

# THE WORK FORCE



Photo by Lynn Miller

## **Erie Nightmare continues**

*See Page 3*



## Photo of the Month



Photo by Mark M. Kotzin

**CSEA member Dave Perry, a heavy equipment operator for the City of Fulton, shows how to operate a snowplow to 9-year-old Logan Aubeuf. Perry was participating in the city's second annual CSEA Employee Recognition Day, a public event honoring CSEA city workers for their service.**

## Food workers win first contract

VALHALLA — Roughly 100 food service employees working at Sodexo's Westchester Medical Center operation overwhelmingly ratified their first union contract Oct. 13, 10 months after a card-check neutrality agreement led to the formation of their new CSEA private sector local.

The new contract provides for raises in each of the three contract years, binding arbitration for both disciplinary action and grievances, seniority rights for promotions and transfers, and several other new items.

"We welcome the members of our newest local to CSEA and praise them for the grassroots organizing effort that led to them joining our union," Southern Region President Diane Hewitt said. "The Sodexo workers saw how a union has helped their unionized colleagues at the medical center. They, too, wanted the respect and fair wages a union contract brings."

— Jessica Stone

**Visit [www.csealocal1000.org](http://www.csealocal1000.org) for a complete list of CSEA's political endorsements, and be sure to vote on Nov. 8!**



# ALERT



**CSEA President Danny Donohue to meet Long Island Region members on Dec. 9**

CSEA President Danny Donohue will visit the CSEA Long Island Region on Dec. 9 to meet with members. The meetings will be held in the region office at 3 Garet Place, Commack. Donohue will meet with union members from 1 to 7 p.m. Please call the Long Island Region office at (631) 462-0030 for an appointment and directions.

# Speeding truck kills county DPW worker

BOLTON — CSEA and the state Public Employees Safety and Health Bureau are investigating the Oct. 6 death of Warren County Department of Public Works member Linda Curtis, who was killed on the job after a truck owned by a private contractor struck her.

Curtis, 47, an 11-year county employee and CSEA member, was flagging at a county road paving site on New Vermont Road in Bolton. Other public works department employees were paving a section of the road nearby while Curtis and a supervisor moved work zone safety signs.

A private contractor hauling materials to a nearby bridge repair project had repeatedly driven through the county's work zone that day at unsafe speeds, despite the road being closed to traffic.

At about 2:45 p.m., Curtis and the supervisor had just completed moving a work zone sign when the private contractor's truck, carrying a full load of crushed stone, again drove at an unsafe speed through the county's

work zone, ignoring warnings from flaggers to slow down.

The truck's brakes failed and the driver steered the vehicle into a ditch where Curtis was still working.

The truck struck Curtis, and she died on the way to Glens Falls Hospital.

PESH has not concluded its investigation, but initial reports show the county was in compliance with bureau regulations, with workers recently completing training in work zone safety, wearing and trained in using personal protective equipment and designating and marking signs indicating the work zone.

The Warren County Sheriff's Department, in its probe of the case, uncovered 26 safety violations on the truck alone. The truck was overloaded by 2,000 pounds. The department has issued the contractor 12 tickets and more charges may be pending.

Curtis, who was single, is survived by a sister. She is the seventh CSEA member to die on the job in the past year.

## School worker dies on job

DUNDEE — CSEA is investigating the death of a member following an accident at a Dundee Central School District facility.

Co-workers found Helen Smith, 62, lying near at the bottom of a loading dock Sept. 30. Smith apparently fell and hit her head while attempting to

throw a bag of papers into a Dumpster. There were no witnesses to the accident.

The loading dock is less than four feet high and did not have railings. Railings are required beginning at four feet, according to safety codes.

## WMC gets shot in the arm

VALHALLA — Westchester County officials recently delivered on a months-old promise of \$57 million in aid to Westchester Medical Center, allowing the cash-strapped hospital \$4 million per month to stay afloat.

The money comes via a deal refinancing bonds the county holds as part of a national settlement from tobacco companies. The final vote to authorize the spending, made by the Westchester County Board of Legislators, comes with a strict county oversight policy.

"Each month, the county executive and the chair of the Board of Legislators will each have to sign off before the \$4 million check is cut," Westchester Medical Center Unit

President Artie Alfreds said. "The hospital administration will be required to send monthly financial reports to the legislators, in addition to a detailed breakdown on how each \$4 million payment is being spent."

The increased oversight is an attempt to prevent the disastrous financial losses incurred under previous hospital administrations.

While the \$57 million will help with operating costs and payroll, the search is still on for a continuous source of revenue for Westchester Medical Center. Aggressive lobbying in Albany this past year had limited results, but officials are optimistic about the coming session.

— Jessica Stone



**Erie County nightmare spurs on demonstration**

# Union members to big biz: 'Back off!'

BUFFALO — When “big business” tried to push its way in front of Erie County employees, CSEA activists in Erie County pushed back, standing tall and fighting for what is right.

Activists held a rally Sept. 29 in front of County Executive Joel Giambra’s office to send the message that big business does not belong in county government.

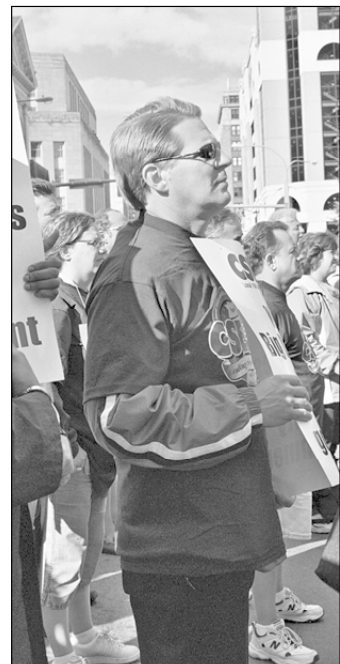
CSEA members attending the Annual Delegates Meeting in Buffalo joined the rally, along with CSEA President Danny Donohue and AFSCME International President Gerald W. McEntee, who spoke at the event.

The rally was in response to a report by a group of business interests recommending the county contract out services, slash remaining services to the bone and eliminate essential subsidies for public health care in the area.

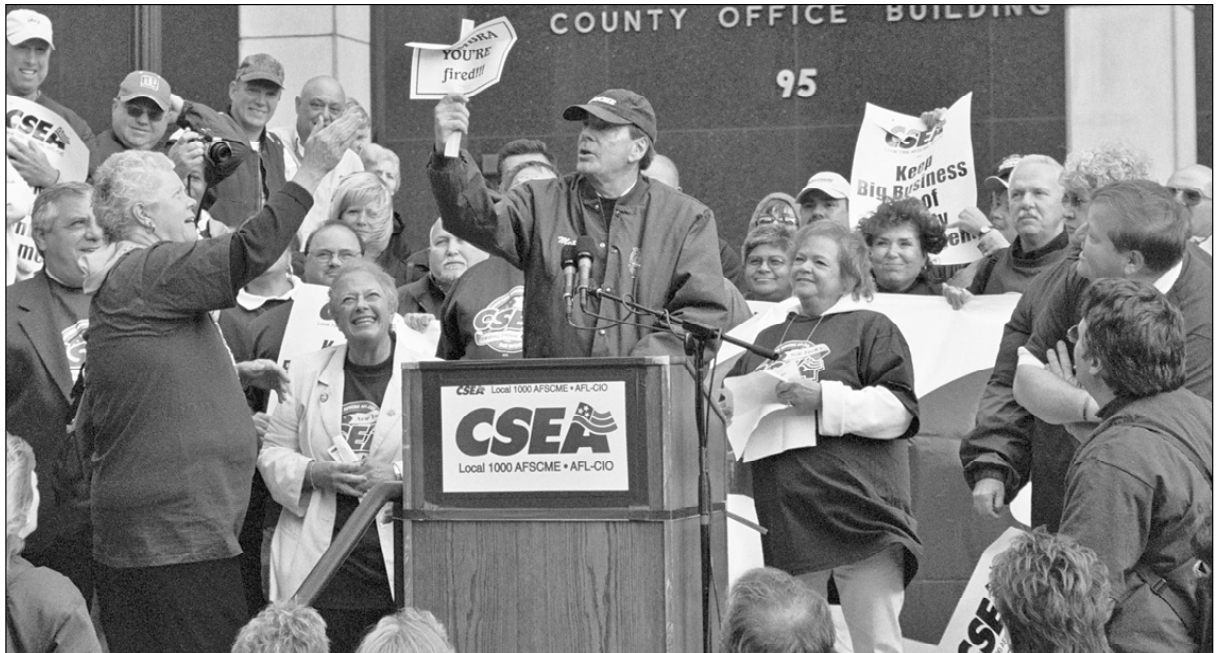
“Attacking employees and services we deliver will not get County Executive Joel Giambra or the Buffalo Niagara Partnership any closer to better government,” said CSEA Erie County Local President Joan Bender. “It will only make things worse.”

Erie County activists are now meeting regularly to plan strategy and media events, and a series of newspaper, radio and television ads has been launched to help get the union message out.

Activists are also working phone banks, supporting CSEA-endorsed candidates for Erie County Legislature and lobbying officials



**Erie County Probation Section President Scott Smith takes part in the demonstration.**



**AFSCME President Gerald McEntee holds a sign that reads, “Giambra, you’re fired!” at a CSEA rally held in front of the Erie County Office Building during CSEA’s 95th Annual Delegates Meeting. More than 1,000 union members took part. Joining McEntee are CSEA statewide and region officers.**



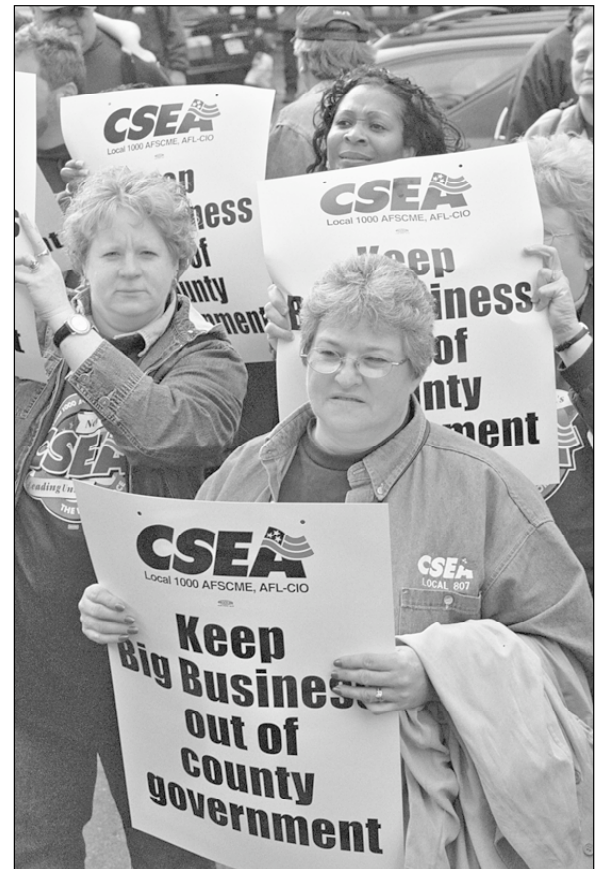
**Erie County Local President Joan Bender confers with state Comptroller Alan Hevesi.**

during the budget process.

Giambra’s proposed 2006 budget raises much-needed revenue through increased sales and property taxes.

It restores some CSEA positions, but it also eliminates a subsidy for the Erie County Medical Center. County legislators will review and possibly make changes to the proposed budget before its adoption next month.

— Lynn Miller



**Bonnie Peters and Rose Conti of Chautauqua County stand in solidarity with their Erie County brothers and sisters.**



# THE WORK FORCE

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## IN TOUCH WITH THE WORK FORCE CSEA President Danny Donohue

### Democracy weakens if you don't vote!

CSEA members have a chance to make a big difference at the ballot box Nov. 8. Off-year elections, with local offices up for grabs, traditionally have low voter turnout. Our democracy gets weaker when people don't exercise the right to vote.

There really isn't any good excuse not to vote — especially for local offices that affect the quality of life in your hometown directly every day. It should also be pointed out that many of the elected officials on the ballot this month will also have direct impact on labor-management relations with thousands of CSEA members in cities, counties, towns and villages across the state.

If you don't think you know the candidates, you should know this: CSEA members like you, who sit on local and region political action committees, have interviewed all the individuals seeking our union's support. They have questioned them at length about where they stand on a wide range of issues that matter to working families. CSEA's endorsement is not given lightly and those who earned it are also proudly receiving the grassroots efforts of CSEA activists working phone banks to turn out the vote, going door to door on behalf of the candidates and helping campaigns in scores of different ways. But your help is needed too.

It is, of course, essential that we hold elected officials accountable, but first we have to get them into office. I urge you to visit the CSEA web site at [www.csealocal1000.org](http://www.csealocal1000.org) and consider the CSEA endorsed candidates listed for your community.

Your "yes" vote is also needed for the two ballot questions on the ballot. The first provides some reforms to improve the state budget process and ensure state aid and public services don't get held hostage. The second is a transportation bond issue that will ensure needed money to fund road and bridge repair and construction. Please review the information on Page 20 of this edition and then vote yes.



*Danny*



# Golden Hill home delivers quality public health care

KINGSTON — When caregivers are forced to make the tough decision to place a loved one in a nursing home, many do exhaustive research to find a facility with the most experienced staff and attentive care available.

If the caregiver lives in Ulster County, he or she doesn't have to look far.

The Golden Hill Health Care Center, Ulster's county-run nursing home, is known as the best around. The 280-bed home has the best record of all the nursing homes in the county, along with the highest occupancy rate.

"The dedication of the CSEA members working at Golden Hill is the reason why this facility has the best reputation of all the nursing homes in the Hudson Valley," said Ulster Local President Kevin DuMond. "The employees are experienced and dedicated, putting the needs of the residents and their families before their own."

Like most public nursing homes in New York state, the inadequate Medicaid reimbursement rate combined with the increased costs counties face due to state mandates leaves Golden Hill vulnerable to privatization.

That move has been the easy way out for county governing bodies across the state, but CSEA activists at Golden Hill are already taking proactive measures to ensure they and their co-workers will



**Venus McSpirit, a certified nursing assistant who has worked 22 years at Golden Hill Health Care Center in Kingston, fixes a necklace for Golden Hill resident Katherine Myers.**

continue to deliver top-notch care at this county facility.

Union activists from Golden Hill and the Ulster Local have teamed up to develop a comprehensive campaign to raise Golden Hill's profile. Similar in its goal to the much-praised CSEA campaign at the Van Duyn Home & Hospital in Onondaga County, the aim is to make taxpayers in Ulster County understand the importance of keeping Golden Hill public.

"County facilities such as Golden Hill are not only a safety net for the

residents who have nowhere else to go, they are also sought out by those who do have other options because of the fine reputation of quality care," said Southern Region President Diane Hewitt.

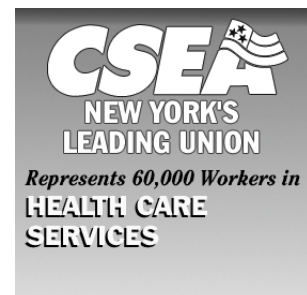
"I know that if I have a family member who needed this type of care, I would want them in a facility where the employees take pride in their jobs. So many private homes nowadays give such poor compensation to their employees that they have little incentive to do a good job."

Privatization is not expected to be a factor in the upcoming county budget vote, but that isn't stopping union members from making their case. Previous cuts throughout county departments has left little budget fat to be trimmed, while the facility is also in need of major, costly repairs to water and sewer systems.

Laura Wesolowski, a certified nursing assistant at Golden Hill for 16 years, said keeping Golden Hill public needs to be a top county priority.

"If Golden Hill were privatized, it wouldn't be run as efficiently as it is now," Wesolowski said. "Here, there is less turnover, which provides stability. The residents see the same faces every day and that is important to their well-being."

— Jessica Stone



**"The employees are experienced and dedicated, putting the needs of the residents and their families before their own."**

**CSEA** Voices



**"I was very impressed with the size and strength, and organizational skills of CSEA. It was very impressive. It shows the strength and breadth of CSEA around the state, and it made me proud to be a part of it. It was not like anything I expected. A lot more went into it than I ever anticipated. I had a good time and I'm looking forward to going next year."**

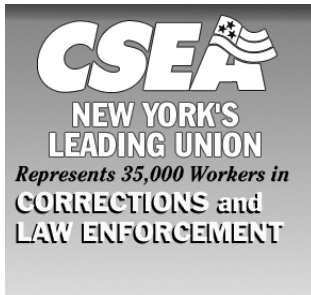
— Nassau Local President  
**Jerry Laricchiuta, on attending his first CSEA Annual Delegates Meeting.**

## **Positive state of labor-management relations**



**Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities Commissioner Thomas Maul meets with CSEA leaders during a recent OMRDD labor-management summit. Maul took questions from union members and discussed the current state of OMRDD's functions during the meeting. CSEA activists at the meeting raised numerous concerns about maintaining quality of care.**





**“Hopefully, we can start working together to save the city money and protect our members.”**

## CSEA to fight proposal to cut emergency dispatchers

OLEAN – CSEA is preparing to mobilize in Olean to stop the elimination of half of the CSEA-represented civilian emergency dispatcher positions.

CSEA has learned Olean Mayor William Quinlan wants to eliminate half of the civilian emergency dispatch jobs held by CSEA members and have 911 calls handled by the county’s dispatch center 30 miles away in Little Valley.

Another component of the mayor’s plan involves using police officers to handle several administrative duties the dispatchers currently perform.

There are currently six full-time and nine part-time dispatchers. CSEA represents the six full-time dispatchers.

Quinlan claims eliminating dispatchers will result in savings, but the amount of savings is unclear. He is quoted in a

March newspaper article as saying \$300,000 would be saved, but in August he is quoted saying the savings would only be \$100,000.

CSEA has met with the city twice, the last time in August, to discuss the proposal. In July, the union made requests for information under the Taylor Law.

At this point, it is still unclear when, or if, the city will attempt to move forward with the plan.

“Hopefully we can work together to save the city money and protect our members,” Unit President Ken Crawforth said. “With some cooperation from the city and some creative thinking on our parts, we definitely think this is a possibility.”

