

THE WORK FORCE

How bad is bad?

New York's Budget Needs More Cuts, Pataki Acknowledges

By RICHARD PÉREZ PEÑA

ALBANY, N.Y.

Pataki's budget cut spending by 5 and said cuts next

Pataki withholding budget shortfall data

Albany: Governorial rival McCall says information needed

By JAMES M. COARDO
Capitol bureau

necessary to balance the 2003-2005 budget, particularly if federal aid is not forthcoming.

mission that than it predicted in both years on the

Pataki's promises carry a cost

Big bills

New York state, grappling with a deficit of as much as \$10 billion, is already committed to some significant tax cuts and health care increases over the next three years:

	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006
Tax cuts	\$1.5 billion	\$1.5 billion	\$1.5 billion
Health care	\$1.5 billion	\$1.5 billion	\$1.5 billion

After spending with state services in his bid for reelection, Gov. George Pataki could get very lucky — or very unlucky — as a state budget deficit.

As noted public affairs editor of Empire Blue Cross, Pataki's work looked as if it was a billion for the state. However, lawmakers only due wanted to billion the state. Low taxpayers or public money.

Gov owns up to \$2B shortfall

By DAVID SERMAN in N.Y. and KENNETH LOVETT in Albany

Gov. Pataki yesterday for the first time "stepped up to a

City Comptroller William Thompson issued a report yesterday showing that 20 cents of every tax dollar collected by the city will be going to pay interest on bonds by 2006.

Right now, 16 1/2 cents of every tax dollar pays for debt service.

Thompson urged city officials to "act now" to develop long-term plan for reducing the growing debt burden makes it harder to fund other city services.

Report Thompson was required to produce by the earlier contained the same data that the administration issued in April.

During the last fiscal year, March 31. And warns it could grow to \$10 billion next year.

EDITORIALS

Hard times in New York

Governor Pataki talks of the need to cut back, and in details not shared during the campaign

The surest indication yet of how bad the state budget crisis is comes straight from Governor Pataki himself. Finally, he and his top aides will talk about it, and in some of the detail it demands.

The governor's order for 5 percent cuts in spending, agency by agency, for the rest of the fiscal year is significant enough in its own right. It's all the more jarring, though, in its departure from the administration line that no cuts in state spending would be necessary before next April 1.

One wonders, then. Why couldn't Mr. Pataki tell us during his re-election campaign what he's willing to say now? There's barely a state in the country that isn't confronting a budget crisis, where the choices come down to raising taxes and public college tuition or cutting services — or all three.

The point of Mr. Pataki's delay wasn't to deprive state Comptroller H. Carl McCall of a campaign issue, was it? Mr. McCall had warned during his own quest to be governor that the state might not have enough money to get through the year. A comptroller's office report in mid-October said that revenues were down 14 percent from the previous year. (Mr. McCall has since adjusted that estimate to 8 percent.) The Pataki administration didn't want to hear such warnings, though. Its message, instead, was that voters

should continue to trust the governor to guide the state through hard times. Even now, Mr. Pataki declines to offer his own estimate of the size of the budget deficit. Others are suggesting it's in the \$5 billion range.

Clearly, though, the state's finances are very shaky. Why else would Budget Director Carole Stene be pushing for a reduction in the state work force? Let's see what becomes of it. The governor imposed a hiring freeze last year. The number of state jobs has declined, by approximately 2,650, since then, but hiring has continued as well. In any case, New York employs many more state and local government workers per capita, and at much higher salaries, than other states, according to a recent study the Public Policy Institute, a business-backed think tank.

Even a deeper reduction in the state work force won't add up to a 5 percent decline in spending. Even if it did, it wouldn't be enough to close the deficit. Five percent less in agency by agency spending translates to about \$1 billion over the course of an entire year, according to budget experts. Whatever the deficit is, it's almost surely well in excess of \$1 billion.

But then Mr. Pataki says more budget-cutting strategies are under consideration — or will be. In time, he'll have to level with us as to what they might be. New York's fiscal reckoning is getting ever closer.

See Page 3

Photo of the Month



Susan Clauson, a CSEA member from the NYS Bridge Authority, cuts up her Wal-Mart credit card with the help of former Wal-Mart executive, now union organizer, Gretchen Adams after hearing Adams' account of Wal-Mart's war on its own workers at CSEA's Women's Conference. The CSEA Women's Committee cheers them on. Read the full story on Page 15. Full Women's Conference coverage on Pages 10-11.

25/55 enrollment for state employees ends March 31

The open enrollment period for state employees who wish to retire under CSEA's 25/55 early retirement program is Jan. 1 through March 31, 2003.

The 25/55 program allows employees with 25 years of service to retire at age 55 without benefit reductions.

Open enrollment periods for local government and school district employees have already taken place. Since the state failed to implement the program earlier, Jan. 1 through March 31 is the default open enrollment period under the law. CSEA introduced the 25/55 legislation as a fairer option than the governor's early retirement incentive for employees and employers alike.

