Only a paycheck

Part-timers don't receive medical, dental, or prescription plans like those negotiated for CSEA-represented full-timers, organizers said.

The push has started to have part-timers in those three western counties sign up for union representation, although some workers said they fear for their jobs.

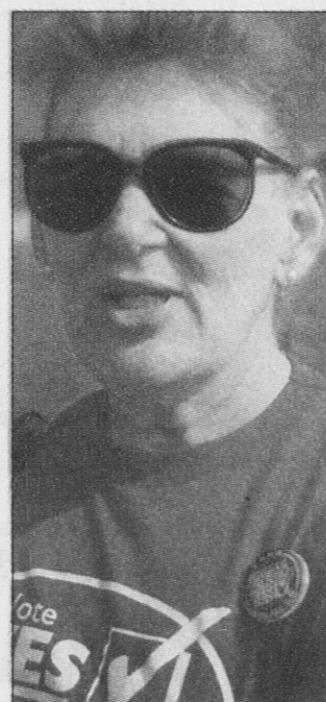
"Many part-timers are afraid they may lose their jobs if they show a desire to unionize," said organizer Richelle Massey-Harris.

"But it's their right, under law, to be able to unionize and bargain collectively," she said.

Career launching pad

Kathy Carney, a certified nursing assistant for the Livingston County Nursing Home, is using her part-time job as a starting point to get a full-time job.

"I'm working part-time, but I would love to work full time," Carney said.



Kathy Carney

"I love working with and taking care of the clients at the home, but all I take home is a paycheck and no benefits. We work hard and deserve better," she added.

Frederick Adams, a part-time housekeeper at Bernard Fineson Developmental Center in New York City, said he wants to expand his 20 hours a week to a full-time position.

"I hope they (managers) will see me working, see that I'm always here on time, that I get the job done, and when a full-time position opens up, they will offer me the position," Adams said.

Benefits a plus

Beatrice Walker is a part-timer in the Monroe County clerk's micrographics department, where she has worked for seven months.

"I like working for the county and I like the job I have," said Walker.

"But as an asthmatic, I have medical needs that cannot be ignored. Therefore, negotiated medical benefits would help me a great deal. Currently, that's not available for part-timers here. I would also work full time, if I were offered a full-time job," Walker said.

Benefits are also a plus of having CSEA negotiate contracts for part-time workers, said Adams of the Bernard Fineson Developmental Center.

"I was working in private industry and making decent money, but there were no benefits," Adams said.

"We had twins and they would need those benefits. I had worked at Fineson for two years during the summer, and I came back working 20 hours a week in the housekeeping department" for the benefits, he noted.

Time to be a parent

The full-time rigors of parenthood left Janet Tascio, office assistant at Church Street Elementary in the White Plains School District, no time for a 40-hour work week.

When her son started school, Tascio said she



Janet Tascio

took the part-time job so she could pick him up, spend quality time and help him get his homework done in a calm atmosphere.

"If I still had a full-time job and was rushing from place to place, I couldn't be there for Jeffrey, who's now 9," Tascio said. "I'm even his class mother, plus my husband is elated with the part-time schedule."

Flexibility and cash important

Donna Pollock is a young, part-time housekeeping and laundry worker who works 24 to 32 hours at Montgomery Meadows, the public nursing home run by Montgomery County, to make ends meet.

The other 32 hours Pollock logs at a nearby private sector facility. The private

sector job helps her pay her bills and provides needed benefits, but Pollock prefers her county job and would love to see the benefits of union membership extended to her.

"I think it's great CSEA can negotiate salary and benefits for us. It's been a long time coming," Pollock said.

The union is there

CSEA brings vast resources to the table when it negotiates contracts for part-time workers.

"Before we had CSEA, we made less money than the workers who were unionized and had the same jobs," said Jerry

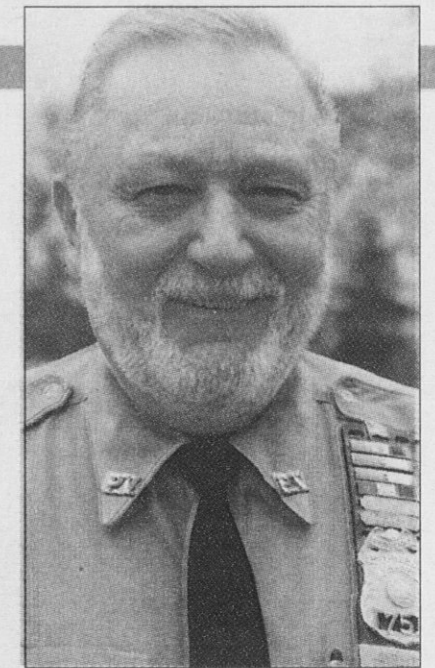
One of the fastest-growing groups in today's work force...



Donna Pollock

Avellino, a part-time security officer in the village of Patchogue on Long Island.

"Now we have clout and we have recourse. If something happens, we have our union to back us," he added.



Jerry Avellino

Survey finds

Part-timers' needs vary

CSEA surveyed part-time workers at the South Beach Psychiatric Center in New York City to find out what they need and want on the job.

Here are the results:

- 59 percent work part-time because it meets their needs;
- 39 percent work part-time because there was no full-time position available;
- 61 percent work between 18-20 hours a week;
- 17 percent work fewer than 18 hours a week;
- 22 percent work more than 24 hours a week.

Many part-time workers seeking full-time jobs said they consistently worked extra hours, often amounting to a full work week.

Although I work extra time which equates to full-time, that could cease at any time based on (the facility's) need. Also, I miss out on location pay and personal leave yearly.

— Carol Vendetti, keyboard specialist

New York's pols disagree on proposed ergonomic standard

New York is sending mixed messages to Washington about a proposed federal Occupational Safety and Health administration (OSHA) ergonomic standard.