— Lynn Miller

## Fight attacks on labor with PEOPLE

### CSEA Voices



“It was really a unique experience.. I was pleasantly surprised that our local got so many votes. I think it really brought home that CSEA is a really, really huge union. I never realized just how large, important and diverse it was. It was unlike anything I expected. ”

— Nassau Local 3rd Vice President Debra Imperatore, on attending her first CSEA Annual Delegates Meeting.

ALBANY — CSEA members are stepping up to take the PEOPLE Challenge to fight back against ongoing attacks on labor.

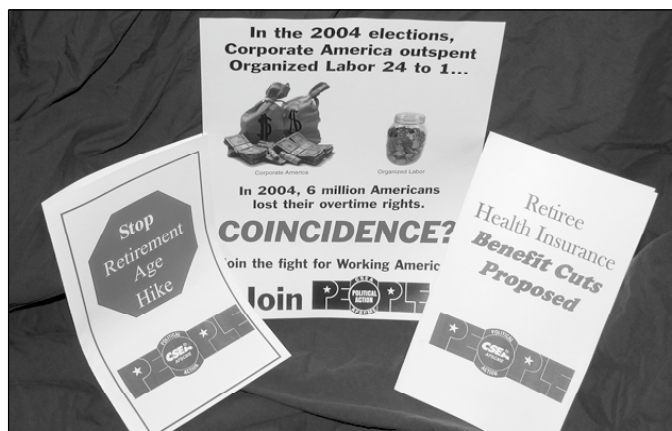
CSEA’s goal is to sign up 12,000 new PEOPLE members in the next year. The union is pairing up comparable units and locals to compete head-to-head to sign up the most new PEOPLE members by Aug. 31, 2006.

Eighty-five units and locals are participating in the challenge. Visit CSEA’s web site at [www.csealocal1000.org](http://www.csealocal1000.org) to find out if your unit or local is participating. A list of the challenge pairs is posted on the site. Members interested in signing up for PEOPLE can also download a program application from the web site.

#### Why PEOPLE?

Even if your unit or local isn’t participating in the PEOPLE Challenge, now is the time to join the program.

In the 2004 elections,



**PEOPLE program materials such as those shown above explain to CSEA members how local, state and federal legislation and policies directly impact them, and what union members can do to protect their benefits.**

corporate America significantly outspent organized labor. That year, 6 million Americans lost their overtime rights. President George W. Bush’s administration is planning even more ways to dismantle working America.

With PEOPLE, working

people can fight back. CSEA members have a strong voice and power in the workplace and all levels of government, the community and the labor movement.

PEOPLE is CSEA’s legislative and political fund-raising program. Through the program,

your union can protect you by supporting politicians and legislation that helps, not harms, working families. PEOPLE uses contributions to endorse candidates who support working people and the issues that concern us, lobby elected leaders to pass legislation that protects working families and educate CSEA members on proposed legislation that could affect them.

Here are some of the ways PEOPLE directly impacts your life:

- Fights for billions in state and federal funding for public employee services.
- Fights contracting out of state and local government jobs
- Defends our pensions and benefits, even for retired employees.
- Fights to maintain and improve Social Security and Medicare benefits, as well as for health care reform.





# Child support specialists provide critical link, aid to families

CARMEL — When Michelle Aaronson tells her clients at the Putnam County Support Collection Unit that she knows what they're going through, she's telling the truth. She's been there.

Aaronson is one of a handful of child support specialists in Putnam County helping residents secure the financial support to ensure their children are well taken care of.

"I feel that because I've been there before, it helps me in my job," said Aaronson, a single mom. "I am here to tell people they will survive it."

The job of the county's child support specialists is part detective, part counselor. In Putnam County, which is smaller than bordering counties in the Hudson Valley, the child support specialists handle clients' cases from start to finish. From the time a client walks into the office, to tracking down a non-custodial parent, to going to court and securing a judgment, Putnam's child support specialists are there.

"I feel I'm doing a good service to custodial parents and the children who depend on the money," said Dawn Alterman, another child support specialist. "If it means I have to do a little extra, maybe make a couple extra phone calls to get a



**Putnam County child support specialists Sue Watkins, Dawn Alterman and Michelle Aaronson are dedicated to helping families secure financial support to raise children.**

case resolved, I'll do it."

Tracking down a non-custodial parent for child support has become trickier, with many parents fleeing town or even the country more frequently than in the past. As mobility has increased, so has technology.

"Our computer system can find a parent through entering his or her Social Security number," said Sue Watkins, a child support specialist

for two of the four year's she's been employed with Putnam County.

Watkins said the nationwide mission to track down deadbeat parents not only makes it easier to locate a non-custodial parent living in another state, it has even led to reciprocity agreements with other countries. Mexico, Australia and Austria are just a few nations on a long list of countries willing to report back to the United States if a non-custodial parent is living there.

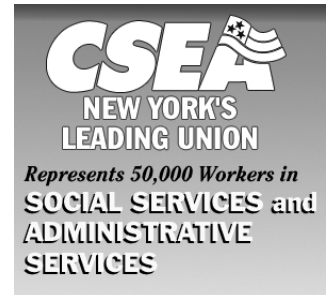
The job isn't without challenges. Money and family are both sensitive subjects that can often make clients more defensive, Alterman said.

"Everybody who calls is mad at us," Aaronson said. "The non-custodial parent is mad because they think we're taking too much money and the custodial parent is mad because we're not getting the money fast enough."

All in all, the CSEA members say the job is worth the occasional complaints.

"It's great when people think they can get away with leaving the country and then we find them," Watkins said.

— Jessica Stone



**"I am here to tell people they will survive it."**



**"We have to stand together to fight for a fair contract. We go above and beyond at work; we never say no when asked for something. We just want equity."**

— Carol Ford, 20-year CSEA member, clerk 2, Yonkers School District, discussing unit members working for three years without a contract.

# Child support enforcement unit honored by state

CATSKILL — Greene County employees working in the county's Child Support Enforcement Unit were honored recently with an award from the state Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance.

The award, presented in August during Child Support Enforcement Month, recognizes agencies helping children and families get the financial support to which they are legally entitled.

The unit is among the

state's top collectors, with payment collections climbing from \$2.1 million in 1994 to \$5 million last year. The unit handles nearly 2,400 cases and is projecting to collect nearly \$6 million in overdue child support

next year.

"One of the secrets to our success is teamwork," Linda Nacey, a senior support investigator, said.

— Therese Assalian



**Employees of Greene County's Support Collections Unit stand with a recognition certificate the state recently awarded the office for its efforts in collecting overdue child support payments. In the back row, from left to right, are Linda Nacey, senior support investigator, Darlene Tompkins, support investigator, Linda Thompson, support investigator and Jean Thomas-Welch, examiner. Front row, from left to right, are Karen Schmatz, clerk, Kelly Vosburgh, community service worker and Stephanie Ingalls, support collector. Not shown are clerks Carol Vollmer and Mary Ellen Gattuso.**





**Union reaches out to seriously injured member, family**

# CSEA members injured at work by hot asphalt

**“CSEA takes the safety of our people very seriously.”**

**NORTH HEMPSTEAD —** A work site incident recently injured three North Hempstead unit members, one seriously.

The seriously injured member, Richard LaPera, suffered 3<sup>rd</sup> degree burns when hot asphalt buried him to his waist. LaPera and several other workers were working on a road project when the asphalt unexpectedly fell from a truck bed.

“Just out of the blue this thing made a popping noise, and the hot asphalt dumped out of the truck,” North Hempstead Unit President Dan LoMonte said.

“There were four people behind the bed of the back of the truck and the supervisor,” LoMonte said. “Three of them stepped backwards. There was a sign behind LaPera and he backed into it, which sent him directly into the asphalt.”

Although two other crew members, Arthur Gerhardt and Craig Bates, were also buried up to their knees in the asphalt, their

quick thinking, along with that of their supervisor and driver, helped save LaPera’s life.

LoMonte said Kevin Williams, who is a volunteer fireman and the 2<sup>nd</sup> vice president of the CSEA unit, used his fire department radio to get LaPera airlifted to Nassau University Medical Center before an ambulance could arrive.

The supervisor, Mike Flaherty, held LaPera up by the arms to prevent him from sinking any deeper into the hot, sticky material, while the other men dug him out with their hands and shovels.

LoMonte said police impounded the truck for a safety check. “The valve switch was in

place so it wasn’t accidentally pushed,” he said. “It was a 3-month-old truck. It was a brand new piece of equipment. This was supposed to be the top of the line stuff.”

“Our sympathy and support

go out to Ricky and his family,” Long Island



**Art Gerhardt, top, and Mike Flaherty, right, are shown while road crew re-paves a road in North Hempstead last winter.**

Region President Nick LaMorte said. “I want to thank the rest of his crew for pulling together and doing all they could for their injured brother.”

“CSEA takes the safety of our people very seriously,” LaMorte said. “Every member should be aware in the event of any serious workplace injury or accident, once the police have been called and medical aid has been rendered, the next call should be to CSEA. We have safety and health specialists who can investigate to see if management did all it could to protect worker safety, and help

to make sure that these accidents aren’t repeated.”

In response to the accident, the crew has formed a committee called North Hempstead Cares About Ricky. They are organizing a fundraiser to help ease the financial burden on LaPera’s wife and two children during what is expected to be a long convalescence.

For more information about the committee, call (516) 739-6726 or e-mail [Nhempsteadcares@aol.com](mailto:Nhempsteadcares@aol.com).

— Rachel Langert

## CSEA Voices



**“CSEA members are the backbone of our school district. The schools could not run without us because we’re the ones taking care of the details that keep things running.”**

— Lucy Cardile, nine-year CSEA member, teacher aide, Yonkers School District, on unit members working for three years without a contract.

**“Every member should be aware in the event of any serious workplace injury or accident, once the police have been called and medical aid has been rendered, the next call should be to CSEA.”**



# School bus driver fights for safety after fatality

MUNNSVILLE — Stockbridge Valley Central School District bus driver Fred Marshall will never forget the day in May 2004 when 8-year-old Mallory Eddy stepped off his school bus into the path of a car that illegally passed the bus.

He was dropping off several students at the bottom of a hill in Siloam, in Madison County. Eddy was getting off the bus when Marshall saw something in his rear view mirror.

"She was on the bottom step when I saw a car," he said. "It was obvious it was going way too fast and it wasn't going to stop."

He warned the children and shut the doors of the bus. That action likely saved the lives of the two children who were about to get off the steps, but it came too late for Eddy, who was already off the bus.

The car struck her and she died about 90 minutes later.

The 19-year-old driver charged in the case was recently acquitted of all charges following a non-jury trial. The judge ruled the teen was innocent of criminally negligent homicide, reckless endangerment, operating a vehicle with inadequate brakes and passing a school bus, writing that the driver had

no reason to know that his brakes were defective and did not voluntarily pass the school bus.

Marshall said he felt "shock and disbelief" after seeing the accident. He had known Eddy for at least three years and also knew her father.

"I was devastated and heartbroken," he said. "When you drive a bus, you consider the kids as one of your own kids. You have responsibility for them. I took it personally."

"I thought maybe there was something else I could have done, wishing I had longer arms so I could grab her and pull her back on the bus," he said. "Then, I realized there was nothing more I could have done."

Marshall said the district provided him a counselor, but the real healing came from speaking with his students, who went out of their way to get the principal to arrange several meetings with Marshall.

"The kids provided more counseling than anyone else," he said. "That's what put me back in the driver's seat. I didn't think I would drive a bus again, but after I talked with them, I knew I had to go back."

Marshall and his co-workers were shocked over the acquittal and are hoping that talking publicly about the incident



Stockbridge Valley School District Bus Driver Fred Marshall reflects on the incident that killed one of his riders.

will raise awareness of what they see as the biggest problems bus drivers face — illegal passing of stopped school buses, lack of stringent and uniform judicial enforcement and sentencing of offenders.

"It's like the judge said losing a passenger on my bus is OK with this ruling," Marshall said. "The only protection we have for the children are those flashing red lights. Something else has to be done."

#### Taking action

Marshall and his co-workers recently met with representatives from the New York Association for Pupil Transportation, an advocacy group that represents the district in transportation issues. The association is one of the sponsors of "Operation Safe Stop," a program that educates the public about drivers who illegally pass stopped school buses and the hazards they create.

"It's happening

thousands of times a day and we've got to put a stop to it," Association Executive Director Peter Mannella said.

The association is pushing for several reforms, including allowing bus drivers more ease in identifying vehicles that pass them, providing more training to judges, magistrates and prosecutors about the problem, increasing the level of charges for offenders who commit other crimes while passing a stopped school bus and adding video cameras on buses.

Stockbridge Valley has outfitted one new bus with cameras and a GPS locator. Marshall said any measures that reduce violations would be a welcome improvement. "Right now, we're on our own out there," he said. "Yellow school buses carry the future."

— Mark M. Kotzin



**The first time fine for illegally passing a school bus is a \$250, five points on your license, and/or possibly 30 days in jail. For more information, visit the Operation Safe Stop web site at [www.nysgtsc.state.ny.us/opsafstp.htm](http://www.nysgtsc.state.ny.us/opsafstp.htm).**

**CSEA** *Voices*



**"The trainings, orientations and seminars were all very informative but the highlight of the ADM for me was marching on the Erie County Office Building. It showed that no matter where you are in the state, you are not alone."**

— Donna Anthony, Saratoga County Child Support Investigator and 17 year member, on attending the recent CSEA Annual Delegates Meeting in Buffalo.



# INSIDE THE WORK FORCE

## 95th Annual Delegates Meeting a call to arms



BUFFALO — “It’s our union, our future,” was the theme of CSEA’s 95<sup>th</sup> Annual Delegates Meeting in Buffalo recently. It was also an appropriate call to arms as the union nears its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2010.

CSEA President Danny Donohue told the nearly 1,000 delegates and staff in attendance they should be proud of the tremendous achievements in their union’s 95-year history. But he reminded them there is hard work to be done to maintain what we have achieved and seek a brighter future.

“Whether it’s a lesson from our history or something we’ve achieved during the past year, none of our accomplishments come easy,” Donohue said. “We need to fight back aggressively against the forces that would erode our hard-fought gains



and seek to destroy us,” the union leader added.

Donohue said future success would depend on individual effort and collective action on the part of every CSEA member whether it’s fighting for public health care, fighting against contracting out and irresponsible public officials in places like Erie County, or electing a new governor who will value working people and work for responsible and progressive public policies.

There were a lot of new faces at this year’s delegates meeting. Forty percent of the delegates were attending their first convention. AFSCME Secretary-Treasurer Bill Lucy took the opportunity to welcome the new delegates.

“You are joining in a process with one of the finest, most influential organizations in the American labor movement,” Lucy said. “Those of you here today, in spite of how difficult the environment may be, are enjoying the fruits of the labor and sacrifice of many who have sat in the same chairs that you sit in today that have helped build this great organization,” Lucy added.

AFSCME President Gerald McEntee told delegates CSEA’s continued success will

come from continuing to focus on representation, organizing and political action, including working to support politicians who will help working people.

“If they are a Republican we should support them. If they are a Democrat we should support them. And if they are either and they are against us then we should work to defeat them day in and day out,” McEntee said.

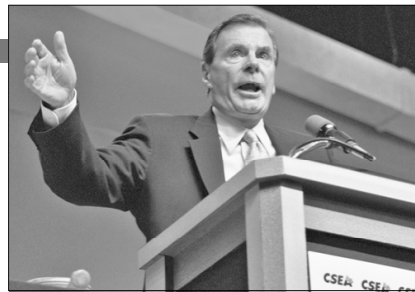
New York State Comptroller Alan Hevesi stressed the need for continued fiscal responsibility at the state and local level, particularly in places like Erie County, where local officials have mismanaged the county’s finances. Sen. Dale Volker (R-Depew) said local officials should stop blaming their fiscal problems on their workers.

One of the week’s highlights was a spirited rally outside the Erie County office building to support Erie County CSEA members under attack (See story on Page 3). Led by CSEA President Donohue and joined by AFSCME President McEntee, delegates took to the streets along with CSEA Erie County members and delivered a blistering message to “keep Big Business Out of Erie County Government.”

During the week, delegates also voted on proposed changes to the union’s constitution and by-laws and adopted resolutions and attended workshops and presentations that provided practical skills and inspiration to keep CSEA a vital force for working people well into our next hundred years.

— Ed Molitor

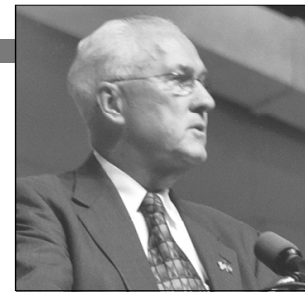
**Look for more ADM coverage in the December Work Force**



McEntee



Lucy



Volker



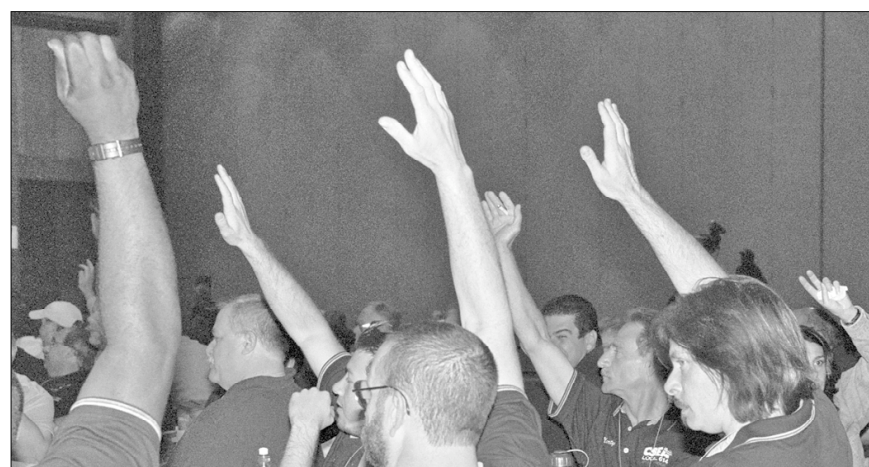
Hevesi



CSEA Delegate Chuck Persons wears a collection of ADM pins from meetings past as he makes a point during the general session.



