

THE WORK FORCE



**Members overwhelmingly re-elect
Donohue, Leadership Team**

See story, Page 3

Photo of the Month



Photo by Mark M. Kotzin

Members of the distance learning class (*February 2004 Work Force, Pages 10-11*) at Onondaga County's Van Duyn Home and Hospital, who recently completed their first module of training, proudly display the certificates of completion they received. From left to right: Essie Harris, Veronica Lyles, Shirley Gary, LayToya Brown, Sheila Scott, Kim Fort, Lashona Worthan, Laquinn Bullock, Kolnicki Brown and Bridget Knight.

GEICO saves, Buffalo loses

When GEICO rolled into Erie County looking for a place to put their new auto insurance service center, local officials say they never seriously considered the city of Buffalo. (See cartoon, Page 14.)

Instead, GEICO looked for a suburb in the area, claiming that huge parking lots and easy access to highways, stores, and other amenities are not possible in urban centers.

Frank Mauro, director of the Fiscal Policy Institute, a labor-backed think tank, believes the \$100 million in tax cuts and subsidies to GEICO "undercuts the whole intent of the Enterprise Zones," aimed at encouraging economic growth in depressed areas. Such tax incentives hurt depressed cities like Buffalo because they must now compete with more attractive areas and don't serve their intended purpose.

For CSEA and other groups the issue is about using tax incentives wisely to spur economic development in the areas that need it most. Otherwise, it's simply corporate welfare.

What's more, taxpayers are shelling out a break to a company that's very well off as it is.

GEICO Facts

- Fifth largest private-passenger auto insurer in the United States.
- Employs more than 200,000
- \$12 billion in assets
- 5.3 million auto policy-holders
- More than 8.6 million vehicles insured
- Key competitors are Allstate, State Farm and Travelers

— Kari Amidon

Rumors run wild around state talks

Contract talks are continuing at a brisk pace and our CSEA Negotiating Team is satisfied with the progress we are making each time we sit down with representatives from the Governor's Office of Employee Relations.

While there is still work to do, we can report meaningful talks are continuing on outstanding issues including compensation and health insurance.

The CSEA Negotiating Team is working diligently on your behalf. They continue to put in long, hard days to protect your interests and justify our

positions. They will not be satisfied until we negotiate the best possible contract for our members.

Even though we continue to make progress, beware of the "rumor mill" because "rumors" and other misinformation undermine our efforts.

Remember, the only source of accurate information is CSEA. Check the CSEA website www.csealocal1000.org regularly.

Say no to "rumor mongers" and say yes to your CSEA Negotiating Team by supporting them 100 percent during this critical phase of contract talks.

QSAC card check win

CSEA has won card check recognition as the bargaining representative for about 400 workers at Quality Services for the Autism Community (Q-SAC) in Queens.

The recognition follows an intensive and difficult campaign involving numerous Metropolitan region activists and staff, community groups,

local elected officials and a solid organizing committee of the workers.

QSAC is a private sector agency funded primarily via the state OMRDD. The workers provide services similar to work performed by CSEA OMRDD workers.

Efforts to secure the first contract will begin immediately.

Erie County Unit ready to fight

BUFFALO — Erie County Unit activists remain prepared to fight against layoffs in a planned re-structuring of the county Social Services Department, even though the county administration has announced a reduction in expected job cuts.

In December, the county had proposed eliminating 147 positions, 101 in Social Services.

They have recently changed that figure, by not filling 60 to 70 vacant positions.

As the *Work Force* went to press, the Erie County CSEA Unit executive board is meeting to plan actions against the potential 46 layoffs, and other administration moves that could cost member jobs.

Save the Date

AFSCME Lobby Day is set for Tuesday, March 30 at the Empire State Plaza Convention Center.

All CSEA members are invited as we join with our AFSCME brothers and sisters to press state lawmakers for a better state budget and other important legislation.

Call your region political action coordinator in your CSEA Region office to sign up.

Donohue, CSEA leadership team re-elected to four-year terms

ALBANY — Danny Donohue and the statewide leadership team have been overwhelmingly re-elected to another term.

Donohue's victory came by a 3-1 ratio in a vote count concluded by the American Arbitration Association. All of CSEA's active members were eligible to vote in the mail ballot election.

"I'm honored that the women and men of CSEA have expressed their confidence in my leadership," Donohue said. "There are enormous challenges ahead across this state and we must continue to work together to make our union even stronger." (See *President's column — Page 4*)

Donohue has helped solidify CSEA's position as New York's leading union by encouraging activism in local, state and national politics while his advocacy of grassroots community networks has

"There are enormous challenges ahead across this state and we must continue to work together to make our union even stronger."

enhanced CSEA's presence and effectiveness.

Under his leadership, CSEA's expertise in contract negotiations has set national standards. The union negotiates more than 1,100 contracts for its members in the public and private sectors.

Donohue was first elected president of CSEA in 1994. He previously served as the union's executive vice president and Long Island Region president. Donohue serves as an international vice president of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees — AFSCME (CSEA's international union) — and as a vice president of the New York State AFL-CIO.

Also re-elected with Donohue were the other members of his leadership team, Executive Vice President Mary Sullivan and Treasurer Maureen Malone. Secretary Barbara Reeves was re-elected without opposition.



From left, CSEA Treasurer Maureen Malone, President Danny Donohue, Secretary Barbara Reeves, and Executive Vice President Mary Sullivan.

Region offices

CSEA region offices and board of director seats were also on the ballot.

All six of CSEA's region presidents were returned to office. Long Island Region President Nicholas LaMorte, Metropolitan Region President George Boncoraglio, Central Region President James Moore and Western Region President Flo Tripi were all uncontested. Southern Region President Diane Hewitt and Capital Region President Kathy Garrison were both re-elected. The term of office for all of

the positions runs from March 1, 2004 to March 1, 2008.

• **Full results of the CSEA elections are available in the Members' Only area of CSEA's web site, www.csealocal1000.org. Biographies of the four statewide officers and all six region presidents are also available.**

• **See Page 16 for more election results.**

• **Page 1 photo by Edward Molitor**



**Long Island Region President
Nick LaMorte**



**Metropolitan Region President
George Boncoraglio**



**Southern Region President
Diane Hewitt**



**Capital Region President
Kathy Garrison**



**Central Region President
Jim Moore**



**Western Region President
Flo Tripi**

THE WORK FORCE

ISSN 1522-1091

Official publication of
CSEA Local 1000, AFSCME, AFL-CIO
143 Washington Ave.
Albany, NY 12210-2303
Danny Donohue, President

STEPHEN A. MADARASZ
Communications Director & Publisher
STANLEY HORNAK
Deputy Director of Communications
LOU HMIELESKI
Executive Editor
AMY SCHARF
Associate Editor
CATHLEEN FEBRAIO
Graphic Production Specialist
JANICE M. KUCKAR
Graphic Production Specialist
BETH McINTYRE
Communications Assistant

The Work Force (USPS 0445-010) is published monthly by The CSEA Publication Office: 143 Washington Ave., Albany, NY 12210. Periodical Mail Postage paid at Post Office, Albany, New York 12288.

**Postmaster: Send address changes to:
CSEA, Attn: Membership Department,
143 Washington Ave., Albany, NY 12210.
CSEA on-line: The CSEA website
can be accessed at www.csealocal1000.net**

Readers:

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

COMMUNICATIONS ASSOCIATES

RACHEL LANGERT	Long Island Region (631) 462-0030
DAVID GALARZA	Metropolitan Region (212) 406-2156
JANICE MARRA	Southern Region (845) 831-1000
THERESE ASSALIAN	Capital Region (518) 785-4400
MARK M. KOTZIN	Central Region (315) 433-0050
RON WOFFORD	Western Region (716) 886-0391
ED MOLITOR	Headquarters (518) 257-1272

The Publications Committee

LONG ISLAND REGION *Jean Ahlert*
METROPOLITAN REGION *Vacant*
SOUTHERN REGION *Robert Lorenc*
CAPITAL REGION *Helen Fishedick*
CENTRAL REGION *Bruce Damalt, Chair*
WESTERN REGION *Vacant*



Time to roll up our sleeves and work on problem solving

Let me start by expressing my sincere thanks to all of you who participated in the recent CSEA elections. I am proud of what we have achieved together and on behalf of the other statewide officers thank you for your vote of confidence. We have much work to do and will continue to fight for what's right every day.