If enacted, the standard would provide employers with OSHA guidelines to prevent repetitive stress and musculo-skeletal injuries in the workplace by recommending equipment and work site changes to protect workers.

During recent testimony at hearings in Washington, New York Attorney General Eliot Spitzer said the proposed standard "is of great importance to workers and the business community of New York."

But Spitzer's testimony flies in the face of the Pataki administration, which recently sent a state Department of Labor representative to the hearings.

Among the administration's arguments opposing the proposed rule: the standard is "unfair to (unionized) public sector

employers," who will be constrained by union contracts and civil service rules from unilaterally imposing more frequent rest breaks on employees whose breaks are defined under union contract.

In other words, the safety and occupational health protection CSEA affords its members through collective bargaining agreements would be too stiff to bend for more protection should the standard become law, according to the state Department of Labor.

A state Department of Labor memo, dated March 1, said: "OSHA's proposal may not be a 'standard' as defined by the statute ... It is not a 'standard' about work place hazards; rather, it proposes to impose a particular management approach on employers."

The Labor Department also argued there would not be enough "professionally accredited ergonomists" to meet the demand the standard would impose, and that it would force public employers to

raise taxes.

On the other hand, New York's attorney general said the proposed standard would "not only significantly decrease work-related injuries ... but would also decrease the monetary costs associated with these injuries."

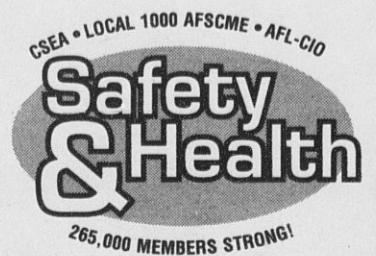
Spitzer also testified the standard would help cut workers' compensation costs by reducing injuries, something that would be good for businesses.

"The improvements in eliminating (musculo-skeletal disorders) would far outweigh the estimated costs of compliance with the proposed regulations. Consequently, workers would gain new protections and businesses would gain significant economic benefits if the proposed standard is implemented," Spitzer said.

Spitzer also said the standard would not supersede state workers' compensation law, other than to reduce claims by reducing injuries.

"The proposed standard is "unfair to (unionized) public sector employers," who will be constrained by union contracts and civil service rules from unilaterally imposing more frequent rest breaks on employees whose breaks are defined under union contract.

— New York state Department of Labor



— Lou Hmielecki



It's sad, but true: Each year in this country, drownings kill more than 1,000 children up to the age of 14. Almost two-thirds are under age 5.

The following rules will help keep your child safe around water:

- Never swim alone.
- Do not use a diving board in a pool that is not approved for it.
- Avoid pool slides; they are very dangerous.
- Prevent shock hazards by keeping electrical appliances away from the pool.
- Do not allow tricycles or wagons at poolside.
- Keep a phone at poolside for emergency use.

Ergo standard legislative update

In mid-June, the House narrowly passed (217-214) largely along a party line vote, an anti-worker measure that would block OSHA's ergonomic standard and cut funding for OSHA enforcement.

The Senate also passed a similar measure in June.

The bills cut funding for job training and fails to fund needed improvements in education programs. (The House roll call on final passage, Vote 273, and vote on ergonomics, can be found on the Web at: http://clerkweb.house.gov/evs/2000/ROLL_200.asp.)

Shortly after the vote, President Clinton issued a statement making clear he will veto this bill if it comes to his desk, one of the reasons being the inclusion of the anti-ergonomics rider. (Go to <http://www.whitehouse.gov/library/ThisWeek.cgi?type=p&date=1&briefing=12> on the Web for a copy of the statement).

Prior to the Senate vote, Sen. Mike Enzi (R-WY) issued a statement and circulated a "Dear Colleague" letter making clear that he and other anti-worker senators planned to offer an amendment to block the rule.

Opponents have moved off their arguments that there's "no science" on ergonomics, and now are claiming that the rule will bankrupt Medicare and Medicaid, put nursing homes out of business and throw senior citizens out of their nursing homes.

Donated skills help build a better town

NORTH TONAWANDA—Using their handyman skills, a group of CSEA members is reaching out to help others in need and charting a list of future projects that will be very much appreciated.

“We’ve formed a group called N.T. Resource Group that will allow us to use the resources we have gained, sometimes but not always through our jobs,” said Dale Rogers, who is the CSEA Unit president and an employee of the town’s engineering department.

“Right now we’re building a concrete deck that will allow a wheelchair vertical lift to be installed at the home of a wheelchair-bound former city employee,” he said.

“This involved digging the space, then squaring it off and preparing it for pouring the concrete, which our group did,” Rogers said.

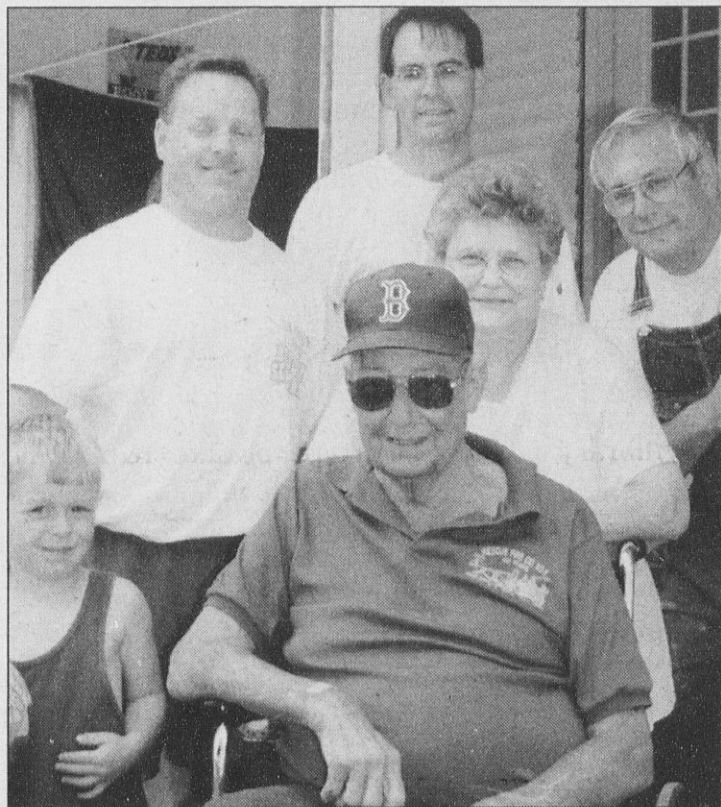
The wheelchair lift will allow Doug Wurl, a former police officer, to enjoy his small back yard by going directly from the rear of his house via the lift.