The 25/55 measure prevents the governor from targeting specific job titles, opening early retirement to all eligible workers.

Longtime CSEA activist dies

Dominic "Dom" Spacone Jr., 73, longtime president of the Niagara Falls School Unit and the Niagara County Educational Local, died Nov. 18, in his Lewiston home after a lengthy illness.

Spacone served for 25 years as unit president and 22 years as local president. In addition to service on the statewide board of directors, he also chaired the statewide local government committee.

Spacone was a member of Retirees Local 905 and president of the Niagara County Retirees Unit.

He worked in the carpentry shop for the Niagara Falls Board of Education for 28 years, retiring in 1991.

Spacone is survived by his wife of 50 years, the former Nina LeSacchi, and four children. His son David Spacone is also a former CSEA Niagara Falls Unit president and current member of the CSEA Board of Directors. He is also survived by two brothers and nine grandchildren.

SUNY New Paltz workers protected

NEW PALTZ — SUNY New Paltz food service workers and their supporters on campus are celebrating a victory after the Campus Auxiliary Services (CAS) Board of Directors voted to require the private Sodexho Alliance to sign a card check/ neutrality agreement as part of the company's negotiations with CAS for a new, 10-year food service contract.

Nearly 100 food service employees at the college, all employees of Sodexho, have been working to organize a union with CSEA since October. CSEA already represents nearly 400 state employees at SUNY New Paltz.

CAS, a non-profit corporation, oversees dining and other student services on behalf of the SUNY New Paltz administration.

The CAS Board of Directors, composed of campus students, faculty and administrative staff, voted to include the card check/ neutrality agreement within the contract for Sodexho to continue its management of dining services at the college.

"As a CSEA representative at SUNY New Paltz, I would personally like to thank the students, UUP members and especially the CSEA members who worked hard for today's victory," CSEA SUNY New Paltz Local President Len Beaulieu said.

Read more about the workers' fight for fairness and respect in upcoming *Work Force* editions.

— Janice Marra



CSEA Southern Region President Diane Hewitt looks on as CSEA President Danny Donohue presents CSEA/AFSCME pins to CSEA's newest members. The 40-plus Ulster County Head Start workers' overwhelming support for the union convinced management to grant CSEA voluntary recognition to represent them.

Note: Each month, The Work Force will feature an excerpt of the union's agenda for the future. To read the entire agenda, visit www.csealocal1000.net.

January 2003

The CSEA Agenda

Throughout the past year, CSEA engaged in a renewal of purpose reflected in the priority agenda that our union unveiled at the 2002 Annual Delegates Meeting. It is an agenda for the future to ensure that our union will continue to take the lead on issues that make a positive difference in the lives of our members and the communities in which we live.

The agenda represents the broad range of activities of our union and helps to focus our efforts. The agenda items were identified and developed with broad opportunity for comment and input from throughout the leadership ranks and by canvassing our membership. It is our purpose to involve our members in issues they care about and, at the same time, more clearly define what our union is all about.

CSEA’s remedy to state’s fiscal woes: cut prescription drug costs

ALBANY — The year ahead promises to be a difficult one across New York and CSEA is wasting no time in mobilizing to ensure fairness and respect for all its members and the services we provide.

Tight budgets at the state and local level, contentious contract negotiations, rising health care and prescription drug costs are already putting strains on services in every part of the state. To address the emerging crisis, CSEA recently held an emergency briefing for its local and unit presidents to lay the groundwork for the fight ahead.

Prior to the emergency meeting, President Danny Donohue called on Gov. George

Pataki and the state Legislature to focus on prescription drug price reform issues as a top priority in dealing with the state’s emerging budget crisis.

“The skyrocketing cost of prescription drugs are an area that cannot be ignored,” Donohue said. “All New Yorkers and our state and local governments pay too much.”

“At the state and local government level, we’re seeing a squeeze, particularly in Medicaid costs which are being driven by the prescription drug increases,” Donohue said.

The union leader pointed out that Florida, Maine, and Michigan have all enacted prescription drug price reforms and realized significant savings. A Boston University study suggested similar actions by New York could help realize \$400 million annually in Medicaid savings alone, with further savings possible with additional reform.

“At the very least, New York must use its tremendous consumer power to leverage better prices from the pharmaceutical companies,” Donohue said.

“There is no one simple solution to the state’s fiscal situation but it would be irresponsible to not seek out the savings that other states are already realizing in this

Did it come as a surprise to you when the Governor announced the state’s budget crisis after the election or were you already feeling the impact of it?



“I’m not surprised at all because prior to the election the governor was making stops in all the counties handing out money very freely. We are savvy enough to know from past experience that once the election is done, the money disappears.”