LEFT: CSEA Treasurer Maureen Malone and CSEA President Danny Donohue present AFSCME President Gerald McEntee with a symbolic check to the AFSCME Fallen Heroes Fund. CSEA delegates donated \$25,795 to aid victims of the recent Gulf Coast disasters. CSEA members can also contribute to Habitat for Humanity efforts to build a house in New Orleans by visiting [www.csealocal1000.org](http://www.csealocal1000.org).



Delegates vote on a proposed amendment to the union’s constitution and by-laws.

### Western Region takes PEOPLE honors



Western Region President Flo Tripi, Western Region Delegate Michael Flaherty and CSEA President Danny Donohue celebrate Flaherty’s winning PEOPLE Recruiter of the Year. After 30 years as a CSEA member employed at the Finger Lakes Developmental Disabilities Services Office, Flaherty also celebrated his retirement on the final day of the Annual Delegates Meeting. The Western Region also won the 2005 PEOPLE Cup, which Tripi is holding.



# Waste plant woes draw action

WANTAGH — CSEA is investigating possible health and safety violations at the Cedar Creek Water Pollution Control Plant in Wantagh, after workers there complained of unsanitary working conditions and bullying by management.

So far, the investigation has been limited to certain areas of the plant, but those areas have already shown several hazards to workers.

“This is unacceptable,” said Nassau County Local President Jerry Laricchiuta after hearing reports of feces-strewn work areas, dilapidated equipment and offshore raw sewage releases.

## Calling for better response

Equally unacceptable is management’s response.

“I’m being told that our employees are being stifled from showing these violations and reporting these violations, and they’re being intimidated,

coerced and threatened by the superintendent,” Laricchiuta said.

“Whatever legal resources or whatever we have in our power, we’re going to use against that kind of bully management.”

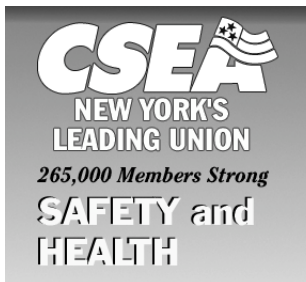
Laricchiuta was able to take

a second tour of the plant with a handful of county officials, and the Nassau County Legislature has set a hearing to discuss the concerns about the plant.

Occupational Safety and Health Specialist Komilla John was able to do a preliminary walk through of the facility, and has formally requested a more comprehensive and detailed inspection, which is pending.

“This facility was built in 1970, and it’s basically a plant that needs a lot of repairs,” John said.

In Building E, referred to as the Influent Building, dumpsters are raised and



# Mount Vernon library fight continues

MOUNT VERNON — CSEA is continuing the fight to return members of the Mount Vernon Public Library Unit to work, negotiating with management to get the 33 employees back to work and Westchester County’s largest library up and running again.

The library has been closed to the public and employees since late August, when high levels of asbestos in the building’s interior were reported.

Later tests proved asbestos to be within legal limits, but the library administration still has not given the go-ahead to reopen.

Unit members attended a recent library Board of Trustees meeting, where Unit President Gary Newman implored board members to inform workers about their future with the library, but was told issues would only be addressed in impact negotiations meetings.

“At this point, there is no valid excuse why our members are not back at work,” Newman said. “If preparation is required to ready the library for reopening, as we have been told, then our members are the ones who should be doing the work.”

CSEA is actively working on the Mount Vernon case. Already, the union has arranged for members to file workers’ compensation claims, in the event asbestos in the century-old library eventually results in worker health problems.

— Jessica Stone

lowered to remove solid waste from the wastewater.

“Employees here are at risk for back injuries due to the weight of the equipment and slippery walking surfaces,” John said.

“While employees work around raw sewage, which carries numerous bacteria and pathogens, they may not have access to proper protective gear.”

In Building C, the primary concern is three-fold. There is possible asbestos exposure, due to the age of the building and water damage to ceiling plaster.

There is also water damage close to electrical circuits and water collects in a confined space near a panel box, which may pose a possible

electrocution hazard, John said.

In Building S, there is a strong smell of ammonia, which John said needs to be carefully monitored.

Trip wires rigged up to stop machinery no longer work.

Workers must use a coat hanger to clear clogs from the filter presses while they are submerged in water, waist deep.

CSEA has requested critical documentation, including the written safety and health policies for Cedar Creek, as well as employee injury and illness logs.

As of press time, the documentation had not yet been received.

Stay informed about what state government is doing through

## INSIDE ALBANY

CSEA is a longtime, major underwriter of this award-winning public television program. See the times below for the 2004 broadcast schedule in your area.



<b>Saturday</b>			
Binghamton	WSKG		2:30 p.m.
NYC	WNET		1:30 p.m.
Rochester	WXXI		5:00 p.m.
<b>Sunday</b>			
Albany	WMHT		12:30 p.m.
			11:30 p.m.
Buffalo	WNED		10:00 a.m.
Long Island	WLIW		6:30 a.m.
NYC	WNET		6:00 a.m.
Plattsburgh	WCVE		9:00 a.m.
Syracuse	WCNY		1:00 p.m.
Watertown	WPBS		7:00 a.m.
<b>Monday</b>			
Long Island	WLIW		12:00 noon



# Guide dog gives gifts of sight, love

STAATSBURG — Sandy Wagner has owned cats and dogs all her life, but it was only when her daughter was brainstorming ideas for a community service project that the chance arose for the state Park Police communications technician to use her love of animals for a more important reason.

Wagner is raising Alex, a yellow Labrador retriever puppy, for the Guide Dog Foundation.

The foundation places puppies with families such as Wagner's until the dogs reach about one year of age. The dog then undergoes a year of intensive schooling at the foundation before being placed with a person with visual impairment.

Alex accompanies Wagner to work and sits by her side as she dispatches Park Police calls to officers in the Taconic Region's four-county area. The energetic puppy has won legions of fans at the Mills Mansion, where Wagner works.

Recently, the *Work Force*'s Jessica Stone met with Wagner and Alex to learn more about the Guide Puppy program and how Wagner makes it mesh with her day job.

**WF: Why did you become involved with the Guide Dog Foundation?**

**SW:** My daughter was looking into training an assisted living dog as a community service project. When she found how long she'd be required to keep the dog, she realized she would be going off to college before the dog was done training with us. Then we found out about the Guide Dog Foundation, where you keep the dog until it is around 12 to 14 months old. My official title is Puppy Walker.

**WF: How did you arrange for Alex to be able to come to work with you?**



**SW:** I first approached my major, who contacted our regional director, who said it would be fine for Alex to come to work with me. A new regional director came in, who had to approve it, too. They've all been wonderfully supportive. I have a group of co-workers who volunteer to take Alex for walks during the day, which is a

real commitment because the Guide Dog Foundation requires us to clean up after the dogs. They are a great help to me, because it's difficult for me to leave my desk.

**WF: What are the challenges in raising a Guide Puppy?**

**SW:** You have to keep an eye on Alex constantly. He is more work than a baby. Everything takes longer. When you go to the grocery store it takes triple the time, because people like to meet Alex. But it's worth it.

**WF: The joys?**

**SW:** Alex. He's just so loveable. He's such a sweet dog. One of my co-workers calls Alex his touchstone, because he'll come and visit with him if he's having a stressful day, and Alex always puts him back in a better mood.

**WF: Are there any special rules you have to follow?**

**SW:** It's not quite the same as having a puppy in the house. Alex is not allowed to jump on people. At home, he's not allowed on the furniture. He has to sleep in his kennel at night. When you first hear this, you may think it's strict, but these things will all be important once he's working as a Guide Dog.



**Sandy Wagner recently takes a break with Alex, the yellow Labrador Retriever she is raising for the Guide Dog Foundation, which matches guide dogs with people with visual impairment.**

**WF: What'll happen once the time comes to bring Alex back to the Guide Dog Foundation?**

**SW:** I'm sure I'm going to be heartbroken. I just tell myself I can do this. It's not harder than letting my kids go off to college! He's got a bigger purpose.

## CSEA court workers collecting cell phones to save lives

SCHENECTADY — CSEA members working in courthouses across the state know firsthand the devastation of domestic violence.

Now, CSEA members in the Capital Region Judiciary Local are doing something to help.

They've started a region-wide effort to collect cell phones to give to domestic violence victims. Local advocacy programs receive the phones, recondition them and give them to victims to dial 911 in emergencies.

Local President Colin Farley started the drive. CSEA's print shop

made signs for the boxes and fliers encouraging the donation of phones and chargers as part of the "Lifeline Program." The union is distributing the materials to county courthouses in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> judicial districts covering CSEA's Capital Region.

While some locations, such as those in Schenectady, Albany, Rensselaer and Saratoga counties, are up and running with collections, others are getting started.

"We're trying to get the word out," Farley said. He credits the

state Office of Court Administration for assistance in launching the drive and for giving him permission to have the boxes placed in the courthouses.

"They've been great, very supportive," he said.

The union will donate all of the collected phones to local advocacy programs. Farley recently donated the first group of phones to the YWCA in Schenectady.

Carol Phillips, an advocate coordinator at the YWCA in Schenectady, said there is always a need for more phones. She said

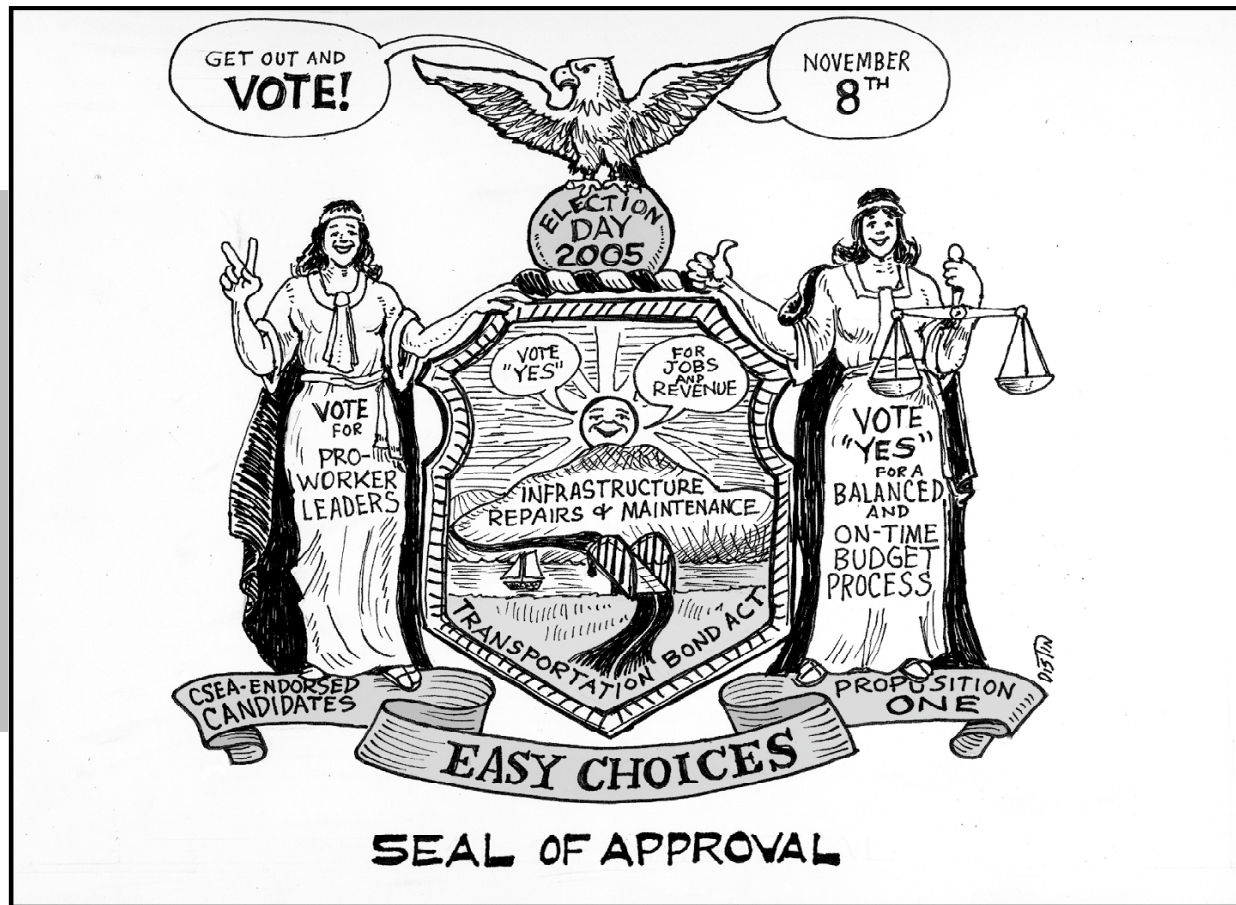
most women seeking help do not own a cell phone. "We go through them so fast," she said.

Farley said this program can make a difference and vows to keep collecting phones for as long as it takes.

"It's just one call that could save a life," he said.

— Therese Assalian



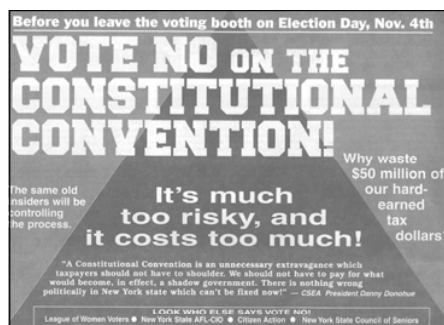


1997

### Eight years ago ...

In 1997, CSEA led the fight for voters to reject proposed New York state constitutional convention, slated for 1999. The union, along with more than 60 other organizations across the state, opposed the convention because it would have cost more than \$50 million in taxpayer money and would have been ineffective in truly solving many problems plaguing the state.

CSEA and other convention opponents educated voters on the impacts of a state "Con Con." In addition to being too costly, the convention would have been run by political insiders and limited citizen participation. The convention would have also threatened many protections union members enjoy, including the right of public employees to organize and public employee pensions. These protections would have been threatened for public employees without guarantees of improvements in state government operations.



**This notice, which ran in the October 1997 issue of "The Public Sector," urged CSEA members to vote against the state's proposal to hold a constitutional convention. The convention, rejected at the polls that November, would have put public employees' rights at risk.**

### Also in 1997 ...

- \* Great Britain's Princess Diana is killed in a Paris car crash.
- \* Hong Kong returns to Chinese rule after years as a British colony.
- \* Roman Catholic nun and Nobel Peace Prize winner Mother Teresa dies at 87 in Calcutta, India.
- \* President Bill Clinton uses the line-item veto for the first time, an action ruled unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court the following year.
- \* Golfer Tiger Woods breaks multiple records in the Masters tournament.
- \* The blockbuster movie "Titanic" is released.
- \* U.S. spacecraft begin exploration of Mars.



# Providing quality care for those in need

SCHENECTADY — Employees of Schenectady Family Health Services represented by CSEA are proud of the role they play in providing medical care and support to uninsured and under-insured residents of the city's Hamilton Hill neighborhood.

Rick Raco, vice president of operations for Schenectady Family Health Services (SFHS), said the agency is a federally qualified health center, making it eligible to receive grants under the Public Health Service Act. Such centers qualify for enhanced reimbursement from Medicare and Medicaid as well as other benefits.

To be eligible, the centers must also serve an underserved area or population, offer a sliding fee scale, and provide comprehensive services, among other requirements. Schenectady Family Health Services also accepts commercial insurance, but about 65 percent of the center's patients use Medicaid.

The center's list of services includes medical, dental, podiatry, pediatrics, obstetrics/gynecology and optometry. In the past year alone, the staff has grown from 80 to 134 employees.

Schenectady Family Health Services will move to a new location later this year as the center has outgrown space it occupied since 1972.

In addition to medical and dental services, staff also provide financial counseling and



**Facility enroller Ruthy Rivera, left, counsels patients on coverage options then enrolls eligible patients in programs such as Family Health Plus, Child Health Plus and Medicaid.**



**Dental Hygienist Karen DeThorne cares for a patient at Schenectady Family Health Services. The private, not-for-profit health care center helps many residents from lower income neighborhoods and rural areas.**

dental outreach at various Hamilton Hill locations. Because Schenectady Family Health Services is one of the only centers in upstate New York that accept Medicaid for dental care, it treats patients who travel from homes more than three hours away.

#### Satellite services

Services are also offered in satellite locations throughout the community such as Bethesda House, where the center runs a free clinic for the homeless, as well as a practice at Ellis Healthcare.

Schenectady Family Health Services also has contracts to provide care to county jail inmates and began a health clinic last summer for Saratoga Race Track backstretch workers.

CSEA Schenectady Family Health Services Local President Garnett Franklin, a licensed practical nurse and 10-year employee, worked at the backstretch clinic this summer in addition to her regular work and was very moved by the people she cared for there. "They are so grateful, I just love them," she said. "They need the health care, and they need the help."

Franklin said an important component of her daily work is talking to people and getting involved in medical assessments and counseling, asking people how they are doing, asking expectant or nursing mothers

about their diets or about their babies' health. Franklin sees many single mothers, elderly persons, and Guyanese immigrants, a growing Hamilton Hill population.

"You feel like you're doing something to help people," she said.

#### Dental care popular

CSEA member Karen DeThorne, a registered dental hygienist and 11-year employee, is especially proud of the work of the dental department. "We are very busy and word of mouth plays a big role," she said. "We have patients coming from all over to get the care they aren't able to get elsewhere."

DeThorne said care ranges from routine maintenance such as teeth cleaning to major work resulting from never having been to the dentist. DeThorne attributes fear and in some cases cultural reasons for why some fail to seek dental care.

"Sometimes, patients come if they know someone speaks their (primary) language," DeThorne said. "We get people from the Russian community, for example, because they know someone here speaks Russian." In addition to Russian, dental department staff speak Spanish, Arabic and Polish.

DeThorne enjoys her job because of the high job satisfaction and the caring community of co-workers at Schenectady Family Health Services. "It's amazing how much the people appreciate you," she said. "I feel I am doing something good. I love the people I work with and I love the job."