A ramp would have required too much space for the small back yard.

Have skills, will travel

“Our Unit members have plenty of skills that can be used to help people in need,” said Rogers.

“For instance, we’ve identified Tom Tussing and Mark Daigler for electrical skills, Bill Davignon and Mike Lehman for concrete work, Kelly Williams for plumbing and Butch Vollmer, Mark Kaszuski and myself for carpentry work. That’s a lot of resources that can be put to good use, if only it’s coordinated.



That’s what I’m trying to do,” Rogers said.

Rogers added he is reaching out to other area unions to join the fledging effort, including the town’s Police Benevolent Association, also a member of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, which is CSEA’s international affiliate.

Rogers posts a bulletin board notice of the jobs lined up, and members can sign up for whatever job they can lend their abilities for.

“It’s a great feeling to help out someone that needs it,” said Rogers.

“Our next job is a house-painting project. Any volunteers?” he asked.

— Ron Wofford

At left, CSEA members Bill Davignon, standing at left, Mike Lehman and Dale Rogers take a break from their foundation work to chat with Doug and Shirley Wurl. Davignon’s son, Kyle, also helped with the project. Above, CSEA Unit President Dale Rogers empties a wheelbarrow of cement while a neighbor smooths a section of floor.

Niagara schools member mourned

NIAGARA FALLS — Marty Johnson — “Mr. Marty” to the thousands of kids who knew him — was missing when playground construction began on a recent Saturday morning at the school where he spent many years as a custodian.

Johnson, a CSEA member who also served as a student mentor at the Niagara Street School, died of a heart attack the night before the playground project he had helped raise money for was to start, casting a somber tone over the proceedings.

“Marty was the type of person who wouldn’t just walk by you without speaking, and asking genuinely how you were doing,” said Dave Spacone, Unit president.

“He will be missed, but he will be remembered,” Spacone added.

“We’re all kind of in shock,” said school principal Patricia McKenna.

“He cared as much about this as anybody. This was his house. He was a man of not as many words as actions,” she said.

The playground project brought together about 80 volunteers to help expand a small play area into an up-to-date playground with slides, gliders, climbing areas, balancing disks and other fun amenities.

— Ron Wofford

**AFSCME
Rocks!**

34th International

'Defining moment'

PHILADELPHIA — AFSCME rocks!

Thousands of delegates, including more than 200 CSEA representatives, gathered here recently for the 34th international convention of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) for a week that showcased the international's power and clearly demonstrated why the union is the nation's largest and best.



McEntee

Rousing speeches by President Bill Clinton, Vice President Al Gore and a host of the nation's most influential labor and political leaders highlighted the activities.

But it was AFSCME President Gerald McEntee who sent the delegates into a rock 'n' roll frenzy in his opening remarks.

"We are at a defining moment," McEntee said, "the kind that rarely occurs, in which social, economic and political forces come together to open up new possibilities — when significant and lasting changes can be made to the very fabric of society.

"We are the union to lead the way," McEntee added.

McEntee and International Secretary-Treasurer William Lucy were re-elected by delegates.

McEntee's themes stressing the importance of good contracts, organizing and a continued commitment to political and social

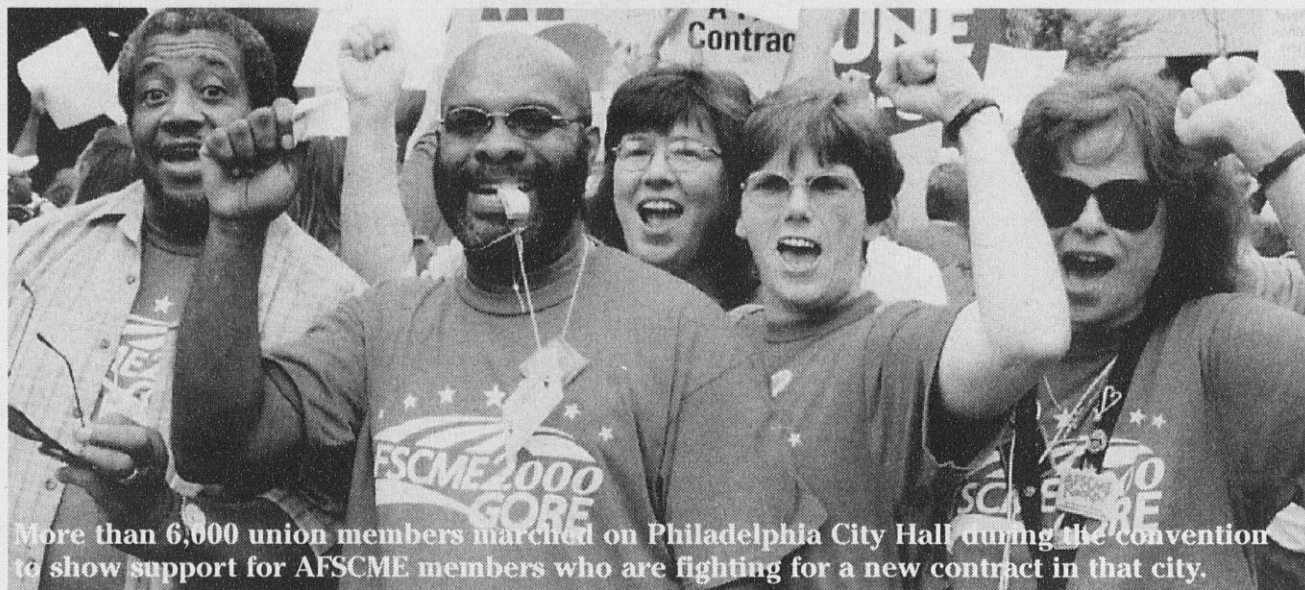
activism echoed throughout the week's activities.