We have serious challenges in every part of this state and will not back down. We have hospitals and health care programs at risk; local governments under financial stress, difficult contract negotiations across the state, our pension system under siege, members' jobs at risk and more than a few elected officials who would like to scapegoat public employees for their own mismanagement. And that's just here in New York.

We are speaking out and working hard to address many of these issues in the developing state budget battle. While Gov. George Pataki's proposals have provided a much better starting place this year, there is still a lot of room for improvement and more than a few areas of concern. CSEA has consistently pointed this out in budget testimony, and numerous meetings and other contact with elected officials. But we have also offered numerous ideas for better approaches that make sense for the state and its taxpayers — and we will continue to put ideas forward.

It's always a lot easier to criticize than it is to come up with practical solutions. With your support and involvement, my commitment as president of CSEA is to be a problem solver.

Workers rally in Nassau County

EAST MEADOW — Wearing placards saying, "Have a heart! Save jobs, Save lives!" and "NHCC workers ARE critical to quality care," hundreds of CSEA members poured into the street around Nassau University Medical Center recently in a show of strength and solidarity.

The Nassau Health Care Corp. workers are fighting the threat of

mass layoffs due to gross mismanagement and other difficulties at the medical center, a nursing home and seven health clinics.

As they marched, choruses of "If you're going to chop, chop at the top!" rang out. Members cheered blaring car horns when passers-by honked in support of the demonstration.

"It's wonderful to see all these people out here supporting each other. It's fantastic, and boy, do we need this!" remarked Nurses Assistant Deborah Tanner, from A. Holly Patterson Extended Care Facility. "We need to support each other, and we need to keep being there for the people," she said.

A just-released consultant's report concluded that NHCC could suffer financial collapse in the next year and a half, if more drastic measures aren't taken soon.

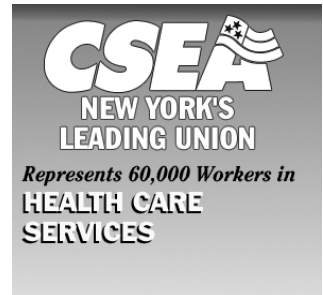
"They've been cutting porters, housekeepers and nurses but they haven't touched anybody up in management," said NUMC Unit President George Walsh. He said the facilities have already lost 500 jobs in the last two years.

While it remains to be seen whether — and how — the consultant's recommendations will be implemented, Nassau Local President Jane D'Amico said the reality is that Nassau residents desperately need these facilities to remain open.

"If you have additional layoffs, that will create a critical condition as far as I'm concerned," said A. Holly Patterson Unit President Les Eason, who is an LPN at A. Holly.



CSEA members rally during a recent Nassau University Medical Center demonstration. CSEA is fighting to keep the facility, a nursing home and seven health clinics open.



"If you have additional layoffs, that will create a critical condition."

— Rachel Langert

Pataki proposes closing Middletown Psychiatric Center

MIDDLETOWN — CSEA is again fighting to maintain mental health services in the community in the wake of Gov. George Pataki's proposal to close Middletown Psychiatric Center.

While this marks the state's third attempt in four years to close the facility, the Pataki administration is considering a plan to launch state-operated, community-based, mental health services. Pataki is proposing to reinvest half of the savings gained from closing Middletown into these community-based services, but the state has yet to release any details on the plan.

State and local elected officials, including State Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther, State Sen. William Larkin and Assembly Mental Health Committee Chairman Peter Rivera are among those who have

joined CSEA in its fight to ensure mental health services.

In 2001 and 2003, Pataki proposed that Middletown patients and staff simply be transferred to Rockland Psychiatric Center, which is located about 50 miles from Middletown.

CSEA President Danny Donohue addressed the issue in recent budget testimony.

"The real issue here is that we need to keep public mental health services available in the communities that Middletown serves in Orange and Sullivan counties with the trained and dedicated CSEA work force delivering them," Donohue said. "Governor Pataki is certainly on the right track in considering community-based services, but reinvesting half of the savings is

not enough."

Southern Region President Diane Hewitt, also a Middletown Psychiatric Center employee, called the community-based care proposal a 'good start,' but remains skeptical of the closure proposal.

Hewitt added that maintaining mental health services in Orange and Sullivan counties is crucial because the two counties are growing in population and the demand for mental health care has accordingly risen.

"CSEA is committed to creating a better future for the patients, as well as the public employees who care about them," she said. "It is extremely important that no patient is left behind."

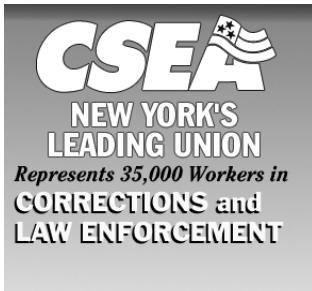
— Janice Marra

CSEA *Voices*



"It's very important to be politically involved. Our medical, health insurance and any type of benefit can all be affected."

— Lizette Marrero, 19-year CSEA member, Mental Hygiene Developmental Aide, Long Island DDSO.



Prison closings worry longtime workers

Editor's Note: At press time new issues were being raised about the future of the correctional facilities identified in this story. The proposed closings will not take effect until a state budget is passed.

“We were all working and all of sudden we heard over the radio that Fulton was closing.”

After 27 years of working for the state, Lorraine Carlisle, a longtime clerk at Fulton Correctional Facility in the Bronx, said she thought she merited a little more respect.

The way she heard about the proposed closing of her facility seemed to say it all.

“We were all working and all of sudden we heard over the radio that Fulton was closing,” said Carlisle, a CSEA member who works in the personnel department.

“I am outraged by the lack of consideration for us,” said Carlisle who has been circulating a petition with other members to keep the facility open. Workers are also planning an informational picket with members of other affected unions.

Citing a reduction in the state prison population, the state Department of Corrections (DOCS) has targeted at least three correctional facilities for closure including Fulton, Camp Pharsalia and Mt. McGregor.

While no layoffs are planned, the state plans to transfer hundreds of prisoners and about 60 CSEA members to nearby correctional and work release facilities. CSEA members argue that some of these facilities are too far from their homes. Others cite the burden closing these facilities will have on their respective communities, the inmates and families.

“This camp is a valuable asset to this community, the workers who staff it, the prisoners who are rehabilitated there, and to the state of New York,” said Central Region President Jim Moore of the minimum-security Camp Pharsalia correctional facility.

Union officials participated in a tour of the facility with prominent state legislative leaders who met with workers who would be affected by the closure, and vowed to “fight vigorously” to oppose the camp’s closing.

At Mt. McGregor, members are coordinating a letter writing campaign to the governor and other elected officials.

“My job is in jeopardy. I’ve got kids in college. I can’t just pick up and move across the state,” said Clifford Seguin, Mt. McGregor Local president.

“I consider myself a professional, dedicated employee and to find out after 19 years of work that I am just a number is really discouraging,” said Seguin. “Somebody in Albany can just pick and choose who loses their job.”

— David Galarza



Lorraine Carlisle, a longtime clerk at Fulton Correctional Facility in the Bronx, stands outside the prison, which is slated to close.



CSEA Central Region Political Action Coordinator Michael Ottaviano, right, discusses the union’s fight to stop the closure of the state Department of Corrections’ minimum-security prison Camp Pharsalia in Chenango County, with supportive state Assemblyman Gary Finch.

CSEA Voices



“CSEA fights for our rights, our raises, our contract and our basic human rights on the job. That’s something you don’t get in most other work places.”