— **Therese Assalian**



**Local President Garnett Franklin checks the blood pressure of Licensed Practical Nurse Vanessa Gilmore.**



# Salary discrimination in the workplace

**Editor's Note:** This is the fourth in a series of discrimination articles to provide valuable information regarding important areas of protection available through the CSEA Legal Assistance Program (LAP). The Legal Assistance Program covers employment and labor issues involving disciplinaries, contract grievances and arbitrations, court litigation and agency proceedings. Get more information about legal services in the LAP by calling CSEA Headquarters at 1-800-342-4146, extension 1443, or by visiting [www.csealocal1000.org](http://www.csealocal1000.org), and clicking on the legal programs and services menu item.

This article provides an overview of salary discrimination in the workplace. In future articles, other areas of discrimination will also be dealt with in more detail.

## Salary Discrimination: The Equal Pay Act

Under the Equal Pay Act (EPA), it is illegal for an employer who is subject to the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) to pay different wages based on the gender of the employees who perform substantially equal work. It is also illegal for a union to encourage an employer to violate the EPA.

For an EPA claim to be successful it **must** be shown that the jobs are "substantially equal" and that they are located in the same work location. The jobs do not have to be identical. Whether the jobs are "substantially equal" will depend on the actual work performed rather than the duties listed in written job descriptions.

Unlike other discrimination laws, the EPA does not require proof that the employer intended to discriminate.

## Employer Defenses to Equal Pay Act Cases

After an employee establishes that male and female employees are paid different wages for equal work, an employer must show that the salary difference is justified by either a merit system, a seniority system, a system that measures earnings by quantity or quality of production, or a differential based on any other factor other than gender.

## Collective Bargaining Agreements and the Role of the Union

The fact that a contract contains unequal rates of pay for equal work of substantially similar jobs does not constitute a defense for either an employer or the union to an EPA claim. Contracts that provide for unequal rates of pay in conflict with the EPA would be viewed

by the courts as null and void. It is inappropriate for a CSEA local or unit to knowingly enter into or renew a contract that continues known wage differences which violate the EPA.

## Enforcement of the Equal Pay Act

The EPA can be enforced through a complaint with the United States Department of Labor (U.S. DOL) or through a lawsuit in federal or state court.

Generally, EPA claims must be commenced within two (2) years of the date of the alleged offense. However, if it can be shown that the employer willfully violated the law, a three (3) year time frame is allowed. If successful, an employee can receive back wages for a maximum of two (2) years, or three (3) years in the case of a willful violation.

## **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. If you are called up for active military duty you may also apply for dues-free status.

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. This does not apply to members who are on leave due to being called up for military duty. Members on active military duty, upon return, are considered to have had continuous membership status for all CSEA election purposes.

Please 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.

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## Protecting Your Benefits

# November is annual option transfer period

The following information is intended for CSEA-represented New York state

Executive Branch enrollees covered by one of the following CSEA collective bargaining agreements: Administrative Services Unit, Institutional Services Unit, Operational Services Unit or the Division of Military and Naval Affairs.



this guide from your health benefits administrator.

Another important resource during the

option transfer period is the "Rates & Deadlines Guide." As soon as the 2006 rates are approved, a "Rates & Deadlines Guide" will be sent to enrollees' homes so you can make an informed decision about your health insurance choices for the 2006 plan year.

As always, enrollees will have 30 days from the date the rate information is approved to make any changes. If you decide NOT to change your health insurance option, you do not have to take any action. If you wish to change health insurance options, you must submit a signed health insurance transaction form PS-404 to your agency's health benefits administrator by the deadline specified in the "Rates & Deadlines Guide."

### Pre-tax contribution program

The Pre-tax contribution program allows enrollees to have their health insurance premiums deducted from their pay before taxes are taken out. This may lower enrollees' taxable incomes and give them more expendable income. Enrollees were automatically enrolled in this program when they became eligible for health insurance unless they declined to participate.

The enrollees' paycheck stub shows whether the enrollee is enrolled in the program.

"Regular before tax health" will appear in the before tax deductions column if your health insurance premium is deducted from your wages before taxes are withheld. "Regular after tax health" will appear in the after tax deductions column if your health insurance premium is deducted from your wages after taxes are withheld.

Under Internal Revenue Service rules, by participating in the program, enrollees may change their health insurance deduction during the tax year only after a program qualifying event such as a change in family status. Additional information

on the program is included in the NYSHIP health insurance "Choices for 2006" publication.

If you wish to change your pre-tax selection for the 2006 plan year health insurance premiums, you must see your health benefits administrator and complete a health insurance transaction form no later than Nov. 30, 2005. No action is needed if you wish to keep your current pre-tax option.

## NYSHIP HMO offerings for 2006

Based on the annual review, NYSHIP approved HMO choices will remain consistent with the 2005 offerings, with three exceptions:

**Capital District Physicians Health Plan (CDPHP)** was approved for expansion into Dutchess County.

**Mohawk Valley Physicians (MVP)** was approved for expansion into Rockland and Sullivan counties.

**Aetna HMO:** New participant enrollment into the HMO has been suspended for the 2006 Plan Year. Members currently enrolled in Aetna HMO may continue to participate with the HMO during 2006, however,

Aetna HMO will not be offered as a NYSHIP option during the Option Transfer Period or at any time during the 2006 Plan Year.

HMO co-payments are not negotiated by CSEA; they are established by the HMO. Enrollees will be sent a side-by-side comparison from the HMO detailing any changes in benefits for 2006. Contact your HMO for clarification of benefits and out-of-pocket expenses.

If you have any questions regarding your health benefits, please contact the CSEA Health Benefits Department at 518-785-4774 or 1-800-286-5242 (JCHB) or you may send e-mail to [healthben@cseainc.org](mailto:healthben@cseainc.org)

## Promoting Good Health



# Leading Edge



As part of the CSEA 100 history project, CSEA has been interviewing individuals who have played a role in our history over the decades. The interviews will be used as part of a book and video documentary project being prepared for CSEA's 100th anniversary. The interviews are also being archived at the CSEA archives at the Grenander Special Collections at the University at Albany. As we celebrate CSEA's 95th anniversary, we are devoting the Leading Edge to some brief excerpts from a few individuals who have offered their perspective for this project.

Betty Thomas, 1994 Local Government Mission Achievement Winner



"I feel it's important for us to document the history of CSEA so those who are going to be the leaders and activists of the future will know what struggles and challenges have already come before. They need to know what we value so that it's not either negotiated away or it's not shaved down to where it's not as good a benefit. It's a matter of keeping our union strong so we are collectively speaking in one voice as CSEA."

Greg Szurnicki, Retiree, longtime activist

"When I first went to work it was January 1955 in the Kings Park Psychiatric Center. It was there I had 85 patients alone on the ward in the afternoon. And



Jackie Stanford, 1994 Irene Carr Leadership Award Winner

then when the man called in sick on ward 65 I had 170. Then I would have to take them outside to feed them in a mess hall of 1,000 patients."

"We need to document our history because our future generations need to know that if it were not for the union's struggle we would not be where we are today. Nothing was given to us. We had to fight for everything, starting with weekends off."



Dorothy Dutton, 2001 State Mission Achievement Award Winner

"I just believe the future generation should know the hard work that has been put in to get the benefits that we have today and hopefully better benefits in the future. All of the hard work people have done like stopping the federal government from taxing our vacation and sick leave and all of the programs we have. They would know the type of fights that have happened that they may face some of the same things that we have in the past."

Ellen Burke, Retiree, longtime activist, 2002 Irene Carr Leadership Award Winner



"Women's issues weren't addressed way back in the '70s when I first got involved. Women's jobs were considered secondary ... I was at the convention when the women's committee became a standing committee ... so that was the beginning of the union recognizing that women were here to stay in the work force ..."

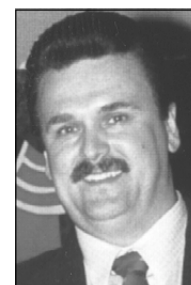


Bob Calhoun, 2002 State Mission Achievement Award Winner

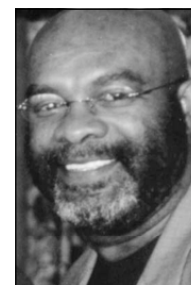
"I believe the future of CSEA lies on the support and backing of the membership as a whole. Without the full support of each and every member we cannot

stand united. This is what the right wing is hoping for: separation among the ranks. I feel that the future and the direction of the organization is much more dependent of the support of each and every one of us now than ever in the past."

Les Eason, 1998 Local Government Mission Achievement Award Winner



"We're getting a newer and newer generation in regard to the work force itself, many of whom are not familiar with the history of labor and specifically CSEA which represents them. They're not knowledgeable of the gains that CSEA has accomplished for them for their work lives. So we have to maintain our history to make these folks aware. It has to be an education for them. Unfortunately many of them come to the job and all they're worried about is getting their next check. They're not familiar with what happens when you go back to the table and the fact that management is constantly trying to take away the gains we have made through the years."



**For more on CSEA's history, including historic photos, visit [www.csealocal1000.org](http://www.csealocal1000.org)**



## September 2005 CSEA Board of Directors summary

*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.*



Whitmore, Marc Rogers and David Lee to the Central Region Political Action Committee;

- Added Jerry Laricchiuta, Daryl Wilson and Gary Steckler to the Long Island Region Political Action Committee; and

- Placed into administratorship locals and units that have failed to hold elections and/or submit election results for the term beginning July 1, 2005.

\*\*\*

ALBANY — CSEA's statewide board of directors met Sept. 13. In official business, the board:

- Appointed Jacquelyn Goldsmith, William Riccaldo and Lynn Wool to the directors' Personnel Committee;

- Appointed Deborah Downey and Doreen Gilbert to the directors' Committee to Study the Cost of Group Life Insurance;

- Added Janet Jackson, Mary

ALBANY — In a separate session Sept. 13, the Board also approved, as amended, CSEA's 2005-2006 budget and the 2005-2006 Capital Additions Budget.

*Questions concerning the summary should be directed to CSEA Statewide Secretary Barbara Reeves, CSEA Headquarters, 143 Washington Ave., Albany, N.Y. 12210, 1-800-342-4146 or (518) 257-1253.*

### PEOPLE PERSON —

The PEOPLE recruiter for the month of September is Robert Riley of the Onondaga County Local in the Central Region. He recruited 20 new PEOPLE members.

PEOPLE is CSEA and AFSCME's political action program. It is responsible for raising money and collecting voluntary contributions from the membership so CSEA can effectively promote our interests at the state and federal level ...

### PAYROLL DEDUCTION —

PEOPLE payroll deduction has been secured for Greene County Unit members in the Capital Region ...

### FLOURISHING PARTNERSHIP —

A cooperative effort established last year between the CSEA Rockland County Local and Rockland County Executive C. Scott Vanderhoef's office was so

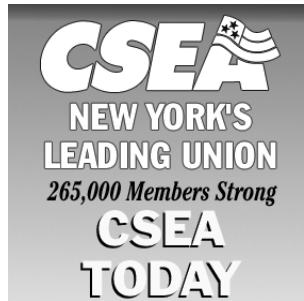
successful, it has continued at a higher level. Now that more than a dozen CSEA members employed at the county's Robert L. Yeager Health Center completed an English as a Second Language course, they've continued on to another course focusing on math skills. The students hope to eventually earn graduate equivalency diplomas. The Rockland County Local is paying for the course books ...

### HEROES —

Christopher LaClair and Michael Monroe, CSEA Black River Valley State Employees Local members employed by the state Department of Transportation, were recently honored for discovering a house fire, rescuing several family pets and fighting the blaze with their truck's fire extinguishers until help arrived ...

### SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS —

The Genesee County Local awarded scholarships to Christina L. Falkner and Katherine J. Diegelman. Falkner is a student in the doctoral program for physical therapy at Daemen College in Amherst. She is the daughter of Amy Joyner and CSEA member Stephen Falkner. Diegelman is a student in the veterinary



technology program at SUNY Delhi. She is the daughter of Gary and CSEA member Abbie Diegelman ...

**SPREADING THE WORD —** Suffern village employees, who recently won recognition as a CSEA

bargaining unit after two Public Employment Relations Board decisions, used a recent community festival to discuss their troubles with Mayor James Giannettino. Village workers and other CSEA members distributed fliers to community members explaining how the mayor has wasted taxpayer dollars fighting a by-the-book union organizing campaign ...

### REACHING OUT —

Members of the Pelham School District Unit in Westchester County are doing grassroots work to gain public support for their contract fight. Members have been greeting Saturday morning shoppers at the village's market, train station and realty offices with fliers explaining that the school district will not give them a fair contract despite the union rolling over a previous contract three times to

accommodate prior district financial troubles ...

### FIGHTING FOR FAIRNESS —

Members of the CSEA Genesee County Unit are mobilizing for a new campaign in their fight for a fair contract. About 300 CSEA members have been working without a contract since Dec. 31, 2004. The county declared impasse in the contract talks in April when CSEA refused to take a hit on health insurance. The county wants employees to begin paying a percentage of their health care premiums, which would cause a reduction in take-home pay for some CSEA members. Genesee County General Unit President Chuck Venditte said the county is unwilling to work with the union on a compromise. Members are now actively involved in developing the unit's contract campaign as well as political action efforts on behalf of the union's endorsed candidates in the area.

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## Ballot Question #1

### **Reform the state budget process**



- ✓ creates an independent budget office
- ✓ provides transparency, accountability, certainty
- ✓ restores balance to the process
- ✓ ensures your state legislators have a say in the state budget
- ✓ creates a contingency budget to end late state budgets for good



on Election Day Nov. 8



on questions 1 and 2

## Ballot Question #2

### **The Transportation Bond Act will**

- ✓ create 120,000 new jobs
- ✓ upgrade our public transportation, bridges and roads
- ✓ improve safety for our families
- ✓ include labor law protections and prevailing wage language
- ✓ strengthen our economy



# Every VOTE counts!



**THE WORK FORCE**  
NOVEMBER 2005  
Vol. 10 No. 2



# UNION SKYLINER



# NEWS

CSEA • Local 1000 American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO

*A Message From Metropolitan Region President*

## GEORGE A. BONCORAGLIO

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

In a few days we will be asked to exercise our civic duties by voting for the person who will run this great city. Once again, our union was the first to proudly endorse former Bronx Borough President Fernando Ferrer, an experienced public servant and a longtime friend of labor.

We all know that he's facing a formidable opponent in billionaire Michael Bloomberg. An opponent who is willing to once again spend an obscene amount of money to get re-elected. He's even managed to get key endorsements from many Democrats and from our brothers and sisters in the labor movement. It's too bad because once again, like so many did during last year's election, too many of us are voting against our best interests.

Bloomberg may talk a good game about not being beholden to special interests or individuals, but let's not forget that he is still a very active Republican who has donated millions to President Bush, the Republican National Convention and the recently indicted congressional Rep. Tom DeLay.

Brothers and sisters, we need to see beyond New York City. We need to realize that while the people in Brooklyn or the Bronx may not be suffering as much as the people who lived in the devastated cities of Biloxi, Miss., or Baton Rouge, La., we are all living under the same misguided, failed, cold and uncaring policies of this administration.

Affordable housing is not a priority. Adequate health care and low cost prescription drugs are not necessary. Who needs more schools or unions? Not the

middle class, working class or working poor, according to Bush. Bloomberg may try to distance himself from Bush, but he's certainly not ashamed of being one his biggest benefactors.



Please see *Message continued on*  
Page 4



*Mensaje del Presidente Regional Metropolitano*

## GEORGE A. BONCORAGLIO

Estimados Hermanos y las Hermanas,

En unos pocos días tenemos que ejercitar nuestros deberes ciudadanos y votar para la persona que correrá esta gran ciudad. Una vez más, nuestra unión era el primer de aprobar orgullosamente al Presidente anterior de el Barrio del Bronx, Fernando Ferrer, un funcionario con mucha experiencia y un amigo del sindicalismo.

Todos sabemos que él confronta a un adversario formidable en Michael Bloomberg, el billonario. Un adversario que está dispuesto a gastar una vez más una cantidad obscena de dinero para ser reelegido. El logró aún obtener los

respaldos claves de muchos demócratas y de nuestros hermanos y hermanas en el movimiento obrero. Es demasiado malo porque una vez más, como tanto hizo durante última elección de año, demasiados de nosotros votan en contra nuestros mejores intereses.

Bloomberg puede hablar un juego bueno acerca de no ser responsable a ningunos intereses ni individuos especiales, pero no nos olvidemos que él es todavía un republicano muy activo que ha donado millones de dólares al Presidente Bush, a la Convención Nacional Republicana y al representante congresional y recientemente acusado Tom DeLay.

Hermanos y hermanas necesitamos ver más allá de la Ciudad de Nueva York. Necesitamos darnos cuenta de que mientras las personas en Brooklyn o el Bronx no pueden estar sufriendo tanto como las personas que vivieron en las ciudades devastadas de Biloxi o Baton Rouge, todos nosotros vivimos abajo el mismo administración equivocado, fallado, frío y indiferente.

Vivienda económico no es una prioridad. Asistencia médica y la medicina bajos del costo no son necesarios. Y quien necesita mas

Message continuation en Pagina 4





Above, Southern Region President Diane Hewitt, Metropolitan Region President George Boncoraglio, New York City Democratic mayoral candidate Fernando Ferrer and Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte walk down Fifth Avenue during the Labor Day parade.



Above, Metropolitan Region Executive Vice President Denise Berkley, swears in officers from Local 429 (from left) Alex Dale, Joann Cruz, Sheila Conroy, Local President Jay Armstrong.



Above, musical group Yerbabuena entertains marchers during the Labor Day parade





Above, Metropolitan Region President George Boncoraglio swears in officers from the State Insurance Fund Local, from left, Clarissal Mitchell, Jacqueline Stanford, Lester Crockett, and Linda Williams.

Right, Democratic mayoral candidate Fernando Ferrer chats with CSEA members.