Delegates danced and cheered with wild enthusiasm as the union celebrated its political action and organizing successes, including prominent presentation of CSEA's state contract mobilization and pension victories and the union's ongoing contract efforts at the Long Beach Medical Center.

Delegates also took their energy to the streets in a massive and spirited march on Philadelphia City Hall in solidarity with AFSCME-represented city workers who face a contract showdown.

— Stephen A. Madarasz

CSEA delegates also voted on scores of resolutions and union constitutional issues during the week. Details about the work and highlights of the convention are available on the AFSCME Web site, www.afscme.org. There is also a link to the site from the CSEA Web site, www.cseainc.org.



More than 6,000 union members marched on Philadelphia City Hall during the convention to show support for AFSCME members who are fighting for a new contract in that city.



CSEA President
Danny Donohue

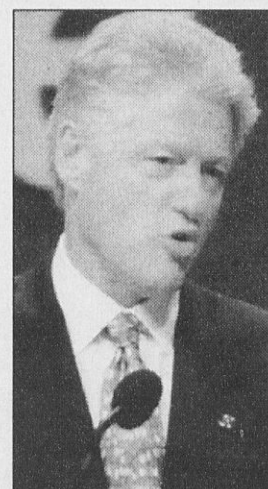


Gore with an enthusiastic CSEA AFSCME delegate.

"I need your help to move our country to new progress and new prosperity."

Vice President Al Gore

The vice president vowed to prevent the privatization of Social Security, promised a prescription drug benefit for senior citizens, called for expanded federal laws to prevent ergonomic injuries in the workplace, advocated lifting barriers to union organizing, insisted on equal pay for equal work and demanded that doctors — not HMOs — make decisions that affect our health.

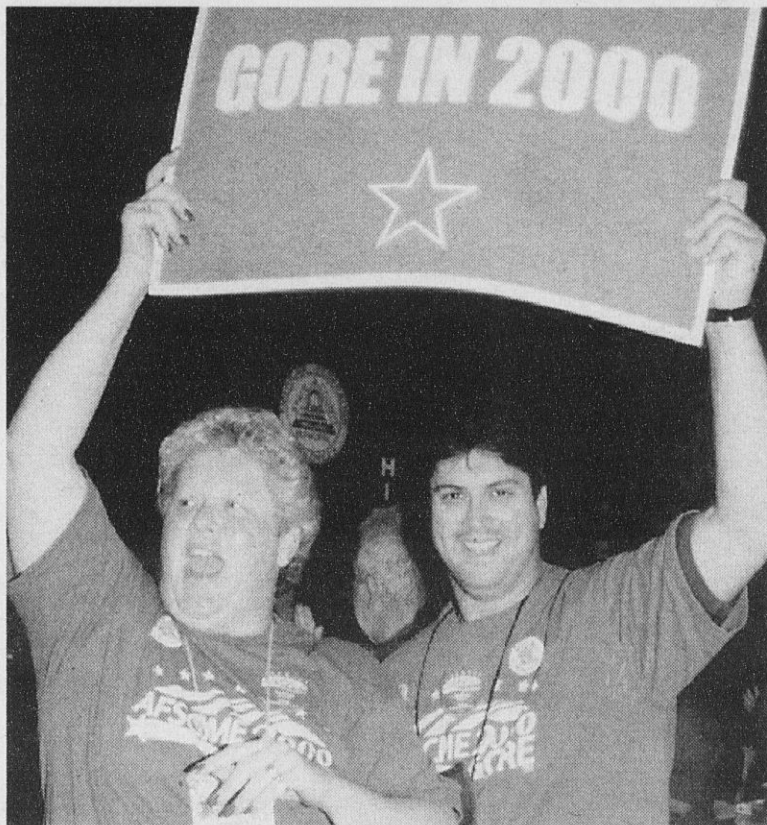


Clinton

"I'm here to say 'thank you AFSCME.' I'm grateful for the work you do every day — making sure all Americans have a better life. "You've got to convince people this is a big election and they've got to show up and vote. This election is about the differences and choices before the American people. There are real differences between the two parties, but only our side wants you to know what those differences are."

President Bill Clinton

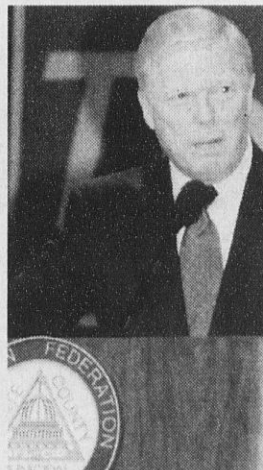
Convention



Above, CSEA statewide Treasurer Maureen Malone and CSEA Central Region 2nd Vice President Bob Timpano show CSEA's support for Al Gore's bid for president. CSEA statewide Secretary Barbara Reeves, left, acknowledges applause after addressing delegates as AFSCME's credentials co-chair.