— **Brenda Thomas, four-year CSEA member, Administrative Assistant, Long Island DDSO.**

State Capitol or Fort Knox?

ALBANY — Sally Bywater's trek to work was never easy.

Like many state employees she parks her car in an outlying Office of General Services lot and then hoofs it for almost a mile. Now she has another obstacle that's adding 10 minutes to her morning routine. And she's not alone.

New security measures at the State Capitol subject state employees to a gauntlet of delays and searches that have everyone hopping mad.

Part of the issue for state workers like Bywater, who works in the Education Department, has to do with access. They don't understand why they are lumped into the same category as someone walking in off the street. Prior to the new security measures that were first implemented in early January, employees used their ID badge for access. Now, only a few have been granted access cards that allow for automatic entry to and from the Capitol. Those employees were granted the coveted cards based on how much business they routinely conduct at the Capitol. Most employees did not fall into this category, did not receive a card and thus have to wait.

"It shouldn't take twenty minutes to get through," said Education Local President Keith Prior. "We're not asking to breach security, we just think our ID badges should be enough



State workers line up at the Capitol, waiting to pass through security.

to get us through," said Bywater, who once witnessed a woman being forced to remove her child's snowsuit. The measures have added an extra element of frustration that many feel is not necessary especially given the hassle that many already endure just to get to work from the parking lots.

Shuttles don't run to all lots and those that do come in to the plaza force employees to pass through the Capitol en route to the office. Bus commuters are dropped off in the same place and must wait their turn in line also.

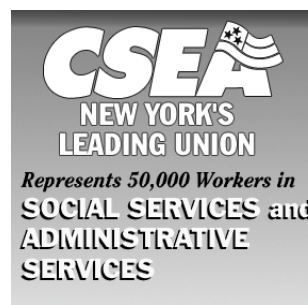
The news is not all bad. Efforts by employees to draw attention to the issue and a recent labor-management meeting have CSEA members

feeling optimistic about changes.

At the recent meeting with CSEA, OGS and the State Police the definition of "official business" was expanded and will now include many who come through the Capitol on buses or from outlying lots. CSEA local presidents have been directed by CSEA to contact their Human Resources Department to discuss eligibility for their members to receive the new ID cards.

"I was pleasantly surprised by the meeting" remembers Bywater, who hopes some modifications will be made to join common sense with security concerns.

— **Therese Assalian**



"We're not asking to breach security, we just think our ID badges should be enough to get us through."

CSEA Voices



"We need to let the employers know that we need to hire more people at the support staff level, not just at the top. Right now, I have so much work I'm snowed under."

— **Cornetta Nazario, 30-year CSEA member, Keyboard Specialist, Division of Housing.**

DSS assailant headed for prison

ALBANY — A woman accused of breaking into the home of a CSEA social services caseworker in December and then torching it has pleaded guilty to a lesser charge of second-degree attempted burglary. (See February Work Force, Page 7)

State Supreme Court Justice Joseph C. Teresi will sentence Maria I. Sanchez, 30, to seven years in state prison and three years of post-release supervision

when she returns to court March 8.

Sanchez was homeless when a CSEA member in the Albany County DSS unit received her case, officials said.

She became obsessed with the man as he secured benefits and helped settle her into a home of her own, officials said.

But Sanchez was soon arrested on an unrelated charge and forfeited the apartment while

in jail. When she attempted to have the same worker put on her case once she was released, the county said no.

On Dec. 19, Sanchez broke into the man's home in Colonie, started a fire on the kitchen stove and then lit sheets and towels, which she apparently used to ignite the bedroom.

— *Material from the Albany Times Union was used in this report.*



“There must be an issue of safety before money. If the plow hits the bad curbing or manhole covers, it could kick the blade up and hit somebody.”

CSEA Voices



“Politics can play a big role. Our members need to stay alert and stay involved.”

— Dwanna Epps, four-year CSEA member, Long Island DDSO.

CSEA activists bring safety concerns to the surface

OSWEGO — When lake effect snow kicks into high gear off Lake Ontario, the falling flakes blanket the entire SUNY Oswego campus seated along the lake’s eastern shore, hiding everything in sight under inches, often feet, of heavy, wet snow.

Then it’s up to the CSEA SUNY Oswego Local maintenance members to plow the streets and clear sidewalks of snow. It’s a job they are used to with several feet of snow each year.

However, as any snowplow operator will tell you, it’s what you can’t see that can hurt you. One raised manhole cover, ill-placed curb or sewer grate can catch the plow and throw the truck sideways, placing

the driver and those in its path in danger.

One particular road on the SUNY Oswego campus has raised a high level of concern among the SUNY maintenance staff. For several years, the road was patched around bad curbing, rising sewer grates and manhole covers. But last year, citing budgetary shortfalls, the patching never was completed. As a result, several workers suffered arm, neck and back/shoulder injuries.

“Three different guys have been hurt there, plowing that area,” said Bob Wallace, CSEA senior groundskeeper. “It’s very unsafe. We brought it up several times and nothing was done. We’ve been asking for years to have the



A recently patched manhole sits in front of the plow, a potential hazard for the workers if the patching deteriorates.

manholes dug up and dropped down, or the road to be brought up. Either way.”

Tired of getting no response from the college’s Safety Committee, CSEA SUNY Oswego Local Safety and Health Chair Dan Hoefler teamed up with Local President Joe Miceli and raised the issue at a campus labor-management meeting.

“There must be an issue of safety before money,” said Hoefler. “If the plow hits the bad curbing or manhole covers, it could kick the blade up and hit somebody. The administration would have a lot more on its hands than fixing the road if that happened,” Hoefler said.

Miceli asked the committee to look at the

big picture. “It’s only a matter of time before a student gets injured,” he said. “How much is the administration losing from an employee or student getting injured or even killed? Not to mention the damage to the vehicles themselves — bent frames, busted plows.”

Two weeks after the meeting, the administration agreed to patch the dangerous road.

“It’s a temporary fix. They still need to come up with a more permanent solution,” Miceli said.

Hopefully, that permanent solution arrives before any more permanent injuries are suffered.

— Mark M. Kotzin



CSEA SUNY Oswego plow operator Tom Abbott prepares to head out.

Port Jervis school members fighting for contract, respect

PORT JERVIS — CSEA members at the Port Jervis School District are not only fighting district administrators for a fair contract, but for respect that often is denied them on the job.

To that end, union members at the schools have turned to their community for support.

“We’re mobilizing our members,” CSEA Port Jervis School District Unit President Betty Lou Kranz said. “We are part of the community as well.”

Kranz has enlisted member and community support through activities such as distributing materials detailing their fight and urging community members to attend Board of Education meetings. They are also distributing posters, bumper stickers and check stickers to boost union visibility in Port Jervis.

Fight for Fairness

“The support staff at the Port Jervis schools need the taxpayers’ help,” Laura LaBerta, a CSEA member and bus driver at the district, said. “We are the very essence of the school. What we do every day is important, and we deserve a decent contract.”

About 230 union members employed at the district have been working without a contract for more than 18 months, with no resolution forthcoming.

One major issue is salary increases over the three-year agreement.

“The district has dictated a salary instead of negotiating with us,” Kranz said. “By their general message of refusing to negotiate, they are disrespecting us.”

Kranz also contests the district’s financial situation, noting that district administrators have recently received large salary increases.



Southern Region President Diane Hewitt, right, mobilizes CSEA members employed by the Port Jervis School District during a recent membership meeting.

Last year the district secured \$1.7 million in additional state aid over what was proposed, and the district’s end-of-year reports for the past three years have noted a ‘healthy beginning of the year fund balance.’

Equally troubling for CSEA members has been school administrators’ treatment of union members and their supporters, especially at Board of Education meetings.

Some school board members have responded rudely during public meetings to comments made by CSEA members and supportive taxpayers in favor of settling an equitable agreement.