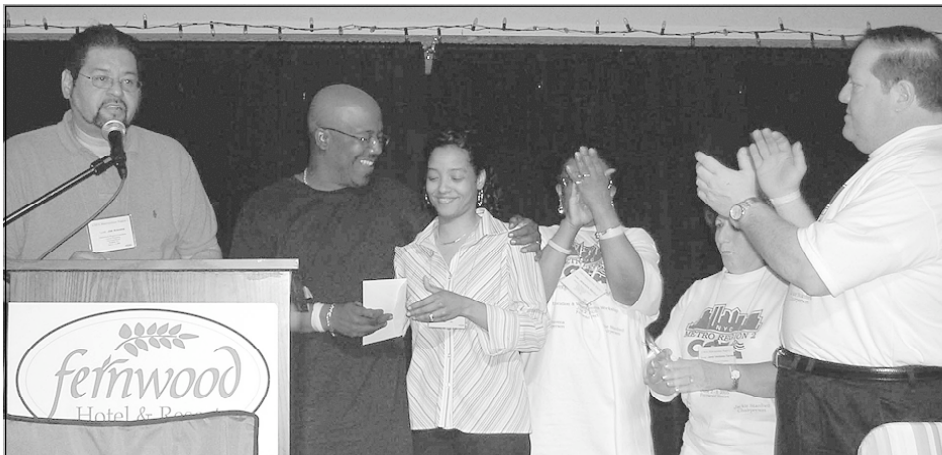
At left, Region Executive Vice President Denise Berkley swears in New York City Retirees Local officers, from left, Harold Price, Oreen Baker, Caroline Sikoryak-Vereline, Barbara Rustin, Irene Hillis, Charles Perry.

 <p>METROPOLITAN REGION OFFICE 40 Fulton St., 22nd floor New York, New York 10038 212-406-2156 www.csealocal1000.org</p> <p>David Galarza Communications Associate</p> <p><b>Metro Region Officers</b></p> <p>George Boncoraglio President</p>	 <p><b>UNION SKYLINER NEWS</b> November 2005</p> <p><b>Denise Berkley</b> Executive Vice President</p> <p>Gene Holland 1st Vice President</p> <p>Linda Williams 2nd Vice President</p> <p>Anita Booker Secretary</p> <p>Ramon Lucas Treasurer</p>
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## Metropolitan Region Workshop



Clockwise from top right: CSEA Education and Training Department Director Sharon Lovelady-Hall engages members in a union version of the popular game show "Jeopardy;" Ira Baumgarten, director of the CSEA-New York State Partnership for Education and Training, delivers a hands-on presentation on conflict resolution; CSEA activists Barbara Rustin and Ramon Lucas enjoying a workshop presentation; members always look forward to the talent show; Metropolitan Region President George Boncoraglio, New York City mayoral candidate Fernando Ferrer, CSEA President Danny Donohue, Women's Committee Chair Jacqueline Stanford and Education Committee Chair Joe Aravena; Sharon Lovelady-Hall is recognized for her contributions to the Region Workshop.



# Workers blast agency facing several probes

QUEENS — Union members and activists from CSEAwere recently joined by Lifespire workers at their second press conference, where they blasted the New York City based agency's union busting tactics, poor working conditions and quality of care issues.

New York State Attorney General Eliot Spitzer, the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the National Labor Relations Board are all investigating Lifespire.

"We cannot maintain and improve quality of care if workers rights are not being respected," Metropolitan Region President George Boncoraglio said. "These employees do very important work with a vulnerable population – they deserve to be treated with dignity and respect."

Workers were also joined by New York State Assembly members Nettie Mayersohn and Michael Gianaris, State Sen. Malcolm Smith and City Council Member Hiram Monserrate.

Lifespire's 1,300 workers provide services to the developmentally disabled in the five boroughs of New York City. Lifespire employees have been working with CSEA to form a union at the agency and with the assistance of elected officials, CSEA and Lifespire officials have been engaged in talks for a card check/neutrality agreement. The agreement would allow for employees to choose whether they want a union free of employer harassment and intimidation.

"I love working with consumers, and I am proud of the work that I am able to do," Lifespire worker Gale Brown

said. "How am I supposed to help each consumer to reach his or her potential if I am concerned for their safety as well as my own on a daily basis?"

Talks with Lifespire were scheduled to resume in October. They ended in July when Lifespire rejected the neutrality agreement and began pressuring employees to withdraw their support for a union by issuing memos, holding mandatory meetings, and intimidating employees as talks were ongoing.

"These employees should be able to choose if they want a union free of employer pressure and intimidation," Metropolitan Region Executive Vice President Denise Berkley said. "It is their right to form their own organization if they so choose and Lifespire management must stop trying to use its power as an employer to

pressure its employees to reject the union."

Lifespire receives 95 percent of its funding from New York state. Lifespire workers are demanding tax dollars go to improving quality of care, not to support anti-worker, union busting activity.

"Management needs to respect our right to form a union so we can work together to make sure all of the consumers get the quality of care they deserve," said Lifespire worker Norma DeGuzman.



Lifespire worker Norma DeGuzman speaks during press conference.

## Message continued from Page 1

At a time when the labor movement is facing turbulent changes and when multi-national corporations like Wal-Mart are driving down wages, not paying health care and destroying towns all across the United States, can we really afford to reward a mayor in cahoots with an administration determined to destroy the labor movement?

Brothers and sisters, I know my friend Fernando Ferrer does not have all the answers, but I know he's been there for us when we needed him. I know he was born and raised in this city and I know he's worked as a civil servant and also spent time as an AFSCME member. I know Ferrer will not be beholden to anybody but the people of New York. Bloomberg, however, has already shown us who he's beholden to. On Nov. 8, get out and vote!

In Solidarity,

*George Boncoraglio*

## Mensaje continuacion de Pagina 1

escuelas? Sindicatos? No la clase mediana, ni la clase obrera o los pobres, según Bush. Bloomberg puede tratar de poner Bush a la distancia, pero él ciertamente no está avergonzado de ser uno de sus benefactores más grandes.

¿A la vez cuando el movimiento obrero está frentando unos cambios turbulentos y corporaciones multi-nacionales como Wal-Mercado manejan de bajar sueldos sin pagar asistencia médica y destruir pueblos a través de los Estados Unidos, como podemos realmente recompensar un Alcalde que trabaja en coalición con una administración que se determina a destruir el movimiento obrero?

Hermanos y las hermanas, yo sé que mi amigo Fernando Ferrer no tiene todas las respuestas. Pero sé que él es estado allí para nosotros cuando nosotros lo necesitamos. Sé que él nació y fue criado en esta Ciudad y yo sé que él es trabajo como un funcionario del estado y también fue un miembro de AFSCME. Sé que Ferrer no será responsable a nadie pero a las personas de Nueva York. Bloomberg, sin embargo, ya nos ha mostrado a quien que él es responsable. ¡En el 8 de noviembre sale y

vota!

En solidaridad,

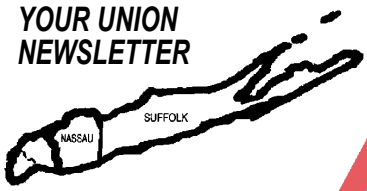
*George Boncoraglio*

**CSEA President Danny Donohue to meet Metropolitan Region members on Nov. 3**

CSEA President Danny Donohue will visit the CSEA Metropolitan Region Nov. 3 to meet with members.

The meetings will be held in the region office at 40 Fulton Street, 22nd floor, Manhattan.

Donohue will meet with union members from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m. Please call the Metropolitan Region office at (212) 406-2156 for an appointment and directions.



# EXPRESS



Message from CSEA Local 830 President Jerry Laricchiuta

## Greater Union Presence at NHCC; CB Ops Still Waiting for Parity

I have started a process in which CSEA will have a greater presence and visibility at facilities operated by the Nassau Health Care Corporation. This process will include the assigning of more administrative assistants as well as more frequent visits by myself and by other CSEA officers.

I have several reasons for this initiative. Number one is that I have an inherent problem with trust at the NHCC. Simply put, upper management has not shown they can be trusted. I continue to be suspicious about their goals and intentions regarding our members.

Labor relations requires trust. On the county side, we've been fairly successful and we seem to be moving in a positive direction. I wish I could say the same for the PBC. The PBC likes to deal in deception rather than in honesty when it comes to labor relations.

Here's a case in point. After I refused to allow them to unilaterally change the payroll schedules for all PBC members, they sent out a notice saying they would do it anyway. That's not labor relations. That's bully management.

The time has come for management to get off the union's back and start treating our members with respect and dignity. It's gotten to the point where I'm seriously considering going public with the internal problems and deficiencies that our members are telling us about.

I will be there and our team will be there monitoring the situation at all times. This includes A. Holly Patterson, where it has become obvious that unit strength is not enough and that a greater presence is needed from the Local.

\* \* \*

We are currently going over the language (word for word) of the CSEA/NHCC bargaining agreement as a prelude to publishing a contract booklet. It's a tedious process but a necessary one to make certain every section reads exactly as it's supposed to. Hopefully, the process will be completed soon and we will be able to get the books to our members.

\* \* \*

Well here we are many months after an agreement was reached with the county on pay parity for our CB operators ... and still no retroactive pay.

For that matter, still no parity! To my mind, pay parity means pay parity. There seems to be some kind of discrepancy in the county's meaning of "parity." As promised, I will speak to County Executive Suozzi on the apparent inequities between the CB operators and other similar titles.

**¶ The time has come for management to get off the union's back and start treating our members with respect and dignity. ¶**

\* \* \*

The real estate consolidation story continues to be one of keeping a watchful eye on its progression and to receive and evaluate input from our members who are affected by the move to 60 Charles Lindbergh Blvd. CSEA continues to closely monitor how the plan is being implemented in an effort to protect the employees as they continue to settle in at the new worksite.

Yours in unionism,

*Jerry Laricchiuta*

President, Nassau County Local

**VOTE**

**Election Day November 8**

See list of CSEA-endorsed candidates  
on pages 4 and 5.

Then on November 8  
make your voice heard.

**Every Vote Counts!**



The  
Work ForceCSEA Nassau County Local 830  
**EXPRESS**

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JERRY LARRICHIUTA, PresidentTony Panzarella, Editor  
(516) 571-2919 Ext. #13

www.csealocal830.org

CSEA Long Island Region Communications Associate Rachel  
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 MARLA ROWE, Probation Department  
 DIANE RUSS, Consumer Affairs  
 EARL STROUGHTON, Nassau University Medical Center  
 JOSEPH WHITTAKER, Fire Marshal's Office

We welcome reader suggestions: Please address your  
 comments to Tony Panzarella, Editor, Nassau County  
 EXPRESS at CSEA Nassau Co. Local 830, 400 County  
 Seat Dr., Mineola, NY 11501-4137.

## Some definitions to help you through the legal maze

**Editor's Note:** This is one in a series of articles appearing regularly to provide valuable information regarding important areas of protection available through the CSEA Legal Assistance Program (LAP). The Legal Assistance Program covers employment and labor issues involving disciplinaries, contract grievances and arbitrations, court litigation and agency proceedings. Get more information about legal services in the LAP by calling CSEA Headquarters at 1-800-342-4146, extension 1443, or by visiting [www.csealocal1000.org](http://www.csealocal1000.org), and clicking on the legal programs and services menu item.

### What is Elder Law?

Elder Law combines several traditional bodies of law such as estate planning, public benefits entitlement, health care, guardianship and probate, to name a few.

As we live longer, accumulate more, and look forward to the time when we can travel, play, not work full time, enjoy our children and grandchildren, certain realities set in: we need to be sure that our personal and financial needs are taken care of and we need to recognize that the best way to do this is to plan ahead, using competent expertise and guidance. That's where the CSEA Elder Law Plan, our newest members-only benefit offered through the CSEA Legal Services Program, comes in. Pre-planning insures that our wishes will be followed, our needs taken care of, and our quality of life preserved and passed on to those we love.

### What are Advanced Directives:

A good will, a power of attorney and a health care proxy: These three documents, commonly referred to as "advanced directives" should be in place for every adult, regardless of age, marital status, gender, job classification, earnings or savings.

Without these advanced directives, not even your spouse, parent, or child can act on your behalf.

A **Will** is a directive that tells others exactly what you want to happen with your property when you pass away. A Will only comes into play when you pass away and it provides instructions to others as to your wishes.

The more specific and comprehensive your Will in terms of setting forth your wishes, the better for your family and the Probate Court in terms of carrying out your wishes. A good Will is very important.

Second, a **Power of Attorney** is crucial. This document gives specific

authority to someone you designate to take care of your financial affairs, should you become incapacitated from doing so on your behalf. A Power of Attorney only lasts while you are alive and it serves to ensure that should you be unable [by illness or absence] from conducting your own affairs of a financial nature, someone you have chosen can step in for you. It doesn't have to be an incapacitating illness to make a Power of Attorney important; a long trip abroad or absence from home for other reasons could also make this document valuable to insure that all your financial matters can be handled appropriately in your absence.

Third, a **Health Care Proxy** is also crucial. Only your designated Health Care Agent, named by you in a Health Care Proxy, can step in when you are unable or incapacitated, to make decisions regarding your own health care. Without such a document naming a Health Care Agent, your medical care and treatment will be determined by doctors and health care administrators, not by your family or other loved ones who know what your wishes are.

### What is Long-term Care

Long-term care generally refers to assistance with activities of daily living such as eating, bathing, dressing, and moving about. For some, assistance can be had at home; for others, the only viable option is non-home based care in some form, such as assisted living or skilled nursing home care.

According to recent surveys, two out of five people over 65 will require some form of long-term care during their lifetime. The average stay in a nursing home is just under three years. The average cost of nursing home care in New York state currently varies from \$6,000 to \$10,000 a month, depending on geographic region.

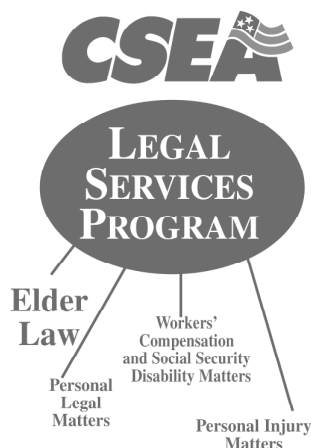
Long-term care encompasses more

than just nursing home care; it includes care received at home, in an adult care facility, or in an assisted living facility. Taken together, **these long-term care options cover almost 50 percent of our aging population today!**

Medicare, which covers persons 65 and over, does not pay for custodial care in a nursing home or for long-term home care. Medicaid does pay for this type of care. For Medicaid to cover long-term care, however, there are strict financial eligibility requirements that can devastate your life savings, leave your spouse with limited resources on which to live, and certainly leave nothing for your children or grandchildren.

### What is Asset Protection Planning

Asset protection planning is focused on insuring that each individual has the opportunity to plan for their future in a way that best reflects their circumstances, both in terms of their family and their finances. The loss of one's life savings does not have to happen if there is advance planning with a quality expert who knows the applicable law and stays on top of the everchanging rules. Even if a family member is already in a long-term care facility, it is never too late to protect remaining family assets.



**Hazardous Duty**

**Health & Safety Problems Exposed At Cedar Creek Sewage Plant**

Responding to a call for help from workers at the Cedar Creek Sewage Treatment Plant, Nassau CSEA President Jerry Laricchiuta personally toured the facility and found conditions there “disgusting.” The media quickly picked up the story and exposed a litany of serious health and safety problems that workers are forced to live with on a daily basis.

“This is unacceptable,” Laricchiuta said. What Laricchiuta found was shocking. He saw ceilings that are falling apart, high voltage electrical boxes exposed to rising water, widespread mold,

open manholes, chemical spills and exposed wiring. Workers were forced to walk through raw sewage in order to make equipment repairs.

Laricchiuta returned to the facility several times to put together a comprehensive list of violations, which has been sent to OSHA and CSEA headquarters in Albany. Laricchiuta has demanded corrective action by County Executive Tom Suozzi.

“I intend to go over the list — point by point — with Mr. Suozzi and I won’t be satisfied until every violation is fixed,” Laricchiuta said.

Laricchiuta said he also wanted to address the claim by his members that management has been engaged in an ongoing campaign of intimidation to prevent them from speaking out on violations.



**CSEA Well Represented At “Making Strides” Walk**

CSEA members, family and friends turned out in force for the recent “Making Strides Against Breast Cancer” 5K walk at Jones Beach. CSEA is a flagship sponsor of the annual event, which raises funding for breast cancer research. Over the years, CSEA has raised more than \$100,000 to help the cause.



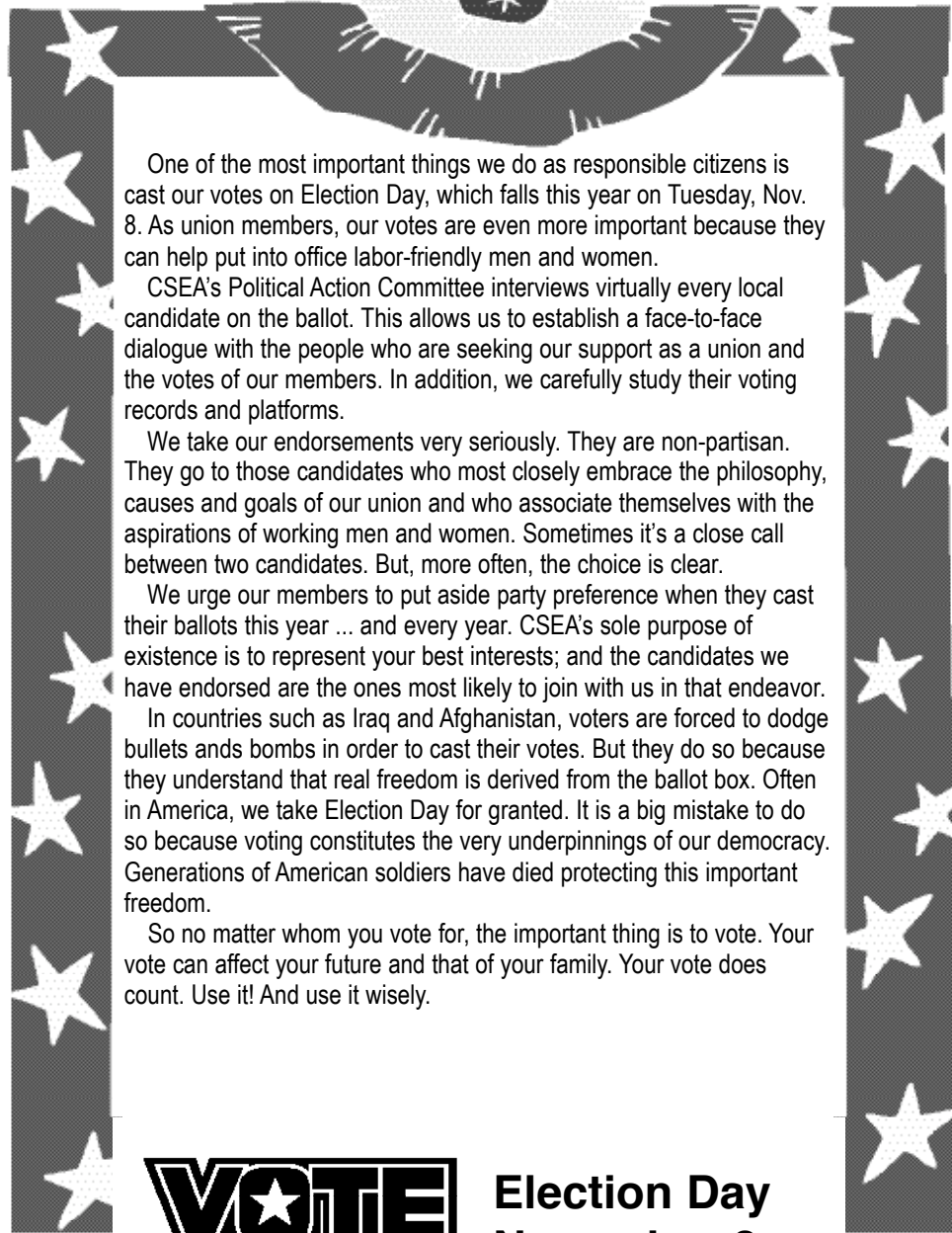
Clockwise, from top left: Part of the CSEA contingent poses for picture; CSEA Long Island Region Women’s Committee Chair Bobbi Eisgrau at the CSEA tent; three Nassau Local vice presidents and a friend prepare to walk the 5K. From left, they are Executive Vice President Diane Russ, friend Lisa Nicol, VP Barbara Lang and Vice President Rob McLaughlin; Nassau Local Executive Vice President and Women’s Committee Co-Chair Diane Russ “makes strides” on the Jones Beach boardwalk with CSEA member Lynne Kramer of the Nassau University Medical Center.