From left, NAACP President Kweisi Mfume praises AFSCME's continued social activism; U. S. Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee of Texas stresses the importance of voting in November; Rep. Richard Gephardt, Democratic leader of the U. S. House of Representatives, urges delegates to "take back the House" by electing candidates who support working families.



New AFSCME delegates get down to business at first convention

"I was amazed to learn of the numerous struggles our AFSCME brothers and sisters go through just to become unionized...Marching side by side with members of DC 33 and 47 (during a contract rally in support of AFSCME Philadelphia city workers) was an important part of the convention. The whole experience has given me information and enthusiasm to take back to my membership and become an even better labor activist."

Debbie Downey, a first-time delegate from the Taconic Developmental Disabilities Service Office

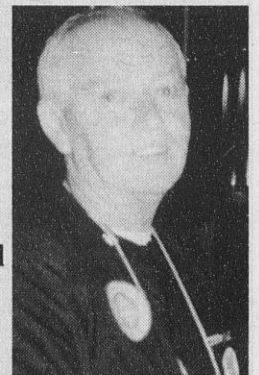


"The speakers were great and they were all geared to the real issues and the long-term struggle that we face as working families. I plan to bring what I learned back home to share with my co-workers."

Cynthia Hancock, Nassau Community College employee, attending her second AFSCME convention

"I was most impressed by the hugeness of the event — the size, how diverse the membership is, was fascinating. "I've never attended anything this big and I'm grateful to be here. The best part was meeting people from all over the country to exchange information about what they face on the job (Sherman was even able to tour a Pennsylvania Correctional facility arranged by one of the local AFSCME councils). Everybody is proud to be part of AFSCME — We have a voice that we wouldn't have without a union as strong as AFSCME."

Wayne Sherman, a first-time delegate from the Southport/Camp Monterey correctional facilities



At right, CSEA Executive Vice President Mary Sullivan, CSEA President Danny Donohue and Metropolitan Region President George Boncoraglio were re-elected AFSCME international vice presidents at the convention.



Fur flees before it flies in Greene County stink

CATSKILL — George Greiner knew he had to raise a stink in this small Greene County village to get things done, but he didn't realize his strongest allies would

waddle into labor talks on four legs.

A family of skunks, an opossum and a rangy pack of rats set up a Wild Kingdom in construction

debris dumped near the leased offices for the county Department of Social Services, where CSEA members work.

The malodorous marauders began to stink up the neighborhood and adjacent offices, prompting CSEA Unit President Greiner to playfully ask county officials for gas masks or eviction notices for the furry squatters.

This problem, however, was nothing for management to sniff at.

Greiner said he worked with the county buildings and grounds crews to first address the eye-burning, tear-causing odor problem, and then sought reimbursement for CSEA members' out-of-pocket clothes cleaning costs.

"Our members were literally taking the office smell home with them," Greiner laughed.

Before everyone's nose got out of joint, union and county leaders devised a quick response.

County and union leaders told village fathers they would raise their own stink if the animal-infested, illegal

construction debris dump wasn't cleaned up quickly.

A professional trapper removed two skunks, two raccoons, one possum, and an exterminator sent the rats packing.

Village workers hauled away the construction debris and spruced up the area around the offices.

"Now we can joke about cartoon character Pepe LePew and the awful odor, but if you had to put up with it, you would know it was no laughing matter," Greiner said.

The vexing varmints also unknowingly put a long-awaited \$40,000 renovation of the offices the county leases back on schedule.

"CSEA and the county administration did work together to, shall we say, air out the problem," CSEA Labor Relations Specialist Angelique Bywater quipped.

CSEA will continue to keep an eye — and a nose — on the situation, Bywater promised.

— Daniel X. Campbell



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INVEST in a
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No other gift helps strengthen so
many of New York's communities
more than a gift to United Way
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New York State Health Insurance -- Empire Plan Clip and Save Telephone Numbers

The Empire Plan Benefits Management Program:

1-800-992-1213

You must call — Before a maternity or scheduled hospital admission; Within 48 hours after an emergency or urgent hospital admission; Before admission or transfer to a skilled nursing facility; Before having an elective (scheduled) Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI). If you do not follow the Benefits Management Program requirements, you will pay a higher share of the costs.

ValueOptions (Administrator for GH):

1-800-446-3995

You must call ValueOptions before beginning any treatment for mental health or substance abuse, including alcoholism. If you do not follow ValueOptions requirements, you will receive a significantly lower level of benefits. In a life-threatening situation, go to the emergency room. Call within 48 hours.

Empire Blue Cross and Blue Shield: For hospital benefits and claims call; 518-367-0009 (Albany area and Alaska), 1-800-342-9815 (All states except Alaska)

United HealthCare Insurance Company of New York: 1-800-942-4640

Call for information on benefits under Basic Medical and Participating Provider Programs, predetermination of benefits, claims and participating providers.

Home Care Advocacy Program (HCAP):

1-800-638-9918

You must call to arrange for paid-in-full home care services and/or durable medical equipment/supplies. If you do not follow HCAP requirements, you will receive a significantly lower level of benefits.

Managed Physical Medicine Program/MPN: 1-800-942-4640

Call for information on benefits and to find MPN network providers for chiropractic treatment and physical therapy. If you do not use MPN network providers, you will receive a significantly lower level of benefits.

Infertility Treatment: 1-800-638-9918

You must call for prior authorization for the following Qualified Procedures, regardless of provider: Artificial Insemination; Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) procedures including in-vitro fertilization and embryo placement, Gamete Intra-Fallopian Transfer (GIFT), Zygote Intra-Fallopian Transfer (ZIFT), Intracytoplasmic Sperm Injection (ICSI) for the treatment of male infertility, assisted hatching and microsurgical sperm aspiration and extraction procedures; Sperm, egg and/or inseminated egg procurement and processing and banking of sperm and inseminated eggs. Call for Centers of Excellence

Express Scripts: Empire Plan Prescription Drug

Program — 1-800-964-1888.