Southern Region President Diane Hewitt, for instance, was interrupted constantly by Board President Deborah Lasch during her three-minute address urging the district to settle a contract.

“That was extremely disrespectful to our members and the taxpayers,” Hewitt said.

Since school board meetings are taped and regularly aired by the local public access television station, CSEA and community members were puzzled when the

tapes stopped airing when CSEA members voiced opposition on the contract dispute. CSEA members couldn’t help but to question the timing.

“It seems like an awfully well-timed coincidence to me,” said Hewitt.

In another instance, a taxpayer speaking in support of CSEA was interrupted by an administrator who turned on a projector for a presentation — and turned up the sound on the machine — during the woman’s comments.

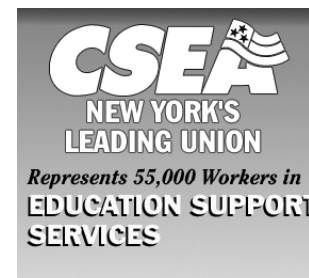
Kranz said that board members have often declined to even listen to speakers whenever the contract is discussed in meetings.

“Some of the board members treated us so rudely,” she said. “At least they should show us courtesy when we get up to speak.”

But Kranz isn’t giving up.

“We’re going to keep fighting,” Kranz said. “We’ve taken this disrespect from the board long enough.”

— Janice Marra



“We’re going to keep fighting. We’ve taken this disrespect from the board long enough.”

CSEA Voices



“We need to keep fighting for a better contract. Especially now since they are making us do more work with fewer people and resources.”

— Tina Branch, 28-year CSEA member, Secretary, Division of Housing

INSIDE THE WORK FORCE

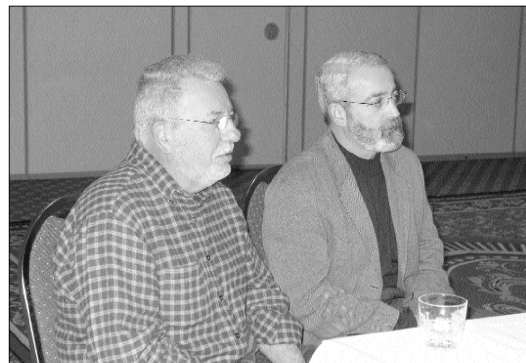
Federal PALs are CSEA's front-line troops

ALBANY — "We are facing an orchestrated assault on the work force like never before; contracting out, de-funding of services at all levels; and that is a direct hit on *us* brothers and sisters, make no mistake about it," warned Chuck Loveless, AFSCME's Legislative Director during the recent CSEA Federal Political Action Liaison (PAL) training.

"Members are assigned to their congressional representatives to be their area's liaison from CSEA," said CSEA President Danny Donohue. "During PAL training we provide the information and strategies they need to help counteract the damage that this administration is doing every day to the fortunes of working families," said Donohue.

Being a federal PAL requires a substantial commitment of time and energy on the PAL's behalf. But as

CSEA Central Region President Jim Moore, left and Onondaga County Local President Frank Forte participate in a discussion on the PEOPLE program.



CSEA Western Region President and Federal Issues Committee Chair Flo Tripi explained, this presidential election will be the mother of all political battles. And federal PALs will be the foot soldiers in the trenches.

"I know you've heard this before, but we're really, *really* going to need your help this year," said Tripi. "We not only have the presidential election. But we have many more federal and state elections that are *also* important to CSEA members."

The PAL mission

Federal PALs are activist members of CSEA who have undertaken a critical mission: To carefully track the political and voting activity of their congressional representatives and senators; to communicate and lobby on behalf of *our* interests to federal lawmakers; and to hold the lawmakers' feet to the fire when they are faced

with votes of particular interest to CSEA members.

The tools to mobilize

At the two-day PAL training, members from across the state were given tools they will need to help mobilize fellow members. They were brought up to date on the damage done by the Medicare bill passed by the Republican controlled Congress and signed by President Bush. They learned about overtime rule changes and the Bush administration's corporate agenda, where working people are given the short shrift.

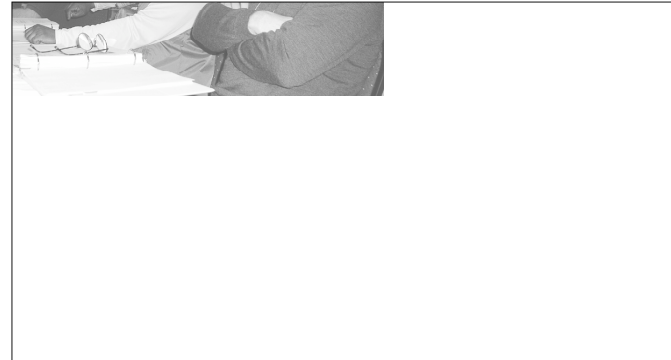
"The cornerstone of their domestic agenda is huge tax cuts, and a very large chunk of

your funding (state spending) comes from the federal government, almost one-third," said Loveless. "So to the extent that you make extreme cuts to state government you will have decreased services. These are services that our members currently provide. But it won't be that way for long if this administration gets another four years," he said.

"PALs should work with and recruit as many members as they can, to help get the White House and Congress back into Democratic hands," said Donohue. "We don't need a *small* number of people to do *everything*, but it is essential that we get EVERY MEMBER to do their part," he said.



U.S. Rep. Maurice Hinchey offered the keynote address at the PAL Training. He is shown here with CSEA Western Region President Flo Tripi and President Danny Donohue.



CSEA PAL's are brought up to date on the damage done by the Medicare bill.

PEOPLE critical to victory

PALs learned the most basic way to help take our country back from the corporate welfare crowd is to give whatever they can to the PEOPLE program. Through PEOPLE (Public Employees Organized to Promote Legislative Equality) CSEA members gain increased leverage in the federal political scene.

When elected officials like President Bush put their hands out to Big Business, they hit the jackpot. Companies and wealthy CEOs regularly donate huge sums of money to buy influence with politicians.

The result: They get sweetheart deals and special favors, while the workers get mugged.

Since union dues cannot be used for federal political purposes, every dollar donated to the PEOPLE program helps level the playing field for us, for ordinary working Americans. Right now it's rigged in favor of big business, which is sending our jobs overseas, pushing for contracting out,

laying off record numbers of people, and then cutting back on unemployment benefits.

"PEOPLE is our voice," said CSEA Central Region President Jim Moore. "By strengthening PEOPLE, we can make our leaders understand that we are determined to take this country back," he said.

For more information about the PEOPLE program, contact the CSEA Political Action Department at 1-800-342-4146 ext. 1404 who will put you in contact with your PEOPLE Region Chairs: Long Island Region, Rutha Bush, Metropolitan Region, Patricia Metzger, Southern Region, Debbie Downey; Capital Region, Cheryl Abbott; Central Region, Lori Nilsson and Western Region, Marie Prince.

— Rachel Langert



We've got the power!

As CSEA members, there is nothing you can do that is more important than helping to defeat George W. Bush in this year's presidential election.

Bush has taken every opportunity to undermine unions and has one of the worst records on labor in American history.

Repealed Ergonomics Regulations — Terminated regulations designed to prevent worker injury from repetitive motion and compensate victims for on-the-job injuries.

Repealed Responsible Contractor Rules — These rules would have denied billions of dollars in government contracts to chronic violators of environmental, labor and safety laws.

Weakened OSHA — Focus is now on compliance and voluntary programs; using

enforcement only to stop "the worst law breakers."

Eliminated jobs — Millions throughout the nation are out of work and some 3 million have lost their jobs since Bush has been in office. The Justice Department has also terminated union representation and collective bargaining agreements in the name of "national security."

Our 265,000 members must stand up against the destructive policies of the current administration and vote for change. "I urge each and every member of CSEA to use their political power and vote," said CSEA President Danny Donohue.

That starts with registering to vote, and then making sure that every eligible voter gets to the polls, not only for the general election, but for the state Primary on March 2 as well.