**Editorial**

# Your Vote Does Count! Please Cast it Wisely



One of the most important things we do as responsible citizens is cast our votes on Election Day, which falls this year on Tuesday, Nov. 8. As union members, our votes are even more important because they can help put into office labor-friendly men and women.

CSEA's Political Action Committee interviews virtually every local candidate on the ballot. This allows us to establish a face-to-face dialogue with the people who are seeking our support as a union and the votes of our members. In addition, we carefully study their voting records and platforms.

We take our endorsements very seriously. They are non-partisan. They go to those candidates who most closely embrace the philosophy, causes and goals of our union and who associate themselves with the aspirations of working men and women. Sometimes it's a close call between two candidates. But, more often, the choice is clear.

We urge our members to put aside party preference when they cast their ballots this year ... and every year. CSEA's sole purpose of existence is to represent your best interests; and the candidates we have endorsed are the ones most likely to join with us in that endeavor.

In countries such as Iraq and Afghanistan, voters are forced to dodge bullets and bombs in order to cast their votes. But they do so because they understand that real freedom is derived from the ballot box. Often in America, we take Election Day for granted. It is a big mistake to do so because voting constitutes the very underpinnings of our democracy. Generations of American soldiers have died protecting this important freedom.

So no matter whom you vote for, the important thing is to vote. Your vote can affect your future and that of your family. Your vote does count. Use it! And use it wisely.



**Election Day  
November 8**

**Photos were  
not available  
for all the  
candidates.**



Clavin



O'Connell

## 2005 Endorsements

### Here are the Candidates Who Will Best Represent Us



Here are the candidates for Nassau County elective office who we feel will best represent the working people of Nassau County. This list consists of Republicans and Democrats, and they have been endorsed based on their records and/or their answers to specific labor-oriented questions asked by our political action committee.

Remember, your union simply makes recommendations based on our best knowledge of the candidates. You are free to vote your own conscience. The important thing is to go to the polls Nov. 8 and vote.

- For County Executive — No endorsement
- For County Comptroller — Donald Clavin (R)
- For District Attorney — Denis Dillon (R)
- For County Clerk — Maureen O'Connell (R)

#### For Nassau County Legislature:

- 1st LD — Kevan Abrahams (D)
- 2nd LD — Roger Corbin (D)
- 3rd LD — John Ciotti (D)
- 4th LD — Denise Ford (R)
- 5th LD — Joseph Scannell (D)
- 6th LD — Francis Becker (R)
- 7th LD — Jeffrey Toback (D)
- 8th LD — Vincent Muscarella (R)
- 9th LD — Richard Nicoletto (R)
- 10th LD — Lisanne Altman (D)
- 11th LD — Craig Johnson (D)
- 12th LD — Peter Schmitt (R)
- 13th LD — Norma Gonsalves (R)
- 14th LD — David Mejias (D)
- 15th LD — Dennis Dunne (R)
- 16th LD — Judy Jacobs (D)
- 17th LD — Edward Mangano (R)
- 18th LD — Diane Yatauro (D)
- 19th LD — David Denenberg (D)



Corbin



Ciotti



Ford



Becker



Toback



Nicoletto



Johnson



Schmitt



Gonsalves



Dunne



Jacobs



Yatauro

## Defensive Driving Courses Scheduled for Fall 2005

CSEA's defensive driving course, which saves participants money on their automobile insurance, will return this fall.

Two six-hour courses will be offered in three-hour segments, and two courses will be offered as full six-hour classes that will run straight through on each of two Saturdays. The following is the fall schedule:

Tuesday and Wednesday, Nov. 15 & 16, 6 p.m. - 9 p.m. each night;

Saturday, Nov. 3, 9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. (half hour lunch break - bring your own);

Saturday, Dec. 10, 9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. (half hour lunch break—bring your own).

Early registration is advised because space is limited and classes will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis.

When the program is completed, participants are eligible for an immediate 10 percent discount on their auto liability and collision insurance for a three-year period on all vehicles for which they are the principal



operator. Drivers with moving violations will receive a four-point reduction on their driving record.

The location for all sessions is the CSEA Nassau Local office at 400 County Seat Drive, Mineola, in the basement of the south wing. Family and friends of CSEA members are also welcome to participate, but no children are allowed in the class.

The new, reduced cost is \$20 per person for CSEA members and \$25 for non-members. For more information, call Judy at (516) 571-2919, ext. 19. To register, fill out the form below and return with your check (payable to CSEA Local 830) to: CSEA Nassau Local 830, 400 County Seat Drive, Mineola, N.Y. 11501, ATTN: Judy.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

WORK PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

HOME PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

DEPARTMENT \_\_\_\_\_

INDICATE SESSION YOU WOULD LIKE TO ATTEND:

Sept. 27, 28 \_\_\_\_\_ Oct. 17, 18 \_\_\_\_\_ Nov. 15, 16 \_\_\_\_\_

Nov. 5 \_\_\_\_\_ Dec. 10 \_\_\_\_\_

# MEMBERS \_\_\_\_\_ # NON-MEMBERS \_\_\_\_\_

AMOUNT ENCLOSED \_\_\_\_\_



Jan. 7, 2006

## Hall and Watson to Speak At Martin Luther King Luncheon



Village of Hempstead Mayor Wayne Hall and the Rev. Dr. William Watson will be the guest speakers at the 12th annual Martin Luther King ceremony luncheon on Saturday, Jan. 7, 2006.

The CSEA Nassau Local Unity Committee, which sponsors the program, is taking reservations for the event, which will be held from 12:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Coral House in Baldwin. The price is \$30 per person (\$20 for children 12 and under).

Carol Croston and Kelvin Lewis, Unity Committee co-chairs, said this year's luncheon once again will include entertainment, raffles and door prizes as well as the two guest speakers.

Hall is serving his first term in Hempstead, New York state's most populous village. Watson is the moderator of the Eastern Baptist Association.

For more information or to buy tickets, call Tim Corr at the Nassau Local office at (516) 571-2919, Ext. 14, or Juanita McKinnies at (516) 378-2790. Reservation forms are available at the local office at 400 County Seat Drive, Mineola.

The Unity Committee's Scholarship Subcommittee will accept applications for its annual scholarships through Dec. 16.

Verification must be submitted that the student is a graduating high school senior or an enrolled college student in good standing. The student must maintain a cumulative average of 3.0 (B) or better and must be the child or under the guardianship of an active CSEA Nassau Local 830 member. Financial need is also a factor. The award may be renewed at the discretion of the Unity Committee.

According to the scholarship criteria, it must be shown that the student has active personal involvement in the advancement of the principles of human rights within the community.

Call Corr for nomination forms and instruction sheets with eligibility guidelines.



Veterans Corner

## New Veterans Committee Formed by CSEA Local 830

By Debbie O'Connell, *Veterans Committee Chair*

Nassau Local 830 has re-established its Veterans Committee. The committee will be chaired by Debbie O'Connell (NCC) and will consist of the following members: Debbie Buonagura (NHCC); Robert Cauldwell (DSS); Stephen Cohen (ME); Ken Dash (BOE) and Felicia Staub (NHCC). Rich Kaupke of the Nassau County Office of Veterans Affairs will serve as a consultant to the committee.

Our mission will be to communicate, educate and lend assistance to our brother and sister veterans and their families with information about veterans entitlements and benefits.

Our first involvement will be with the Third Annual Homeless Veterans Stand Down, which is planned for Monday, Nov. 14, at the Freeport Armory. Twenty-five federal, state and county agencies as well as private charitable organizations will join 200 volunteers from 30 veterans organizations offering veterans' job search assistance, social services, clothes, haircuts, medical screening and hot food. We are looking for assistance in providing toiletries for these veterans. (See ad on this page for details.)

Any disabled veteran in need of transportation for a scheduled appointment with the VA Medical Center in Northport or the VA Out-Patient Clinic in Plainview should call (516) 572-8456. Two weeks advance notice is required.

A new web site designed by the Department of Veterans Affairs can be very helpful to the survivors of armed forces personnel. The site, [www.vba.va.gov/survivors](http://www.vba.va.gov/survivors), explains the benefits and application process for dependency and indemnity compensation. The same information is available by calling the Nassau County Office of Veterans Affairs at (516) 572-8452.



### I Am A Veteran

By Col. Paul Swerdlow, U.S. Army Ret.  
*Chaplain, Northport Veterans Hospital*

I am a veteran  
I shivered that cold winter in Valley Forge  
And rejoiced at the glorious surrender at Yorktown.  
I wept at the flames that engulfed Washington  
And said "never again."  
I wore blue and bled red.  
I wore gray and bled red.  
The blood I spilled was to reunite a nation  
Of the people, by the people and for the people  
I am a veteran.

I was at Little Big Horn and I prayed;  
I was at Wounded Knee and I prayed;  
I prayed that one day the old Americans  
And the new Americans would be one people.  
I was there to charge up the hill at San Juan;  
Knowing that my country was emerging  
Beyond its borders.  
I was prepared to make the world safe for democracy.  
Young and idealistic,  
I came to France  
To turn back the hordes in this war to end all wars.  
I am a veteran.

It was with disbelief that I became  
A part of the day which will live in infamy.  
Once more I said goodbye to those I loved  
To protect my country.  
Across the vast desert I met the enemy.  
I met him on island after island.  
I kept my promise to return.  
I met him on the beaches of Normandy.  
I repelled him from the gates of Bastogne.  
I freed thousands from the shadow of death.  
I am a veteran.

A small nation cried out for help  
And I came because others had been there for me.  
A nation was saved.  
I felt the agony of defeat in the jungles of a distant land.  
But I held my head high  
When another people cried out,  
I again put on my uniform to save them from tyranny.  
Today I remain ready to pledge my life.  
My property, my sacred honor.  
Until there will be peace and freedom on earth  
For everyone. everywhere.

I am a veteran.



**CSEA is collecting non-perishable  
or personal care items for  
Homeless Veterans**

***All items must be in original packaging.***

- \* Toothpaste \* Toothbrush \* Soap \* Deodorant
- \* Sunscreen \* Shaving Cream \* Disposable Razors
- \* Insect Repellent \* Lip Balm \* Snacks \*
- Prepaid Phone Cards

Drop off items in unsealed boxes by Nov. 9, 2005 at:  
**CSEA Office, 400 County Seat Drive, Mineola**  
**South Wing — Lower Level**  
**9 a.m. to 5 p.m.**

For more information, call Debbie O'Connell at 571-2919, ext. 22



## A Message From Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte



Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

With the holidays approaching, I thought it was a good idea to count our blessings. First of all, as Americans, we live in the

greatest country in the world. Our freedoms are the envy of people the world over.

We are here to celebrate another year. In other places natural disasters have killed many people, and ruined the lives of many more. How many people from New Orleans and parts of the Gulf Coast have lost all their worldly possessions and are now faced with the mammoth tasks of cleaning up and rebuilding?

Maybe it's going to be a lot more costly this year, but we will still have warm homes to return to at the end of the day. Millions of people in our own country sleep under bridges, behind shopping centers, and in homeless shelters. Many don't know where their

next meal is coming from.

We have health insurance so we can see a doctor or go to the hospital when we're sick. Millions of seniors have to choose between buying their life saving medication or staying warm in winter.

And finally, **we still have good jobs!** Perhaps you don't realize just how difficult it is getting to be to find jobs like ours.

As CSEA members, we still have union contract protections that guarantee a decent wage, paid holidays, paid vacation and sick time, and overtime. We will have a pension when we retire. In the private sector, all those things are the exception rather than the rule! All that downward pressure on wages and benefits will only make it tougher for people like us, to keep what we have. But I'm sure you will agree that some things in this life that are worth fighting for.

You and I still have jobs that afford us the ability to earn a living, have a life, *and* spend time with our families! No matter how boring or routine your job

**“No matter how boring or routine your job may have become, in these times, just having a decent job may be one of the biggest blessings of all!”**

may have become, in these times, just having a decent job may be one of the biggest blessings of all.

I wish you and your family a joyous and healthy holiday season!

In solidarity,

Nick LaMorte, president  
Long Island Region

### **Savings up to 50 percent**

## **Discounts for CSEA Members On New York Islanders Tickets**

CSEA members along with their families and friends can attend selected New York Islanders games this season at a substantial discount. The discount was arranged by CSEA through its ongoing member benefit program, President Jerry Laricchiuta said.

The discounted tickets will be available for the following three games, which will be played at the Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum:

- Saturday, Nov. 12 vs. Boston – 7 p.m. (Baseball Hat Night)
- Friday, Nov. 25 vs. Ottawa – 2 p.m. (Kids' Jersey T-Shirt Day)
- Saturday, Dec. 17 vs. Colorado – 7 p.m. (Winter Hat Night)

Tickets that normally cost \$70 will be on sale for \$39, a \$31 savings to CSEA members. Tickets that sell for \$55 will be sold for \$28, a \$27 savings.

**ALL TICKETS ARE SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY AND MUST BE PURCHASED AND PAID FOR IN ADVANCE.** Special mail order forms are available at the CSEA Nassau Local office, 400 County Seat Drive, Mineola, or through your unit president.

For more information call CSEA local office at (516) 571-2919 or the Islanders at 1-800-822-ISLES Ext. 3.

## **Deadline is Dec. 31 For AFSCME Scholarships**

CSEA members who are parents of high school seniors should be aware the deadline is rapidly approaching for the AFSCME Family Scholarship Program.

Completed applications must be postmarked no later than Dec. 31.

Nassau Local President Jerry Laricchiuta said AFSCME will again award 10 scholarships of \$2,000 each selected from applicants who meet the eligibility requirements. The scholarships are renewable each year for a maximum of four years provided the student remains enrolled in a full-time course of study.

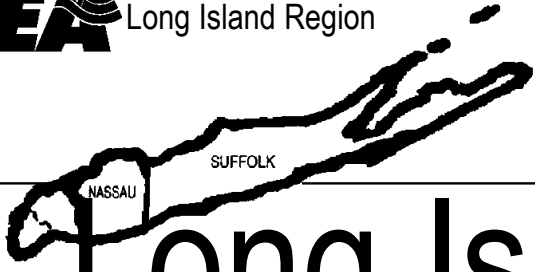
Any graduating high school senior who is a child of an AFSCME (CSEA) member (or whose legal guardian is an AFSCME member) and who intends to enroll in a full-time, four-year degree program in an accredited college or university, is eligible.

Criteria for the award include academic record, high school activities and a written essay on "What AFSCME Has Meant to Our Family."

To get an application, write to:  
AFSCME Family Scholarship Program  
Attention: Education Department  
1625 L Street N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036

Application requests can also be made by e-mail to [education@afscme.org](mailto:education@afscme.org) or can be downloaded from the AFSCME web site at [www.afscme.org](http://www.afscme.org), or can be requested by phone by calling (202) 429-1256.





# Long Island Reporter

## Welcome Shelter Island



**SHELTER ISLAND** — It's a really small town, where almost everyone still knows their neighbors.

Shelter Island, which is accessible only by ferry, would seem like an unlikely place for residents to make waves. That's just what they did.

"The supervisor started saying how he was going

**Please see Shelter Island, continued on Page 3**

Left to right: Shelter Island Unit Secretary Treasurer Beverly Pelletier, Vice President Linda Cass, Suffolk Municipal Local President Bill Walsh and Unit President Linda Klenawicus outside of Justice Hall.

## Shelter Island

to change personnel policies to take this and take that away from us," said Shelter Island police clerk Linda Klenawicus. "Every week, it was something new. I said, 'We've got to go union!'"

"We really didn't have problems with the town board, as a whole, until the supervisor came in a couple of years ago," said Shelter Island justice court clerk Beverly Pelletier. "This supervisor is a pencil pusher. We are all 100 percent overpaid as far as he is concerned."

Klenawicus and Pelletier said town employees had for years occasionally talked about bringing in a union. The workers became galvanized to organize in the wake of numerous management efforts to increase the workweek and/or cut pay and benefits.

With that, the workers launched the organizing drive that resulted in the town's white-collar employees joining CSEA. Town employees reached out to CSEA Labor Relations Specialist Guy DiCosola.

"I met with them, explained how CSEA operated and they signed some cards," DiCosola said.

After CSEA Long Island Region Director Ron King met with the workers, even more town employees signed union cards.