You must call for prior authorization for BCG Live, Ceredase or Cerezyme, Drugs for the treatment of impotency, Enbrel, Epoetin, Human Growth Hormone, Immune Globulin, Lamisil, Prolastin, Pulmozyme, or Sporanox.

The Empire Plan Nurse Line:

1-800-439-3435

Call for health information and advice 24 hours a day, seven days a week. To listen to selections from the Health Information Library, enter PIN number 335 and a 4-digit code from the Empire Plan NurseLine brochure. Health information is also available at Health Forums on the Web, www.healthforums.com/empire.

Text Telephone (TTY) lines for hearing-impaired or speech-impaired callers with TTY devices:

The Empire Plan Benefits Management Program:

TTY only 1-800-962-2208

ValueOptions: TTY only 1-800-334-1897

Empire Blue Cross and Blue Shield: TTY only 1-800-241-6894

United HealthCare: TTY only 1-888-697-9054

Express Scripts: The Empire Plan Prescription Drug Program: TTY only 1-800-840-7879

Attention Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) Enrollees:

Contact your individual HMO for important telephone numbers.

Special Election CSEA Western Region President

A special election is being held to fill the CSEA Western Region (Region 6) president's office.

Only eligible voters (members who were on the CSEA membership lists as of Dec. 1, 1999) will receive ballots.

The election schedule printed below was adopted by the Statewide Board of Directors on July 13.

- Aug. 1:** Ballots due 8 a.m.
Aug. 1-4 Verification and tally of ballots until completed
 Results announced upon certification by the SEC.
End of protest period : 10 days after results are certified and announced.
September Results published in the September edition of *The Work Force*

Members with questions about the election may call the statewide Election Committee at 800-342-4146 ext. 1477.

Tell us how You've Made A Difference!

CSEA needs your story now!

Tell us how your actions at work have improved services to your community. Did you come up with a new way of doing your job that made it more efficient, safer, cost less? Do you participate in an activity off the job that benefits the community? And, how has your membership in CSEA helped you realize these achievements? Training, networking, informational resources?

If being part of the CSEA Work Force has helped you make a real difference in the quality of life on the job or for your community - *tell us about it.*
 Send us the facts - today.
 We'll follow up later for more details.

The story: (use as much space as necessary)

Results of your effort (check all applicable):

- A more efficient way to do a job
 A new service to the community
 A safer worksite
 Saving money
 Community improvement
 Other (please explain)

Efforts instituted on what level (check all applicable):

- Local County State

How CSEA empowered you to take action (check all applicable):

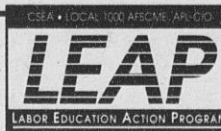
- On the job training
 Seminars
 Safety programs
 Other (please explain)

Recognition (check all applicable):

- Awards
 Certificate of appreciation
 Newspaper article
 Other

Your Name -----
 Local # -----
 Address -----
 City ----- Zip -----
 Phone -----

Please mail this form to:
 Beth McIntyre, c/o CSEA Communications Department,
 143 Washington Ave., Albany, 12210.



Tuition Benefit

The new contract with New York State covering CSEA-represented State employees in the ASU, ISU, OSU and DMNA bargaining units continues the LEAP tuition benefit.

Program Highlights

- ✓ **Flexible** — Apply anytime between April 1, 2000 and March 31, 2001. Now available for summer courses.
- ✓ **Guaranteed Approval** — Every eligible member will receive one tuition benefit.
- ✓ **Easy Application** — Apply by mail, fax or by phone.
- ✓ **Many Schools** — Your voucher can be used at more than 130 participating schools statewide.
- ✓ **Credit by Examination Fee Reimbursement** — Receive reimbursement for College-Level Examination Program (CLEP), DANTES and Regents College Exams in addition to your LEAP tuition benefit.

Catalogs with details about LEAP tuition benefits were mailed in June to any eligible member who applied in 1998-1999. New York State Agency Personnel and Training Offices also have a small supply of catalogs. Eligible members who did not receive a catalog in the mail may request a copy by calling LEAP at 1-800-253-4332.

Break in membership affects eligibility for union office, voting privileges

A break in union membership status can have long-term future implications. Your membership status affects your eligibility with respect to:

- seeking or holding union office;
- signing nominating petitions for potential candidates;
- voting in union elections, and;
- voting on collective bargaining contracts.

Only members "in good standing" can participate in these activities. To be in "good standing," your dues cannot be delinquent.

If you go on unpaid leave or for any other reason have a break in your employment status, your dues will not continue to be paid through payroll deductions. You must make arrangements to pay your dues directly to CSEA to continue your membership status. If you are either laid off or placed on leave without pay status due to becoming disabled by accident, illness, maternity or paternity, you may be eligible for dues-free membership status for a period not to exceed one year.

Note, however, you **must** continue to pay dues to run for office. Dues-free or gratuitous membership allows members to continue their insurance coverage while out of work. It does not protect your right to run for or hold office.

You must notify the CSEA Membership Records Department at 1-800-342-4146, Ext. 1327, of any change in your status and what arrangements you are making to continue your membership in CSEA.

How sweet it is!

COLA, pension win biggest Capitol victory in decades

A one-two punch of a permanent pension cost of living adjustment (COLA) and pension sweeteners will put more money in retirees' pockets as the result of the greatest CSEA political action win the last 30 years.

"CSEA's unity paid off — we have the most sweeping pension improvements in a generation," said an ecstatic CSEA President Danny Donohue after Gov. George Pataki signed the landmark legislation.