REGISTER TO VOTE

If you are not currently enrolled to vote, you can register in person at your county board of elections. Or call **1-800-FOR-VOTE** to request a voter application.

Workers oppose move to Ground Zero building

NEW YORK CITY — CSEA members at the New York State Department of Health (DOH) have been left to wonder if the agency cares about the health of its own workers.

DOH plans to relocate hundreds of workers and dozens more from the Public Service Commission (PSC) and Health Research Incorporated (HRI) from their midtown offices near Penn Station to an office building that was contaminated following the World Trade Center attacks. The move may occur as early as next year.

"It's mind boggling how a health agency would plan to make a move that could compromise the safety, health and well-being of our members and the general public," said Metropolitan Region President George Boncoraglio.

The 15-story limestone building across the street from Ground Zero was hit by landing gear from one of the two hijacked airliners. It sustained structural damage and was heavily contaminated by a wide range of toxic substances including asbestos, lead, fungi, fiberglass, heavy metals, bacteria and mercury.

Questions not answered

During a recent walk-through of the building, CSEA Occupational Safety and Health Specialist Komilla John noted the conspicuous absence of officials from the Governor's Office of Employee Relations (GOER) and the Office of General Services (OGS), the agency responsible for finding the new site and signing the lease.

"There were many critical questions that we raised during the walk through," John said. "But, there was no one available to provide answers."

For instance, John observed the building's air intake system faced the construction site and did not appear to be equipped with the proper filters.

CSEA members concerned

Members recently circulated a petition opposing the move and asked health officials and OGS to reconsider the plan.

Boncoraglio also vowed to meet with state and health officials to discuss members concerns.

"None of our CSEA members want to move," said Marie Rogers-Granger.

Aside from their safety concerns, workers are also mindful that if relocated, they would have to co-exist alongside one of the largest construction sites the city has ever seen.

"After we move in, how do you keep out all the dust and possible toxins that will be inevitably stirred up by the construction?" asked Deborah Hanna, president of the CSEA Health Research Incorporated.

Over the next 10 years, workers fear they will have to contend with noise, traffic and other byproducts of the rebuilding effort. Plans currently call for the construction of the Freedom Tower, a memorial for the 9/11 victims and four other skyscrapers as well as a major mass transit hub.

PSC Local President Renee Jackson said the emotional and psychological impact should also be considered.



From left, CSEA Public Service Commission Local President Renee Jackson, Health Research Incorporated Local President Deborah Hannah and state Department of Health Grievance Rep. Marie Rogers-Granger stand outside the proposed new state Department of Health offices in New York City. CSEA is voicing health concerns about the building.

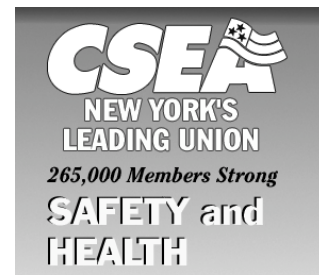
"I know members who lost family and friends at the World Trade Center," said Jackson. "Many have purposely avoided the site."

CSEA requests detailed inspection reports

While an official from the company hired to test the building insists the building is safe, CSEA has asked for detailed inspection reports and is seeking more information.

"About a year ago we found dangerous levels of asbestos in one of our buildings not far from this site despite repeated claims by federal, state and city health and environmental officials that lower Manhattan was safe for workers," said Frank Cosentino, CSEA Metropolitan Region Occupational Safety and Health Committee chair. "We fought for a comprehensive cleanup of that site then and we will continue to fight to ensure the health and safety of these members and the general public."

— David Galarza



“It’s mind boggling how a health agency would plan to make a move that could compromise the safety, health and well-being of our members and the general public.”

C. Jane Run — and record

LATHAM — Capital Region band C. Jane Run celebrated the recent release of their new three-song CD with a benefit concert.

More than \$1,000 was raised to benefit the USO's Operation Phone Home which provides prepaid calling cards to men and women serving overseas.

The benefit also featured three other local bands.

"How Do You Like Me Now?" is the third release from this high-energy foursome with a strong CSEA connection.

On drums is Joanne DeSarbo, CSEA Schenectady County Local president, and on lead vocals is Lisa Carey, who has been working at CSEA's Partnership for Education and Training for 10 years.

Longtime CSEA connections

Carey has been connected to CSEA in some form or another since she was a child.

Her dad worked for CSEA for 25 years and her mom was a CSEA unit president.

The women are joined by Michael Wray on vocals and bass and Chuck Reinemann on guitars.

The band, with its powerful stage presence and crisp sound combines the best of an updated brand of punk meets pop with an '80s accent.

The band played songs from the CD and also covered some classics with a distinctive twist.

The crowd responded by hitting the dance floor and cheering the band.

Attendees also received a copy of C. Jane Run's new release CD to enjoy at home.

The release marks a yearlong collaborative effort and was recorded at Pinewoods Studios in Melrose.

The band has been playing together for 12 years and does



C. Jane Run is from left, Chuck Reinemann, CSEA staff member Lisa Carey, CSEA Schenectady County Local President Joanne DeSarbo, and Michael Wray. The band recently held a CD release party that helped raise money for the USO, which provides entertainment to service men and women.

about 10 shows per year primarily in the Capital Region.

They also have played venues as far away as Las Vegas and have plans to perform in Boston and New York City.

To learn more about C. Jane Run check out their website at www.cjanerun.net.

You can hear and see samples of their music and order a CD.

And in case you were wondering, the "C" in C. Jane Run does not stand for CSEA.

— **Therese Assalian**



**Looking to
move up in
Civil Service?**

**CSEA's Members
Only area at
csealocal1000.org
has all the Civil
Service test prep
books you need to get
ahead in your job.
And they're all for
free!**

Operation Adopt a Soldier

WILTON — The CSEA staff at Mt. McGregor Correctional Facility are hosting a project to help bring mail and kind words to service men and women currently serving across the globe, including in the United States.

The staff asks that you write letters, send a card or a note to those serving their country.

To download a list of service people who would like to receive mail, complete with addresses, visit the CSEA web site at www.csealocal1000.org/region4.php

You can also contact Mt. McGregor Local President Cliff Seguin Jr. at (518) 587-3960, ext. 3801.





See story, Page 2.



20 years ago ...

In early 1984, then CSEA statewide Secretary Irene Carr addressed the pay equity issue on a televised forum with NYC NOW President Barbara Rochman, Assemblywoman May Newburger and other key officials. At that time, women earned 59 cents for every dollar a man earned. Equal pay and comparable worth were priority CSEA issues.

Over the past 20 years, CSEA has led the way on gender equity issues in court, in legislation and at the bargaining table — efforts that have helped close the gender gap and improve opportunities for advancement.

This March, as we celebrate Women's History Month, we know that more work must be done and continue to fight the many obstacles women may face in the workplace.



Also in 1984:

- * Geraldine Ferraro is first woman vice presidential candidate.
- * "The Cosby Show" premieres.
- * Soviets boycott the Summer Olympics in Los Angeles.
- * Ronald Reagan re-elected president in landslide election.
- * Apple computer releases the Macintosh personal computer.
- * The first megabit chip is produced at Bell Labs.
- * "Where's the Beef!?" takes the country by storm.
- * French and U.S. teams identify the AIDS virus.

Things don't always go better with Coke

Can you get more American than Coca-Cola? But torture, kidnapping, intimidation and murder? Is that the American way of doing business?

According to eyewitness reports and testimony from a recent fact-finding delegation in

Colombia, there is mounting evidence that Coca-Cola is using any and all means necessary to halt trade unionist activity in the Latin American country.

From this information, it appears the Atlanta-based multinational company routinely and systemically threatens, tortures, and kills Colombian workers.

"After hearing all the testimony and Coca Cola's response through their representatives in Colombia, our preliminary findings leave enough doubts to prove the need for further investigation," said CSEA organizer Jose Schiffino, who is of Colombian descent and is active in the Committee for Social Justice in Colombia.