"We asked for voluntary recognition, but management objected to some of the titles we were including in the

bargaining unit. It resulted in a protracted court fight," DiCosola said. "We prevailed at the Public Employment Relations Board and were able to keep most of the people who wanted to join."

The group elected Klenawicus to be their first president. Pelletier is the secretary-treasurer and Linda Cass is the vice president.

"We were just tired of being lied to and being threatened that our benefits would be taken away from us. It was time to stand up for ourselves," Klenawicus said. "We stand together."

Now, DiCosola and the unit's executive board are busy negotiating their first contract. Although management isn't making the process any easier, DiCosola said the fledgling unit is hanging tough.

"This group has been right there, sticking with us, even during that very difficult period of time when we were fighting for a contract in neighboring Southold," he said. "Shelter Island took a very active interest in what was going on, and they have given us a strong vote of confidence."

He said the Shelter Island fight should serve as a reminder to long-standing members just how important it is for them to have CSEA representation.

"This is a group of people that had problems and no

one to go to," DiCosola said. "They were in a very difficult position, so they came to us for help, and I'm glad to say they're really embracing being a part of CSEA."

During a recent visit, Suffolk Municipal Local President Bill Walsh assured town workers that although the unit only has 10 members, it has the full weight of the union behind them.

"From our statewide president to the region president, I can assure you that you're all important to us. We're here to support your efforts," Walsh said. "This is where the union lives, in every group, big and small that says, 'We want a union!'"

— Rachel Langert

## Southold Town Hall workers' illness investigated

SOUTHOLD — Four members went home sick after working in the basement of Town Hall, and the Town of Southold unit of Local 852 is pressing to find the cause of the problem.

"Currently CSEA is in the preliminary stage of investigating possible causes and ensuring that our members have a safe place to work," said Tom Skabry, president of the East End unit.

In early October the four, who work in the town clerk's office, went home after complaining of dizzy spells, headaches and feeling ill.

"The problem seems to be centered on old documents, paper documents, in the basement," Skabry said. The papers are archived documents that date from the late 1800s and early 1900s.

The unit notified Komilla John, CSEA occupational health and safety specialist, and has requested information from the town on illness and injury reports the town is required to file.

"We want to discover if there is an on-going pattern and hopefully nail down any reasons for people to get sick in Town Hall," Skabry said.

Guy DiCosola, the unit's labor relations specialist, is assisting in the investigation. Skabry is a member of the Long Island Region Health and Safety Committee as is John Addamo, vice president of the unit. Addamo also sits on the Local 852 health and safety committee.

Fundraiser Nov. 10

### North Hempstead Cares About Ricky

A recent work site incident seriously injured North Hempstead highway worker Richard LaPera. To help LaPera and his family ease financial burdens during what is expected to be a long convalescence, LaPera's co-workers have formed the North Hempstead Cares About Ricky committee. The committee will hold a fund-raiser for LaPera's family Nov. 10 at 7 p.m. at the Rockaway Café, 43 Rockaway Ave. in Valley Stream. Admission will be \$25 and all proceeds will go to the LaPera family. For more information, call (516) 739-6726 or e-mail Nhempsteadcares@aol.com. See related article on Page 8 of *The Work Force*



PHOTO OF THE MONTH



Suffolk County District Attorney Tom Spota swears Marc Alessi into office, while his fiancé, CSEA Political Action Coordinator Gretchen Penn, looks on. Alessi is the newly elected Assemblyman for the 1st Assembly District on the North Fork of Long Island, and the first ever Democrat to hold the office. He was elected with the support of many CSEA members, who worked long and hard on his campaign. Alessi is a former CSEA Political Action Coordinator and most recently worked for State Comptroller Alan Hevesi.

Welcome SUNY Farmingdale

The Long Island Reporter is welcoming a new subscriber: the State University of New York at Farmingdale Local.

The members voted by acclamation to take the publication at a recent general membership meeting.

Local President Tom Dowdney said the paper would be a way for the local to improve communication with the membership and let members know what about what's happening in other parts of the region.

"We have about 200 members in this local, from grade 15 executive secretaries to grade 5 cleaners," Dowdney said. "The titles run the gamut, and we're really spread out on campus."

Dowdney said he is seeking volunteers to help with various activities of the local, including committees and political action. The local is also looking for people to become shop stewards, so they can function as the eyes and ears of the union in the various buildings and departments on campus.

"If you volunteer, the union will feed you and train you," he said. "I can't do everything all by myself, and even though we have the board here, we still need your participation."

The local's social committee is also gearing up for the holiday party, which will be held Dec. 22 at Knapp Hall, with lunch from noon to 2:30 p.m. The party goes to 4 p.m.

If anyone wants tickets to the party, contact the local officers or the following members: Chris Walker, Nina VonDeeston, Patty Wagner, Vanda McCormick, or committee chair Fran Barton at (631) 420- 2010. Tickets are \$5 for members and \$11.25 for those who do not belong to the local.

Message from Long Island Region President  
Nick LaMorte



**G**reetings Brothers and Sisters,

With the holidays approaching, I thought it was a good idea to count our blessings. First of all, as Americans, we live in the greatest country in the world. Our freedoms are the envy of people the world over.

We are here to celebrate another year. In other places natural disasters have killed many people, and ruined the lives of many more. How many people from New Orleans and parts of the Gulf Coast have lost all their worldly possessions and are now faced with the mammoth tasks of cleaning up and rebuilding?

Maybe it's going to be a lot more costly this year, but we will still have warm homes to return to at the end of the day. Millions of people in our own country sleep under bridges, behind shopping centers, and in homeless shelters. Many don't know where their next meal is coming from.

We have health insurance so we can see a doctor or go to the hospital when we're sick. Millions of seniors have to choose between buying their life saving medication or staying warm in winter.

And finally, **we still have good jobs!** Perhaps you don't realize just how difficult it is getting to be to find jobs like ours.

As CSEA members, we still have union contract protections that guarantee a decent wage, paid holidays, paid vacation and sick time, and overtime. We will have a pension when we retire. In the private sector, all those

things are the exception rather than the rule! All that downward pressure on wages and benefits will only make it tougher for people like us, to keep what we have. But I'm sure you will agree that some things in this life that are worth fighting for.

You and I still have jobs that afford us the ability to earn a living, have a life, and spend time with our families! No matter how boring or routine your job may have become, in these times, just having a decent job may be one of the biggest blessings of all.

I wish you and your family a joyous and healthy holiday season!

In solidarity,

Nick LaMorte, president  
Long Island Region

*Nick LaMorte*

Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte swears in the officers of the SUNY Farmingdale Local. From left are President Thomas Dowdney, Secretary Amanda Gist and Executive Vice President Glen Havjar. Not pictured is Treasurer Joel Tarantowicz.





# Inside Reporter

## Long Island Region at the 95th Annual Delegates Meeting



Big crowd of CSEA delegates rally in front of Buffalo's City Hall in support of city workers.

Long Island President Nick LaMorte and delegates Debbie Trapp, left, Town of Babylon, and Meg Shutka, Brookhaven White Collar, take a brief break from convention business.

**C**OMMACK — Many new delegates, a demonstration for Erie County employees, member diversity and a domestic violence workshop were among the highlights of the recent Annual Delegates Meeting in Buffalo.

Manny Mangual, president of the Pilgrim Psychiatric Center Local, thought the convention was a good one. "I experienced more participation by delegates, especially in the pre-convention workshops," he said.

Mangual was also pleased by the thousands in delegate donations for a project to build homes in the New Orleans area for those affected by Hurricane Katrina, in conjunction with Habitat for Humanity. "It shows the union is concerned not only with employment, but with issues of community and

humanity," he said.

"We had a good convention, very informative," said Andre Sigmone, 2nd vice president of the Long Island State Employees Local.

Bobby Rauff, executive vice president of the Oyster Bay Local and the CSEA convention committee chair, was at the podium to open the convention.

"One of the things someone told me before the convention is the light (on the podium) is going to be so blinding you hardly see anybody," Rauff said. "When you are in front of so many people, you want to be perfect. I opened the convention and welcomed the delegates."

**Two years in the planning**

The opening minutes were the culmination of two

It shows the union is concerned not only with employment, but with issues of community and humanity.



years of work for Rauff and Laura Gallagher, the other Long Island region committee representative, because they began work for the 2004 convention, which was postponed.

In July, committee members and CSEA Secretary Barbara Reeves visited Buffalo to inspect the convention facilities, hotels and local transportation. Committee members helped run the pre-convention workshops, set up information tables and gave convention pins to nearly 1,000 delegates.

Rauff said he thought the delegates were becoming more knowledgeable about the union's constitution, by-laws and members' rights. Delegates are also learning more information to share with their locals and units. "The convention is getting more interesting," he said.



Gallagher, 1st vice president of the State University of New York at Old Westbury Local, said she enjoyed serving on the convention committee.

"It was great working with the other committee members, handing out convention pins and greeting delegates," she said. "This year, about 40 percent of the delegates were new. We had a roll call vote this year as well. [The roll call vote was on making a change as to when elections for region officers would be held.] This was my sixth convention and I had never seen one done before, so that was very interesting."

**Especially good for new delegates**

The convention was especially good for new delegates, said Bill Walsh, president of the Suffolk Municipal Local 852. "In talking with the new delegates from our local, I was happy they saw a little bit of everything that can take place at a convention. We had a roll call vote, which takes some time, as well as some good debate."

Several of the delegates spoke highly of a workshop on domestic violence presented by Catherine Custance, executive vice president of the Pilgrim Psychiatric Center Local. She developed it as part of her work in CSEA's 18-month Leadership Education And Development (LEAD) program, which seeks to identify and train future CSEA leaders.

"I had to pick a project and decided to do something

near and dear," said Custance, a survivor of domestic violence. After breaking into small groups, workshop attendees shared stories of themselves, family and friends and described the nature of the abuse, whether physical, financial or social.

"It was fascinating to watch this unwind in front of me," Custance said.

Kevin W. Ray Sr, president of the Long Island Judiciary Local, attended the workshop. "It was excellent and one of the best I've ever attended," he said. "The convention is always a good experience; always a learning experience."

Mary D'Antonio, president of the SUNY Old Westbury Local, said the convention was informative. "Watching democracy at work; a very good convention," she said. "Seeing how many new activists there are shows there's a lot of life in our union."

— Charles Michaelson  
Photos by Kathy Walsh



Above, Delegates representing Suffolk Local 852 are, from left around table, Richard Vacchio, Jim McDowell, Pat Fisher, Meg Shutka, Matt Hattorff, Bill Parente, Nick Zambelli, Debbie Trapp, President Bill Walsh, Jeanne McCarthy and Dave Clark.

At left, Statewide President Danny Donohue, at mike, addresses the rally. Statewide Executive Vice President Mary Sullivan is at his left. Metropolitan Region President George Boncoraglio is at far right.



'Seeing how many new activists there are show there's a lot of life in our union.'



## Long Beach court workers win praise

LONG BEACH — The City Court in this community of 34,000 on Long Island's South Shore handles a wide variety of cases in the 20,000 actions it handles each year.

"The court handles everything," said Pat Annunziata, a court officer for 12 years and 1st vice president of Judiciary Local 330. "Felonies — we do arraignments and felony hearings here and then they're sent up to district courts — codes, civil cases, parking tickets, landlord-tenant, drug cases."

Annunziata and two other court officers, the judges' secretary, the court reporter and several secretaries comprise the 12-member CSEA unit at the court.

Nancy Aull serves as secretary to both judges who sit in the court, Roy Tepper and Stanley Smolkin. "It's primarily dictation and transcribing, maintaining the chambers and the library," said Aull, who has worked at the court for 19 1/2 years. "I do everything. I love it. They're two of the greatest people to work for."

Annunziata said the court had a rare compliment from an attorney appearing before the court. "We had a lawyer here this morning," Annunziata recalled. "He said this is the nicest court he'd ever been to and he'd never been to a court where everyone was nice."



Above, Nancy Aull is shown with Judge Stanley Smolkin, one of the two judges who sit in Long Beach's City Court.

Left, Elenoria Porter, left, and Jacqueline O'Hare are two of the secretaries whose work helps keep the court running smoothly and pleasantly.



Left, George Gentilesco, left, who has six years of service at the court, and Pat Annunziata are two of the three court officers assigned to Long Beach City Court.



Right, Stephanie Santo is the newest member of the court's secretarial staff, having transferred from Civil Court in Queens a month ago.

## Statewide Secretary Reeves holds training session for new secretaries

COMMACK — Despite a downpour that drenched Long Island on Oct. 11, Statewide Secretary Barbara Reeves drove from Albany to Long Island Region headquarters to introduce 18 new unit and local secretaries and one new secretary-treasurer to their duties.



Statewide Secretary Barbara Reeves discusses the duties of the local and unit secretary with 17 students at the Long Island Region training session.

Reeves began with a discussion of the structure of the union. "There are six regions, locals and units, and all have their own constitution," she said.

A key role of the secretaries is to be "keepers of their union's records," which include writing the minutes of executive board and general membership meetings and physically maintaining the records, which include minutes, correspondence, the constitution and by-laws. (As an example of by-laws, she pointed to the single secretary-treasurer present and said that his unit had merged the two offices and that action would be recorded in its by-laws.) Another essential role for the union secretary is notifying members of meetings.

Talking about how long union records should be kept, Reeves noted there are varying periods required for different kinds of records. Some records are required by federal statute, some by Internal Revenue Service, for example. "Keep them for seven years, and you'll be safe," she said. She made an exception for minutes of labor-management committee meetings, saying those should be kept indefinitely.

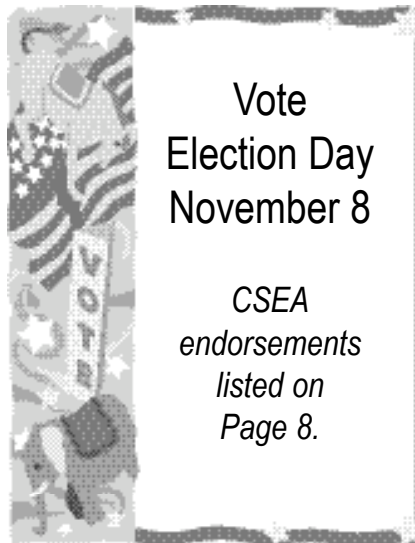
"Because of changes of managers, it's important to have a record of past practice," Reeves said.



# Around the Region

## Calendar of Upcoming Events: November 2005

- 9 - Defensive Driving — 5:30-8:30 p.m.
- 10 - Defensive Driving — 5:30-8:30 p.m.
- 11 - Region Office Closed — Veterans Day
- 14 - Human Rights Committee Meeting — 6 p.m.
- 15 - Health and Safety Committee Meeting — 5 p.m.
- 16 - Local 920 General Membership Meeting — 11:15 a.m.-3:15 p.m.
- 16 - Region Executive Board Meeting — 5:30 p.m.
- 19 - Defensive Driving — 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
- 21 - Women's Committee Meeting — 5:30 p.m.
- 22 - PEOPLE Committee Meeting — 5 p.m.
- 24-25 - Region Office Closed — Thanksgiving
- 28 - Education and Training Committee Meeting — 5:30 p.m.



- 29 - Political Action Committee Meeting — 5:30 p.m.
- 30 - Local 508 Membership Meeting — 5 p.m.



Ramon Valdez, 4th Vice President of the SUNY Stony Brook Local, signs up to be fitted for glasses by Katie Eberhardt of Davis Vision.

### Davis Vision has East Setauket location

If you work in or near the State University of New York at Stony Brook Local, you may not be aware that there is a union eyeglass provider just a short trip away.

One of the lesser known locations for Davis Vision is nestled right in the Stony Brook Tech Park, at 33 Research Way in East Setauket.

During a recent tour of the state-of-the-art facility, SUNY Stony Brook Local officers used their union negotiated eye care benefit to see if they needed new glasses.

"It's such a convenient location, but it is kind of tucked away, and I don't think many members know about it," Local Executive Vice President Debbie Nappi-Gonzalez said. "We just want them to know this benefit is very close, and they should take advantage of it."

### LIDDC Local President Willie Allen retires



Amityville resident Willie Allen (center) is congratulated by CSEA Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte, left, and CSEA member Rutha Bush, right, upon his retirement from state service. Allen worked for the state for 37 years, most recently as the supervisor of a group home for the developmentally disabled. He also served as the president of CSEA's Long Island Developmental Center Local for the past four years, as well as in other union positions for eight years before that.

"Willie is just one of the thousands of CSEA members whose work makes New York worthy of its name, the Empire State," LaMorte said. "Willie Allen has devoted his working life to making life better, both for the developmentally disabled, and through the union, for the other state employees who care for the disabled. In serving others, Willie Allen has enriched his community. We wish him happiness and health in retirement."

### CSEA members make Strides Against Breast Cancer



CSEA members are shown in front of the union's tent at the Strides Against Breast Cancer walk, held at Jones Beach Oct. 16. Region President Nick LaMorte is seventh from left; Bobbi Eisgrau, second from right, chairs the region's Women's Committee, whose members worked long and hard to prepare for the annual event. Hundreds of CSEA members and friends were among the 40,000 people who took part in the 5K walk on the boardwalk to raise money for the American Cancer Society.



# CSEA Endorses Local Candidates

The Long Island Region Political Action Committee has announced its endorsements for this election season. Through interviews and questionnaires, the committee chooses those candidates that either have or will stand up for the hard working families and taxpayers that CSEA represents.

“It is important that as the leading public employee union, representing 50,000 members on Long Island, that the CSEA region Political Action Committee take an active and thorough role in the endorsement process of all of our elected officials,” said Committee Chair John Shepherd. “As public employees we play a critical role in determining who our bosses are, that is why the political process is one of the

most important forums for CSEA involvement,” he said.

Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte said that while the committee is not telling members how to vote, the endorsements should be an important barometer to take into consideration.

“Together we can turn the tide toward positive changes that will benefit us all. However, this can only happen when eligible voters go to the polls and pull that lever for labor-friendly candidates,” said LaMorte.