The COLA and pension sweeteners — in the form of pension credits — cap decades of persistent CSEA lobbying.

State lawmakers and Pataki approved pension reform legislation which will apply to all public employees — whether employed by the state, local government or schools.

CSEA won the permanent and automatic COLA because of hard work and diligent lobbying, union leaders said.

The thousands of phone calls and letters which flooded the offices of elected state officials made a difference, they added.

Load of CSEA bills make it through state Legislature

CSEA had a banner year in the state Legislature, with the passage of union-supported bills which better protect members' rights and their health and safety.

The huge legislative wins of pension reform and permanent cost-of-living (COLA) adjustments were supplemented by wins in other areas.

These important bills passed the state Senate and Assembly:

• **Criminal History Check:** This bill allows for the



Reeves

Editor's note: The Work Force publishes a summary of actions taken by CSEA's Board of Directors. The summary is prepared by CSEA statewide Secretary Barbara Reeves for union members.

ALBANY — CSEA's statewide board of directors met on June 5. In official business, the board:

- Reclassified in-house positions of computer programmer/analyst to computer business specialist and director of labor relations to director of contract administration;
- Created the position of director of field and member services;
- Changed titles of the deputy directors of labor relations to deputy directors of contract administration; and

•Approved M/C reclassifications as proposed in the Compensation Study presented at the April 14 session.

Questions about this summary should be directed to CSEA Statewide Secretary Barbara Reeves, CSEA Headquarters, 143 Washington Ave., Albany, N.Y. 12210, (800)342-4146 or (518) 257-1253.

COLA facts

Eligible retirees will receive the automatic pension adjustment every year beginning September 2001. The amount will be 50 percent of the 12 month increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI), with a minimum increase of 1 percent and a maximum of 3 percent.

Public employees who retired at age 62 or older will be entitled to the adjustment after five years of retirement.

Increases will apply to the first \$18,000 of pension.

There is also a catch-up provision for long-time retiree, effective September 2000, which will be 50 percent of the average increase in the CPI from date of retirement through 1997.

Retirees who currently receive a greater supplement under existing retirement and Social Security law will continue to receive that supplement.

Employees who retired before age 62 will be eligible after 10 years of retirement.

Disability retirees will be

eligible for the adjustment after five years of retirement regardless of how old they were when they retired.

Specific questions about your pension should be directed to the Comptrollers Office by calling (518) 474-7736.

Pension reform

Effective Oct. 1, 2000, employee contributions are eliminated for members of Tiers 3 and 4 of the retirement system who have at least 10 years of participation in the system.

This benefit is equal to a 3 percent salary increase. All employees will gain this benefit when they reach 10 years of service.

Members of Tiers 1 and 2 will gain an extra month's service credit for each year of service, up to 24 months of additional credit.

Unlike the early retirement incentive, which employers must opt in for, pension reform will kick in automatically for state and local government and school district employees.

fingerprinting and criminal history review for all prospective school district employees. Originally, this bill would have applied only to school district employees, but not private contractors, charter schools or workfare participants.

Intense CSEA lobbying prompted lawmakers to include those groups and include strong language protecting the rights of existing employees.

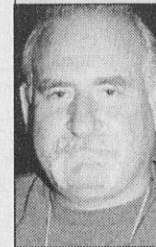
• **School Bus Standees:** Signed by Gov. George Pataki, this law bans the operation of a school bus while any passengers are standing. The provisions will be phased in over four years.

• **Pesticide Notification:** This bill will require school districts to provide information to staff and parents on the use and application of pesticides.

• **Health Care Demonstration Project at Helen Hayes Hospital:** This bill establishes a 60-bed pilot project at the Helen Hayes Hospital to treat persons with disabilities. CSEA won language to require the program be operated by hospital employees, who are CSEA members.

Members happy with more pension enhancements

"My members are very pleased that CSEA gained pension improvements — when everybody works together, everybody benefits. "More came out of the state contract fight than just a contract for state employees. CSEA led the way on benefits that will help every single CSEA member and every public employee in New York."



John Shepard
President
Nassau Municipal Local

"This has been a wonderful year for CSEA. What the state negotiating team did led to benefits for everyone...it came back to us. We are all one and look at the results. "Right from the beginning, all of CSEA's leadership worked together to support the state workers but in the end we all got something out of it. It shows what you can achieve when you demonstrate solidarity. I think CSEA's rank and file members understand that better now."



Ginger Sheffey
Cayuga County

"I'm thankful and grateful for Danny Donohue's leadership in keeping this a top priority for so many years and for the hard work of CSEA and AFSCME. "We hoped to get a foot in the door with COLA and instead we got both feet in...this is a good bill."



Charlie Peritore
Chair, CSEA Retiree Division

Counting the gold, the hugs and smiles at Special Olympics

Gold medal athlete and CSEA member Stephen Caruso can count the medals he's won at the New York Special Olympic Summer Games, but he's lost count of the smiles and hugs he's received.

Caruso, who works in the mail room at the state Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (OMRDD) in Albany, has been competing and winning in the games for 15 years.

This year was no different, with two more gold medals being added to his collection of more than 20.

"The most important part is having lots of fun competing and working with all of your teammates," Caruso said.

Caruso was one of thousands of athletes, volunteers and spectators who descended on the Albany State University campus recently for the three-day event.

For the second year, CSEA was a sponsor of the games and dozens of union members volunteered to help with the athletic contests and festivities.

Sandra Veith used her "older sister routine" to coax her younger sibling to volunteer at the games.

Veith, a CSEA member at the state Department of Taxation and Finance in Albany, and her sister, Sandra Pigliavento, also a CSEA member in the department, helped the athletes stay busy between events with musical instruments, craft projects and games of skill like ring toss.