"It is our hope that Coca Cola will work with us to ensure that these abuses will not be tolerated."

Schiffino joined an independent delegation of union activists and educational representatives who were led by New York City Councilman Hiram Monserrate. The delegation spent 10 days traveling throughout the country and visiting Colombian Coca Cola bottling plants and its subsidiaries. They met with workers, executives, politicians, activists and clergy.

Monserrate, who represents one of the largest Colombian communities outside of Colombia, said he was "dedicated to ensuring that none of the rights of my constituents' families are abused under the banner of an American corporation and that New York

City consumer dollars aren't underwriting human rights abuses in other countries."

Colombia is Coca Cola's most profitable market in Latin America. But many have alleged the company has been taking advantage of the nation's economic, political and military turmoil to break Colombian trade unions active in their plants. Reportedly, they have done so by contracting with paramilitaries to perpetuate the cycle of violence.

Members of the delegation heard horrific testimony from members of the Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores de Industrias Alimenticias (SINALTRAINAL) (National Food Workers Union), which represents Colombia's Coca Cola employees. Their leaders reported more than a dozen trade unionists have been assassinated.

SINALTRAINAL members said they've also been subjected to death threats, raids at their homes and union offices, kidnappings, intimidation and other violations of their collective agreements in order to break the union.

Join the fast, help the working poor

Did you know that 1 out every 4 U.S. worker is a low-wage worker? Did you know that America's working poor are all around us—in supermarkets, in parking lots, and on working farms? These hard working men and women provide essential services, yet do not receive a fair wage. Because of this, they struggle to put food on the table and pay the bills. And it is getting harder.

Help spread the word that America's working poor cannot be pushed aside and ignored any longer. Give lower-income people the power to fight poverty, starvation, and economic injustice by participating in the New York State Labor-Religion Coalition's 9th Annual 40-Hour Fast, aimed at increasing awareness of America's minimum wage and low-wage workers.

To make even more difference, this year's fast is emphasizing voter registration. As CSEA members

know, the best way to stand up and be counted is by registering and voting. By signing up new voters, you will help low-income people flex their political muscle and counteract the powerful forces working against poor people today. Still more important, your participation ensures that the fight for fair wages, quality working conditions and good benefits for every worker continues to grow.

Help send a message that these deplorable conditions will not be tolerated. Encourage at least three working people to register to vote. By standing up and doing your part, America's hard working poor will have a stronger voice.

You can sign up to take part in the fast at www.labor-religion.org.

— Kari Amidon



From left, CSEA Organizer Jose Schiffino; Lenore Palladino, national organizer of the United Students Against Sweatshops; New York City Councilman Hiram Monserrate; and Dorothy Benz, communications director for Communications Workers of America Local 1180.

"Our interviews verified that the lives of students, workers, women, and everyone struggling for justice in Colombia is a life lived with daily terror," said Lenore Palladino, national organizer for United Students Against Sweatshops. "The incredible fear witnessed in Colombia is reason enough to require that Coca Cola ensure students and residents in the U.S. who buy their products that they are doing everything they can to protect their Colombian workers from violence and murder." The delegation also

called for the following actions to verify that human and labor rights are not being violated in Coca Cola's Colombian plants: 1) Dropping retaliatory criminal charges against employees; 2) A public statement from Coca Cola supporting international labor rights in Colombia and denouncing anti-union violence; and 3) The establishment of an independent body to monitor labor conditions.

— David Galarza

Board of Directors election results

CSEA's board of directors is comprised of 122 voting and non-voting members, charged with the power and authority to transact all of the union's business.

Albany County — Jack Rohl*	Long Island Region 1 Educational — Jean Ahlert*	Health — Robert V. Simoni*	Nilsson*	Robert Calhoun*	System — Michael D'Alessandro*
Allegany County — David J. Mayo*	Southern Region 3 Educational — Debra Raguseo*	Herkimer County — Joan M. Grose*	Mental Hygiene Reg. 6 — Kathy Button,* Dawn Smith*	Putnam County — Irene Kobbe*	Tioga County — Lynn F. Wool*
Audit & Control — Georgianna M. Natale*	Capital Region 4 Educational — Vianna (Vi) Boyko*	Insurance — Phil Cannon*	Monroe County — Michael Flavin*	Rockland County — William J. Riccaldo*	Transportation — Bob Timpano,* William LeBaron*
Broome County — Doreen Gilbert*	Western Region 6 Educational — Kelly L. Volpe	Jefferson — Marc S. Rogers*	Montgomery County — Edward W. Russo*	Saratoga County — Ronald D. Revers*	Ulster County — Alessandra E. Reynolds*
Cattaraugus County — Karen L. Anderson*	Education Department — Cheryl Abbott*	Judiciary — Mary Ellen DeLouise	Motor Vehicle — Michael Febraio Jr.*	Schenectady County — Harold (Hal) Gray Jr.*	Universities Reprs. — Colleen Wheaton, Mary D'Antonio, Paul McDonald, Joseph McMullen
Cayuga County — Ginger Sheffey*	En.Con. — Laverne V. French*	Labor — Lester Crockett	Nassau County — John C. Shepherd,* Jane M. D'Amico*	Schuyler County — Charlene M. DeMarco*	Warren County — Paul S. Fritsch*
Chautauqua County — James R. Smith*	Erie County — Marcia E. Olszewski*	Law — Angela Fiore	Niagara County — Mark W. Dotterweich*	Seneca County — Bruce K. Damalt*	Washington County — Brenda Facin*
Chemung County — Thomas P. Pirozzolo*	Executive Reprs. — Francis (Frank) Strack, Thomas (Tom) Moylan	Livingston County — Mary Jo Tubbs*	Office of Children & Family Services — Joseph T. Melita Jr.*	St Lawrence County — Betty J. Thomas*	Westchester County — John McPhillips, Gary J. Conley
Columbia County — Lucretia J. Altomer*	Fulton County — Ron Briggs*	Madison County — Roslie M. Tallman*	Onondaga County — Tad Fundalinski*	State — Mary A. Capano*	Wyoming County — Sandra L. Boyd*
Correctional Services — Ellen P. Lennon, Richard Plumadore	Genesee County — Sharon L. Bork*	Mental Hygiene Reg. 1 — Carol Guardiano*	Orange County — Sabina Shapiro*	State Public Authorities — Paul Doran*	Yates County — Carol A. Thornton*
Delaware County — George Lawson*	Greene County — Mary-Alice (Patty) Whiteman*	Mental Hygiene Reg. 2 — Joel Schwartz,* Abraham R. Benjamin Jr.*	Orleans County — Christine A. Covell*	Steuben County — Ronald A. Gillespie*	* Unopposed
Dutchess County — Elizabeth Piraino*		Mental Hygiene Reg. 3 — Deborah Downey	Otsego County — Linda Stiefel*	Suffolk County — Margaret (Meg) Shutka*	
Economic Development — Rose DeSorbo*		Mental Hygiene Reg. 4 — Helen Fishedick*	Public Service —	Sullivan County — James J. Blake*	
		Mental Hygiene Reg. 5 — Rose A. MacBlane,* Lori		Taxation & Finance — Jacqueline R. Goldsmith*	
				Teachers Retirement	

Region Election Results

Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte*	Southern Region President Diane Hewitt	Central Region President Jim Moore*
Executive Vice President Carol Guardiano*	Executive Vice President Gary Conley*	Executive Vice President Ginger Sheffey*
1st Vice President Liz Pearsall*	1st Vice President William Riccaldo*	1st Vice President Betty Thomas*
2nd Vice President Les Eason*	2nd Vice President Thomas Murray*	2nd Vice President Bob Timpano*
3rd Vice President Jane D'Amico*	3rd Vice President Lizabeth Piraino*	3rd Vice President Brian Mayock*
Secretary Lee Reynolds*	Secretary Christine Mumma*	Recording Secretary Dorothy Breen*
Treasurer Barbara Allen*	Treasurer Diana Harris*	Treasurer Roslie Tallman*
Metropolitan Region President George Boncoraglio*	Capital Region President Kathy Garrison	Western Region President Flo Tripi*
Executive Vice President Denise Berkley	Executive Vice President Betty Egan	1st Vice President Kathy Button*
1st Vice President Leonita Wilson	1st Vice President Ron Briggs	2nd Vice President Hank Hoisington*
2nd Vice President Linda Williams	2nd Vice President Mike Gifford	3rd Vice President Steve Hurley*
Secretary Anita Booker	3rd Vice President Linda Hillje	Treasurer William Stanton*
Treasurer Ramon Lucas*	Secretary Kim Wallace	Secretary Dawn Smith*
	Treasurer Carol Bruno	* Unopposed

CSEA delegates to the AFSCME convention

The following are results for the contested races for AFSCME delegates. The listing of all unopposed AFSCME delegates appeared in the January, 2004 edition of *The Work Force*.