**The CSEA Long Island Political Action Committee endorsements for Nassau County are as follows:**

## Nassau County

- 1 LD — Kevan Abrahams
- 2 LD — Roger Corbin
- 3 LD — John Ciotti
- 4 LD — Denise Ford
- 5 LD — Joe Scannell
- 6 LD — Francis Becker, Jr.
- 7 LD — Jeff Toback
- 8 LD — Vincent Muscarella
- 9 LD — Richard Nicoletto
- 10 LD — Lisanne Altmann
- 11 LD — Craig Johnson
- 12 LD — Peter Schmitt
- 13 LD — Norma Gonsalves
- 14 LD — Dave Mejias
- 15 LD — Dennis Dunne
- 16 LD — Judy Jacobs
- 17 LD — Ed Mangano
- 18 LD — Diane Yatauro
- 19 LD — Dave Denenberg
- Comptroller — Don Clavin
- Clerk — Maureen O’Connell
- District Attorney — Denis Dillon
- County Executive — No endorsement

- Town of North Hempstead
- Clerk — Michelle E. Schimel
- Supervisor — Jon Kaiman
- Councilman — Angelo Ferrara

- Town of Hempstead
- Supervisor — Kate Murray
- Council — Dorothy Goosby
- Council — Gary Hudes
- Council — Anthony Santino
- Clerk — Mark Bonilla

- Town of Oyster Bay
- Supervisor — John Venditto
- Council — Angelo Delligatti
- Council — Elizabeth Faughnan
- Council — Chris Coschignano
- Clerk — Steven Labriola

- Nassau County Judges
- NC Court — Daniel Palmieri
- Town of Hempstead — Gary Knobel
- NC District 2 — Rob Pipia, Gerald Wright
- NC Dist — Norman Janowitz
- NC — Joseph McCormack

## Ballot Question #1

### Reform the state budget process



- ✓ creates an independent budget office
- ✓ provides transparency, accountability, certainty
- ✓ restores balance to the process
- ✓ ensures your state legislators have a say in the state budget
- ✓ creates a contingency budget to end late state budgets for good



on Election Day Nov. 8



on questions 1 and 2

## Ballot Question #2

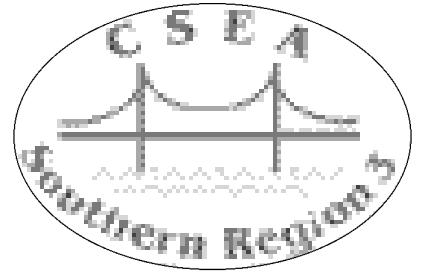
### The Transportation Bond Act will

- ✓ create 120,000 new jobs
- ✓ upgrade our public transportation, bridges and roads
- ✓ improve safety for our families
- ✓ include labor law protections and prevailing wage language
- ✓ strengthen our economy

**Every Vote Counts!**

# Southern Region

## CROSSROADS • Your Union Newsletter



• A supplement to *The Work Force* • November 2005 Vol. 9 No. 2

### A Message from Southern Region President Diane Hewitt

## Our strength is in our numbers



Greetings, brothers and sisters. As I write this message, we are facing issues all over the Southern Region that desperately need the support of all CSEA members.

Have you ever heard the saying that there is strength in numbers? Standing together, all 40,000 of us,

is the key to winning the battles we face. From organizing new union members to fighting budget crises to winning tough contract battles, our plate is full.

Let's start in Ulster County. As in years past, the financial situation there is grim. The easy way out that often pops up during tough budget years involves cutting services and cutting employees. Let's not allow that. The county has an obligation to its taxpayers to continue the important services officials long ago made a commitment to provide. The Golden Hill Health Care Center, for example, provides top-notch care to the county's senior

***Standing together, all 40,000 of us, is the key to winning the battles we face.***

citizens. Not only is Golden Hill a place for seniors with nowhere else to go, it is also a sought-out facility, chosen over the region's private nursing homes because of its proven track record for excellence. Altering county government's obligation to Golden Hill's clients and its employees would be a one-time fix for the cash-strapped county. CSEA is more than happy to use its resources to work with the county to find other means of cost savings.

A little further south, employees of Suffern are still fighting for fairness. CSEA was forced to take its organizing drive to represent village workers, but the mayor has yet to formally notify CSEA of the board's decision. We need everyone's help in putting pressure on the village administration.

We are also facing several contract fights. We've all

experienced difficult negotiations at one point, but we've had a few recent cases that stand out. Our Yonkers School District Unit, with more than 1,000 members, has worked without a contract for three years and the latest negotiations don't hint of a fair resolution any time soon. This is one unit that definitely needs our support. The workers are the backbone of the Yonkers

*Please see Message continued on Page 2*

## Safety hazards put Westchester County workers at risk

WHITE PLAINS — Several months after a legal secretary was stabbed to death in a mall parking garage near the Westchester County Office Building, county workers' safety is at risk because of management's laid back attitude in rectifying potential hazards identified by CSEA's Occupational Safety and Health Department.

The 56-year-old woman, who was not a CSEA member, was heading to her car, parked in the garage, when a resident of the county's homeless shelter allegedly stabbed her. Police labeled the crime as random, but that particular shopping mall has been the site of other violent crimes in recent years. Many county employees also park in that garage.

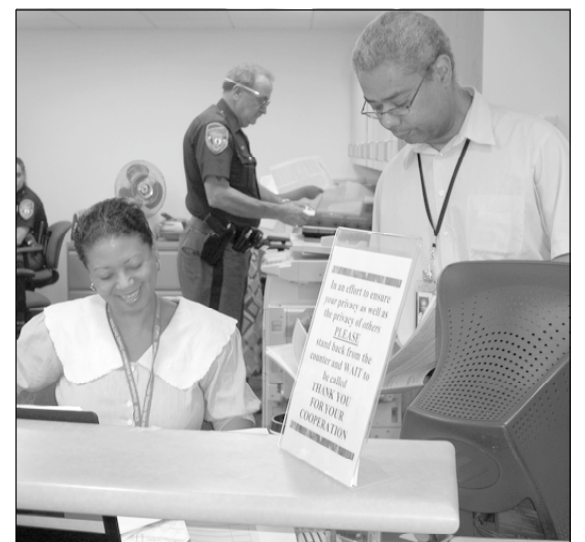
CSEA Westchester County Local President Jack McPhillips said what happened to the woman easily could have happened to a county worker. Now, McPhillips wants to see other potential problem spots cleaned up, starting with the county Department of Social Services office at the county's 85 Court St. building, where problems are nothing new.

"This building has been a problem for years," he said.

"They've renovated it from top to bottom, including getting rid of asbestos. First, we started having air quality problems, which have continued after renovations. Now, we're concerned about workplace violence."

The concern over workplace violence actually follows a county effort to make the Social Services office more "customer friendly," McPhillips said. Receptionists now sit at lower counters, face-to-face with clients without the protection of Plexiglas. What was initially an effort toward better customer service has backfired.

"Some of our customers are very upset and angry," said Judith Brome, a receptionist at the Social Services office. "The receptionist is



**Among the CSEA members at risk due to the lack of safeguards in the Westchester County Department of Social Services office are receptionist Judith Brome and Pedro Fantauzzi, a supervisory eligibility examiner.**

*Please see Safety hazards continued on Page 4*





From left, Pelham Schools Unit Vice President Joe Facchiano, President Victor Torres and Secretary/Treasurer Jim Richardson take advantage of the community's busy Saturday morning shopping traffic to distribute information on their contract battle.

### Contract updates

The following units and locals recently ratified new contracts:

- Mount Vernon School District Unit
- Rockland County Unit
- Beacon School District Unit
- SUNY Purchase Food Service Workers
- White Plains School District
- New York State Bridge Authority Local
- Southern Westchester BOCES
- Westchester Medical Center Food Service Workers
- Lakeland School District Unit
- Mount Pleasant Blue and White Collar units

Still holding strong in tough contract fights are:

- Town of Stony Point
- Westchester Medical Center Unit
- Ulster County Unit
- Yonkers School District
- Sullivan County Jail Unit
- Pelham School District Unit

### Southern Region Crossroads

Southern Region President:  
Diane Hewitt  
 Southern Region Director:  
James Farina  
 Southern Region Communications Associate:  
Jessica Stone  
 Office Manager: Rhonda Cafarelli



Southern Region Office:  
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Beacon, NY 12508  
845-831-1000 or 1-800-757-CSEA (2732)  
Fax: (845) 831-1117  
CSEA Headquarters: 1-800-342-4146  
www.csealocal1000.org

Do you have an article or announcement for Crossroads? Contact Jessica Stone at the above phone or fax numbers or e-mail at stone@cseainc.org

### Hudson Valley Developmental Disabilities Services Office Local members walk to remember co-worker

When Carl Allen died unexpectedly from heart disease at the age of 52, his co-workers at the Hudson Valley Developmental Disabilities Services Office were stunned and saddened. When the opportunity arose to honor Allen by participating in an American Heart Association fund-raising walk honoring him, several CSEA local members jumped at the chance. Allen, a developmental aide, was this year's honoree for the annual walk, held May 15 at Rockland Community College in Suffern. The 3.1-mile route gave walkers the chance to draw attention to one of the most common killers.



Members of the Hudson Valley Developmental Disabilities Services Office Local participated in the American Heart Association walk held at Rockland Community College in Suffern in memory of co-worker Carl Allen.

### Message *continued from Page 1*

schools, and they deserve to be paid as fairly as everyone else employed there. Unit officers have announced they are stepping up the fight and will be doing all they can to increase visibility.

Politically, we've released our endorsements for this year's elections. Please keep in mind when you read media coverage of CSEA endorsements that the candidates selected were chosen after a lengthy process undertaken by our Political

Action Committee. While this year's endorsements went largely to one particular party, we do not endorse based on political affiliation. We endorse on a candidate's record and what he or she can do for CSEA members.

In closing, I need to congratulate all our new officers, both those re-elected for another four years as well as those beginning their first term as CSEA officers. I look forward to working with all of you.



### Southern Region celebrates Labor Day 2005

CSEA members marched up Fifth Avenue in New York City's annual Labor Day Parade. Southern Region participants included, from left to right, Westchester Medical Center Unit President Artie Alfreds and Charlie Guidarelli, also from the Westchester Medical Center Unit; Southern Region President Diane Hewitt; Rockland County Local President Billy Riccaldo; Westchester Local President Jack McPhillips; and Westchester Local 2nd Vice President Mary Miguez.

### Southern Region officer installations



At left, the newly elected officers of the Orange-Sullivan-Ulster Retirees Local are, from left, Recording Secretary Theresa Sinsabaugh, Treasurer Julia Mercatili, 1st Vice President Rose Galieri, and President Naomi Kaplan.

Right, Southern Region President Diane Hewitt swears in the new slate of officers for Yonkers School District Unit: Unit President Bobbie DiBattista, 1st Vice President Richard Odson, 2nd Vice President Gloria Krokos, 3rd Vice President Edward Mattiaccio, Recording Secretary Joan Dengler, and Treasurer Louise Piltz. Looking on is Westchester Local President Jack McPhillips.



Left, the Orange County Local held an installation for local and unit officers in late August at the Otterkill Country Club. Pictured are officers taking the oath of office.

### Accident kills Ossining Unit member

CSEA's Southern Region is mourning the death of one of its members, 24-year-old Village of Ossining Department of Public Works employee John Rodrigues.

Rodrigues died July 20 after falling off the back of a sanitation truck and hitting his head. Co-workers and police tried to help Rodrigues, but he was later pronounced dead at a nearby hospital.

CSEA Occupational Health and Safety Specialist Komilla John said Rodrigues was part of a three-worker team picking up garbage on a residential street. After the driver turned the truck around and headed back down the street, co-workers noticed Rodrigues on the pavement.

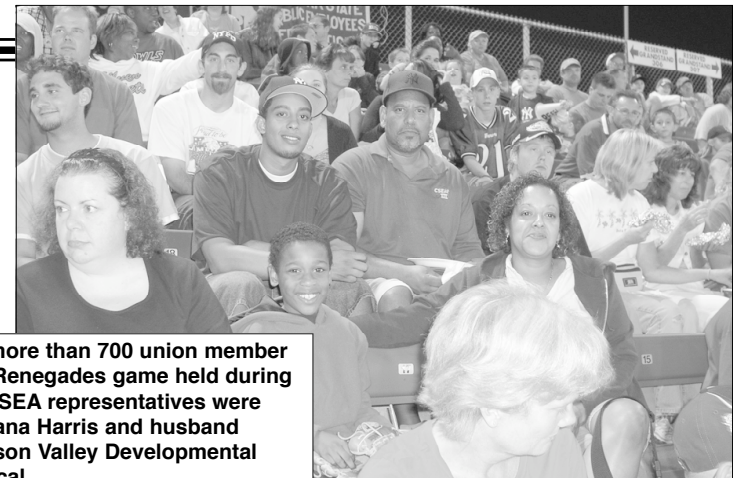
CSEA and PESH investigated the incident, which was ruled an accident.

### Slow down in work zones

A CSEA-supported bill creating a new mandatory \$50 surcharge for violating speed limits in highway construction or maintenance work areas was signed into law July 14. It is effective beginning Nov. 1.

The surcharges will be deposited in the state Highway Construction and Maintenance Safety Education Fund used for public service announcements, education and awareness about safe driving in work areas.

So slow down, and don't forget — many of those workers on the road are your CSEA brothers and sisters!



CSEA members were among more than 700 union member attendees at a Hudson Valley Renegades game held during Labor Day weekend. Among CSEA representatives were Southern Region Treasurer Diana Harris and husband Speed Harris, both of the Hudson Valley Developmental Disabilities Services Office Local.



## Southern Region members hard at work



Above, Jason Muglio is one of several CSEA members working in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Westchester Medical Center, working to ensure that infants born premature go on to lead a healthy life.



Above right, Allison Pilat, an aide at the Poughkeepsie Public Library, is responsible for shelving books returned to the library.



Right, Jason Ward, a laborer for the Taconic State Parks, maintains some of the park equipment during the winter months.

### Safety hazard *continued from Page 1*

the front line. We pass the customers along to someone else, but since we're the first to speak with them, we often bear the brunt."

While the new reception setup increases a customer's ability to potentially harm a worker with physical violence, CSEA Occupational Safety and Health Specialist Komilla John said other hazards exist. The lack of a Plexiglas barrier enables a customer to spit at workers, putting a worker at risk for disease, she said.

CSEA's identification of the Westchester safety hazards follow widespread publicity the union drew to similar risks in Department of Motor Vehicle offices in New York City and Long Island.

Air quality has been the other problem in that building. Asbestos removal was part of extensive renovations, which had forced several departments to temporarily move their offices during the project several years ago. Although the renovations are now done, workers say they've experienced respiratory problems that they believe stem from the work.

"People without asthma are having asthma-like symptoms while those with asthma are feeling even worse," McPhillips said.

County officials had cited outside bus fumes as one explanation for the continued air quality problem, but McPhillips and John aren't convinced, as the breathing problems haven't extended to the Westchester County Office Building located across the street.

McPhillips said it's time for county officials to come in and rectify the safety hazards.

"They don't think there's a problem, but there is," he said. "It's management by disaster."

— Jessica Stone

## Scholarships Awarded

### Southern Region scholarships awarded at Executive Board meeting

CSEA awarded five Southern Region scholarships at the Region Executive Board's June meeting.

Southern Region 3 Scholarships went to Devin E. Flanigan, daughter of Millbrook School District Unit member Debra Flanigan, and Daniel J. Pesquera, son of North Castle Unit member Barbara Pesquera.

Community Action Scholarships were given to Selena Watkins, daughter of Yonkers School District Unit members Judith and Robert Watkins, and Leslie Aitken, daughter of Ulster County Unit member Andrew Aitkin.

The Diane Hewitt Scholarship went to Rebecca Costello, daughter of North Salem School District Unit member Andrea Costello.

### Westchester Local awards annual scholarships

The Westchester Local announced its annual scholarship recipients in late May.

Each year, the local presents 12 scholarships for \$1,000, as well as the \$1,000 Grace Ann Aloisi Scholarship, a four-year renewable scholarship.

The winners of the local scholarships are: Daniel Adams, son of Leonard Adams, Pocantico Hills School District Unit; Douglas Bicknese, son of Jeanine Bicknese, Mount Vernon School District Unit; Rachel Cleary, daughter of William Cleary, Westchester Medical Center Unit; Douglas Ellman, son of Diane Ellman, Yonkers School District Unit; Sarah Greenbaum, daughter of Beatrice Greenbaum, Westchester County Unit; Lindsay Macri, daughter of Christine Macri, Port Chester School District Unit; Luciano Ranallo, son of Ennio Ranallo, Edgemont School District Unit; Jolynne Sannicandro, daughter of Linda Sannicandro, Yonkers School District Unit; Francesca Santa, daughter of Gina Pelliccio, Westchester County Unit; Andrew Seicol, son of Lorraine Seicol, White Plains School District Unit; John Soychak, son of Linda Soychak, Lakeland School District Unit; and Selena Watkins, daughter of Judith and Robert Watkins, both of Yonkers School District Unit.

The local awarded the Grace Ann Aloisi Scholarship to Beth Anne Croughan, daughter of Francine Croughan, City of White Plains Unit.

### Orange County Local awards annual scholarships

The Orange County Local awarded 12 annual local scholarships to children of local members at a June 8 dinner at the Old Erie Pub & Grille in Middletown.

Ten graduating high school students received scholarships. They are: Scott Derkacz, son of Beth and Gary Derkacz, members of the Port Jervis School District Unit; Michael John Augustyne, son of Mary Augustyne, Warwick Valley School District Unit; Nicole Anzalone, daughter of Diane Anzalone, Minisink Valley School District Unit; Lacey Raponi, daughter of Katherine Raponi, Orange County Unit; Christopher DeStefano, son of Paula DeStefano, Washingtonville School District Unit; John Schreiber, son of Kathleen Schreiber, Port Jervis School District Unit; Sean Curtin, son of Jeanette Curtin, Warwick Valley School District Unit; Megan Burnham, daughter of Michael Stevens, Washingtonville School District Unit; Tara Ford, daughter of Debbie Ford, Port Jervis School District Unit; and John O'Connor, son of Monica O'Connor, Orange County Unit.

Two students already in college won the local's two post-high school awards. They are: Tara Jean Sullivan, daughter of Janice Sullivan, Newburgh School District Unit; and Briane Jacob, daughter of Diane Jacob, Goshen School District Unit.