"I get great satisfaction from doing this because I see how much the athletes appreciate the little things in life," Veith said. "The athletes get so excited competing, even if they don't win," she added.

The success of the athletic programs and the competition can be traced to the thousands of CSEA members who work with the mentally retarded, said union member Joe Howard, who has worked at an OMRDD facility for 15 years.

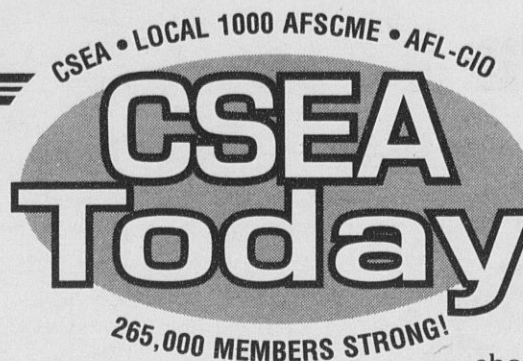
"The dedication of workers makes the summer games possible," Howard said. "Our consumers achieve their goals and CSEA members help them do that," he added.

Sally Kleemann, a CSEA member at the Court of Appeals in Albany, said she enjoyed her second year volunteering at the games.

"This is very heartwarming and inspiring," she said, adding, "It's very worthwhile for the union to get involved. And it's more fun for me than I could imagine."

FIGHT DECERT BID

— CSEA will fight a Steuben County attempt to decertify about 100 positions from the 750-member CSEA county employee unit because the county claims those jobs are supervisory positions. The state Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) will hold hearings this month. Western Region President Roger Sherrie branded the county's scheme as "a poorly disguised attempt to break the union." CSEA is preparing to negotiate a new contract for county workers...**OPEN HOUSE** — CSEA's Capital Region will host an open house and family barbecue at the regional office, One Lear Jet Lane, Latham, on Aug. 31 from 4 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. RSVP to the office at 800-874-7344...**BUS RODEO CORRALS PUBLIC SUPPORT** — Bus drivers at the Williamsville School District used a recent bus rodeo to generate public support for the important jobs they do and remind residents about the status of contract talks with the district. Drivers jockeyed their buses through obstacle courses and later chatted with district residents about their jobs and professionalism. So far, the district has not made a fair contract offer, said Kathleen Curr, Unit president...**MARCHING FOR MONEY** — CSEA Town of Hempstead Local members helped raise \$10,300 for the March of Dimes during WalkAmerica 2000...**GAY AND LESBIAN TASK FORCE** — The CSEA Metropolitan Region has formed a gay and lesbian task force to address work/life issues. The task force, chaired by Walter "Wally" Nash, meets the second Wednesday



of each month in the Metropolitan Region office in Manhattan to deal with job-related and personal issues.

Members who are interested in participating should contact their Local president or their CSEA regional

office...**UNION FAMILY GROWS** — The Syracuse Common Council passed a resolution voluntarily recognizing CSEA and agreeing to add about 40 city Parks Department recreation aides, currently unrepresented, to the existing CSEA bargaining unit. The resolution is non-binding, but the matter is currently before the state Public Employment Relations Board and is expected to be resolved soon...**FOOD FIGHT VICTORY** —

CSEA-represented food service workers at SUNY Cortland, working for the Auxiliary Services Corporation (ASC), recently ratified their first contract which covers 125 employees... **PEOPLE PERSON** —

The recruiter of the month for June is Nancy Clancy of the Capital Region, who recruited 24 new PEOPLE members. PEOPLE is AFSCME's political action program aimed at getting friends of working families elected to Congress...**MEMBER MOURNED** — CSEA members from the Baldwin School District mourn the loss of a union sister, Jean McGuire, who died recently. Jean was a "devoted worker for 20 years and a friend to everyone". Jean also served as treasurer for the Cafeteria Unit and was in charge of hospitality. "Jean was very special. She always remembered everyone's birthday and she was a wonderful mother and grandmother," said Cafeteria Unit President Julie Guando.



Phyllis Veith, right, a CSEA member in the state Department of Taxation and Finance and Olympic Village coordinator, and her sister Sandra, left, volunteer during the recent Special Olympics.

Come join us at



MORE TO EXPLORE

Aug. 24 - Sept. 4, 2000, Syracuse

www.nysfair.org

The New York State Fair is at the Empire Expo Center located off Exit 7 of Interstate 690, 3 miles west of Syracuse. Hours of operation are 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily.

Reproduced coupons will not be accepted. Additional coupons will be available at your CSEA region office.

Clip one coupon at right for each CSEA member and family member and bring coupon(s) to any fair gate for a two-for-one admission on Saturday, Sept. 2 and Sunday, Sept. 3, 2000, only.

TWO-FOR-ONE ADMISSION for CSEA members and families on Sept. 2 and 3 during CSEA Weekend.

SAVE SAVE SAVE SAVE SAVE SAVE SAVE SAVE

Two for One Buy one admission for \$7, get one free CSEA member or family member

Coupon good for Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 2-3, 2000, only

Celebrate CSEA Weekend at the New York State Fair Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 2 and 3, 2000.

CSEA

Buy one fair admission for \$7, receive the second free for one CSEA member or family member. Children under 12 free.

NAME _____

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PHONE _____

CSEA LOCAL _____

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SAVE SAVE TWO FOR ONE SAVE SAVE

Saturday, Sept. 2 and Sunday, Sept. 3, 2000, is CSEA WEEKEND at the New York State Fair in Syracuse. CSEA members and their families will receive two-for-one admission that weekend, compliments of CSEA and the New York State Fair.

CSEA will maintain a booth in the Center of Progress Building on the fairgrounds throughout the entire fair, so stop by and visit the CSEA booth at any time. The two-for-one coupons above, however, are only good during CSEA Weekend, Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 2 and 3.