CSEA members vote for delegates to AFSCME's convention to represent the membership. The convention is held every two years, during which changes to AFSCME's constitution and bylaws, which ultimately affect CSEA, are voted on. This year's convention is scheduled for Anaheim, Calif., June 20-25, 2004.

Capital Region Kathy Garrison Michael Febraio, Jr. Elizabeth "Betty" Eagan Joseph F. Musso Jack Rohl Sharon Rickert Mike Gifford Cindy Thurber Linda J. Hillje Dawn Sweeney Kim Wallace Bob Travis Carol Bruno Mark Davis Sue Crawford Jeanette M. DeBonis Laverne French Michael J. Meyers Joseph T. Melita Bob Calhoun Tom McMahon George Hebert Georgianna Natale Netha DeGroff Michael Geraghty Tracy Carnavale	Hal Gray Keith Prior Helen Fishedick Hank Wagoner Jackie Goldsmith Greg White Bill VanGuilder Pat Jabonaski Ed Wysomski Rose DeSorbo	Kenneth Penski Joan Bender Marie Prince Sandra Boyd Tom Rogalski Yvonne Brown Rocco A. Sidari, Jr. Ron Castle, Jr. James R. Smith Rose Conti John V. Stading Doris B. Cota Elaine Timm Christine Covell Mary Jo Tubbs Wayne Dorler James Volpone Mark Dotterweich Thomas J. Warzel Robert "Robbie" Ellis Pamela Watson Timothy Finnigan Wendy Wedman Bernadette Giambra Michael Flavin
Western Region Florence "Flo" Tripi Ronald A. Gillespie Kathy Button Nancy P.L. Hart Hank Hoisington Cyndy Herman Steven J. Hurley Michael Jones Dawn Smith Robert Mootry, Jr. Bill E. Stanton Marcia E. Olszewski Timothy A. Anderson Charles Parsons Susan Balsano		



Summary of January 2004 CSEA Board of Directors meeting

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

ALBANY — CSEA's Board of Directors met on Jan. 15, 2004. In official business, the board:

- Expanded the range of member benefits to include the New York Safety Program (replacing the National Traffic Safety Program), the Value Advantage Program (Davis Vision), EarQ (discount hearing aides), Verizon Wireless and Simply Certificates (discount gift certificates);
- Authorized opening of an Investment Management Account with Fleet National Bank;
- Approved miscellaneous allowances for 2004 CSEA events;
- Approved 60-month copy machine lease for Brooklyn Developmental Center Local 447;

- Extended for five years lease for Orange County Local 836 office at 446 East Main Street, Middletown;
- Authorized through March 31, 2006 a lease for Office of General Services Local 660 on the Concourse Level of Empire State Plaza, Albany;
- Extended for five years lease for Nassau County Municipal Employees Local 882 office at 336 North Broadway, Jericho;
- Dissolved Hudson Valley Community College-Student Association Local 707 and Helmuth Day Care Employees Local 714;
- Approved 2004 special election schedule for vacancies on the statewide board of directors; and
- Placed into administratorship Town Of Callicoon Unit 853-8810-00.

Questions concerning the summary should be directed to CSEA Statewide Secretary Barbara Reeves, CSEA Headquarters, 143 Washington Ave., Albany, NY 12210 or (518) 257-1253.

Procedure protects rights

AFSCME's constitution includes a rebate procedure to protect the rights of members who disagree with how the union spends money for partisan political or ideological purposes.

Article IX, Section 11 of the International Constitution, which establishes the procedure for dues rebates for members who object to AFSCME's partisan political or ideological expenditures, was amended at AFSCME's 33rd International Convention.

The amended language requires those persons who object to the expenditure of dues for political or ideological purposes submit their objection in writing to both the International Union and CSEA Local 1000 by certified mail between April 1 and April 16 (dates inclusive) each year for the prior year ending Dec. 31.

The timing of the steps in the procedure is tied to the International's fiscal year. The procedure, including the requirements for submitting a proper rebate request, were modified by a constitutional amendment adopted by the 1998 International Convention. As modified, those procedures and requirements are spelled out in Article IX, Section 11 of the International Constitution. THESE REQUIREMENTS WILL BE STRICTLY ENFORCED.

Here's how it works. Members who object to the expenditure of a portion of their dues for partisan political or ideological purposes and want to request a rebate must do so individually in writing between April 1 and April 16, 2004. That request must be timely filed by registered or certified mail with: the International Secretary-Treasurer and the CSEA Statewide Treasurer. The requests must contain the following information: name, Social Security number, home address and the AFSCME local to which dues were paid during the preceding year. This information must be typed or legibly printed. The individual request must be signed by the member and sent by the individual member to: International Secretary-Treasurer at AFSCME Headquarters, 1625 L St., N.W.,

Washington, D.C. 20036-5687; and CSEA Statewide Treasurer, Empire State Plaza Station, P. O. Box 2611, Albany, N.Y.

12214-0218. Requests for more than one person may not be sent in the same envelope. Each request must be sent individually. Requests must be renewed in writing every year the member wishes a rebate.

Upon receipt by the International of a valid rebate request, an application for partisan political or ideological rebate will be sent to the objecting member. The objecting member will be required to complete and return the application in a timely manner. In accordance with the constitutional amendment adopted at the 1998 International Convention, the application will require the objecting member to identify those partisan or political or ideological activities to which objection is being made, and no rebate will be made to any member who fails to complete that portion of the application. In determining the amount of the rebate to be paid to any member, the International Union and each subordinate body shall have the option of limiting the rebate to the member's pro-rata share of the expenses for those activities specifically identified in the application.

Upon receipt by CSEA of the valid, certified request, the constitutional maximum of 3 percent rebate will be processed. No phone calls or e-mail correspondence will be accepted.

Any member who is dissatisfied with the amount of the rebate paid by the International Union may object by filing a written appeal with the AFSCME Judicial Panel within 15 days after the rebate check has been received. Appeals should be sent to the Judicial Panel Chairperson at the AFSCME International Headquarters at the address listed above. The Judicial Panel will conduct a hearing and issue a written decision on such appeals, subject to an appeal to the full Judicial Panel. If dissatisfied with the Judicial Panel's ruling, a member can appeal to the next International Convention.



Protecting Your Benefits

Empire Plan claims deadlines for calendar year 2003

Empire Plan enrollees have until March 31, 2004, (90 days after the end of the calendar year) in which to submit medical expenses that were incurred during the 2003 plan year to:

United Health Care Service Corp.
P.O. Box 1600
Kingston, N.Y. 12402-1600
For the Empire Plan Basic Medical Program, the Home Care Advocacy Program (HCAP) and for non-network physical therapy or chiropractic services.

CIGNA/Express Scripts
Member Reimbursement /
Claims Review Unit
P.O. Box 1180
Troy, N.Y. 12181-1180
For prescriptions filled at non-participating pharmacies or at participating pharmacies without using your New York Government

Employee Benefit Card.
ValueOptions

P.O. Box 778
Troy, N.Y. 12181-0778
For non-network mental health and substance abuse services received in 2003.

Enrollees can call the Empire plan at 1-877-7NYSHIP (1-877-769-7447) with questions or to obtain claim forms. As a reminder, when using the Empire Plan's new toll-free telephone number, please pay extra attention to the choices offered by the automated system.

Network providers/pharmacies will submit claims directly to the appropriate insurance carrier on your behalf. If you have a non-network claim submission, make sure you complete the requested subscriber information on the claim forms, include the original billing or receipt (if requested), and don't forget to sign the claim form.

May 15 is deadline for submitting proposed resolutions, changes to CSEA's constitution and bylaws

Proposed resolutions and proposed amendments to the CSEA Constitution & Bylaws for consideration by CSEA delegates to the union's 2004 Annual Delegates Meeting **must be submitted by May 15, 2004.**

Proposed resolutions may be submitted **only** by a delegate and **must** be submitted on the proper forms. Forms for submitting resolutions are available from CSEA headquarters and region offices.

Proposed resolutions and proposed amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws must be submitted no later than May 15 to Statewide Secretary Barbara Reeves, CSEA Headquarters, 143 Washington Ave., Albany, N.Y., 12210-2303.

The 2004 CSEA Annual Delegates Meeting will be held Sept. 19-24 in Washington, D.C.

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.

Leading Edge

EDITOR'S NOTE: This month, The Work Force debuts a new feature called Leading Edge. Each month, the Leading Edge will focus on a CSEA member whose job, activism, community involvement or interests put them in the spotlight. This month, CSEA Chautauqua County activist and officer Jim Kurtz is profiled for his United Way involvement.

Jim Kurtz has been active in CSEA since 1972, serving his Chautauqua County unit and local as steward, negotiating team member, board rep, treasurer, political action committee member and president.

He has served the Western Region as treasurer and political action committee member, and as Chautauqua County's representative on CSEA's board of directors. In that capacity he has served on many statewide committees, including membership, insurance and the Public Sector — now publications committees. He is currently serving as local president again.

In his county employment, Jim is a public health sanitarian. Among his duties, he inspects hotel swimming pools, restaurants and beaches for the County Health Department.

A highly respected community activist, he recently assumed the presidency of the Chautauqua County United Way Campaign, a measure of the high esteem in which he is held by his community. Jim was also a positive influence in the building of a county permanent Workers Memorial monument in Erlandson Overview Park a few years ago, and is active in the annual Workers Memorial ceremony, and is a leader of the Chautauqua Credit Union and active on the area labor council.

He and his wife Arlene, are the parents of adult children Jacob and Joy. Jim and Arlene have earned the admiration of many for their dedicated care of their daughter, Joy, who sustained a traumatic brain injury in a car accident years ago, and has only the use of her right hand. They often attend region meetings, with Joy in her wheelchair. She has spoken at region meetings, and regularly speaks out through public service messages, before high

school prom season, about the dangers of drinking and driving.

"We're quite proud of her," said Kurtz. "She's also helpful to others, helping in a special horseback riding program, and reading to kindergarten children on a regular basis."

Kurtz took a few moments with the *Work Force* recently to answer some questions about his activism and community involvement.

What are your new duties as United Way president?

"As UW president, I oversee the fund campaign, and dispense funds to the many non-profit agencies receiving them."

How did you come to be a United Way president?

"I've always had a desire to serve."

What are the goals of the 2004 United Way drive?

"To raise as much funding as possible, to help with the increased need, due to job loss in the area."

What issues is the United Way of Chautauqua County facing in general, and specifically, how have things changed for charities in the last 20 years?

"Companies are leaving the area, taking jobs away. There are fewer good-paying jobs and more needy families.

Who has had the biggest impact on your life?

"My wife, Arlene."



Jim Kurtz poses with a mock *Work Force* front page recognizing his years serving on the CSEA Board of Directors publications committee.

Scholarship deadline approaches

April 15 is the deadline for graduating high school seniors who are sons or daughters of CSEA-represented employees to apply for scholarships offered by or through CSEA.

A single application covers three scholarship programs. Applications are available from CSEA local or unit presidents, at CSEA headquarters, region or satellite offices, or may be downloaded from the Member Benefits section of the CSEA web site: www.csealocal1000.org.

Irving Flaumenbaum Scholarship

Eighteen scholarships will be awarded to graduating high school seniors of CSEA members. Three \$1,000 awards will be presented in each of CSEA's six regions.

JLT Award

One \$2,500 JLT Award Scholarship will be presented to a graduating high school senior entering the SUNY system. The top 2 percent of scholastic achievers, based on high school average, class rank and SAT scores will be selected to create the eligibility pool for this scholarship.

MetLife Award

One \$2,500 MetLife Award will be presented to a graduating high school senior and is not limited to a student entering the SUNY system. The top 2 percent of scholastic achievers, class rank and SAT scores will be selected to create the eligibility pool for this scholarship.

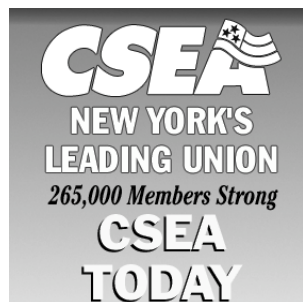
Winners will be notified in June and announced in *The Work Force*. The CSEA scholarship program is administered by the CSEA Memorial Scholarship Committee.

PEOPLE PERSON

— The PEOPLE Recruiter of the Month for January is Rutha Bush of the Long Island DDSO. She recruited 28 new members to the PEOPLE program.

It is Bush's third consecutive month as Recruiter of the Month. PEOPLE is CSEA and AFSCME's political action program. It is responsible for raising money and collecting voluntary contributions from the membership so that CSEA can effectively promote our interests at the state and federal level ... **CBTU SLATES ANNUAL CONVENTION** —

The 33rd International Convention of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU) is scheduled for May 26 - 31, 2004 in Atlanta. This year's theme is "On the road to the ballot box: Building a coalition for victory." The format will include resolutions and policy papers designed to put forth the organization's position on a wide range of domestic and global issues that speak to the needs of working families. "The focus of the convention will be to tackle the tough issues and suggest solutions which will provide security, a decent standard of living, a voice in the political process, and generally make the quality of life a little better for all of us, particularly the least among us in our society," explained CBTU President and AFSCME International



Secretary-Treasurer William Lucy. For additional information, leave a voice mail message at (518) 257-1210 or toll free at (800) 342-4146, ext. 1210 ... **ROAD CONDITIONS AVAILABLE ONLINE**

— The state has launched a web-based Winter Travel Advisory System to provide motorists with information on New York's most-traveled roads, including the NYS Thruway. This new website provides information on weather and road conditions such as icy spots, flooding, blowing and drifting snow, fog or freezing rain. To use this new system, simply log onto the State Department of Transportation's (NYSDOT) website at www.dot.state.ny.us and click on the Winter Travel Advisory System link for information on major roads and highways ...

WORKER INJURY STUDY FLAWED — The Bureau of Labor Statistics has released a report stating that private workplace injuries have declined. But don't be fooled by the numbers. The data can not accurately be compared to previous years because the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) changed how employers record injuries. Additionally, employers are more frequently using scare tactics that seek to prevent reporting of dangerous conditions.

Hearing Aid Benefit

→ Now Available!



Members are now entitled to the following hearing aid benefits:

- 35% OFF suggested retail price.
- Lifetime service and adjustments through your local participating office.
- 90 day supply of batteries.
- Free annual hearing screening.
- Available for employees, members, and family members.

SPECIAL OFFER!
EXCLUSIVE
TO CSEA Members
100% Digital
Hearing Aids From
\$950⁰⁰

EarQ[®]
The Intelligent Hearing Aid
866-432-7500
www.earq.com



Editors Note: Due to space constraints, the Employee Benefit Fund column did not appear in this edition. It will resume next month.