— **Betty Thomas, CSEA Central Region 1st vice president and St. Lawrence County Local president.**



“I’m not surprised about the budget deficit. We have critical positions that are vacant. Roughly thirty-some plant utility positions here in Plaza Operations alone. We’re running short staffed. Some places we don’t have staff at all and nobody should have been surprised.”

— **John Wakewood, CSEA Capital Region 2nd vice president and Office of General Services Local president**



“In Suffolk County schools, we thought things were going fairly well. This is a real shot and we’ll deal with it. A lot of possible layoffs, a lot of possible benefits being cut and it’s going to impact our members big time. It’s going to come as a surprise to a lot of people. So we really have to get out and let them know what’s happening and what we’re going to do about it.”

— **Diane Klement, Suffolk County Educational Employees Local president**

CSEA ready, state not

The CSEA negotiating team is ready to begin contract talks with the state for members in the Administrative Services Unit, Institutional Services Unit, Operational Services Unit, and the Division of Military and Naval Affairs.

CSEA has made a formal request to begin negotiations, but the New York State Governor’s Office of Employee Relations has indicated it will not be ready to exchange proposals until at least the end of January.

The team, which is made up of 24 CSEA members from across the state and professional CSEA contract negotiations staff, has its proposals ready for the upcoming negotiations. Contract proposals are based on input from rank-and-file members who responded to the contract survey CSEA sent out earlier this year as well as recommendations from team members about changes needed.

For more information, visit www.csealocal1000.net.

area,” Donohue said. CSEA has launched a statewide advertising campaign to press for action on the prescription drug issue. At the presidents’ briefing, CSEA laid out information and strategies to bring about positive action as state and local officials deal with unprecedented budget shortfalls in the months ahead.

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Fired Up for 2003

And so it begins.

The year ahead promises to be a difficult and challenging one. Tight budgets, contentious contract negotiations, rising health care and prescription drug costs and strains on services are already evident in every part of the state.

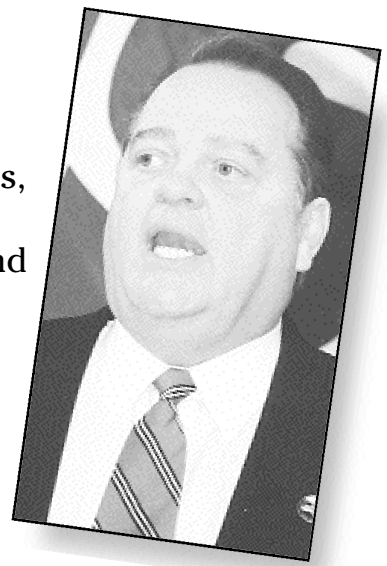
It will likely get worse before it gets better. There has been little indication of the extent of the problem from Governor Pataki. But some analysts believe the current state budget deficit is more than \$2 billion with projections for an unprecedented \$10 billion deficit in the next fiscal year.

CSEA has been warning about the signs of an approaching crisis for some time to no apparent response. So let me be clear: CSEA members will not be scapegoats for fiscal mismanagement or the unwillingness to deal with problems before the crisis.

There is no one simple solution. There has to be a comprehensive long range plan that is balanced and fair. In the meantime, there are some immediate actions that could be taken.

Prescription drug price reform is the first example of an area that could yield significant savings for New Yorkers. (See story, Page 3).

We will press this issue as our starting place but make no mistake, we have a long road to travel in the year ahead.



New OMH plan a disgrace

ALBANY — CSEA is ridiculing a new “Five Year Plan” from the state Office of Mental Health.

“This plan would be laughable if it wasn’t so tragic,” said CSEA President Danny Donohue. “We have seen scandal after scandal stemming from the administration’s morally bankrupt policies that have failed people with mental illness. Now OMH has the gall to issue more of the same nonsense in what is supposed to be a comprehensive plan.”

In October CSEA indicated that it has no confidence in the

leadership of OMH and called on Gov. George Pataki to personally intervene to end his administration’s mistreatment of people with mental illness.

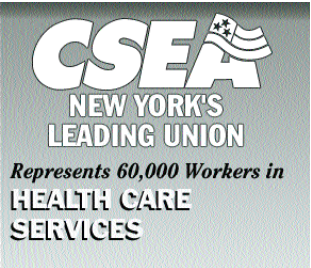
The governor has not only ignored CSEA’s call but has said little about the mental health crisis, even as the *New York Times* has continued to publish new accounts of abuse and mistreatment of individuals with mental illness stemming from the administration’s policies.

At press time, state Attorney General Eliot Spitzer had filed a lawsuit against the operators of

an adult home that was the subject of one of the *Times*’ exposes for deficient care.

CSEA has called for an overhaul of the state’s policies and treatment for people with mental illness and has outlined ideas for a balanced community based system making better use of available facilities and the existing work force.

CSEA remains concerned that the governor’s upcoming state budget may call for the closing of state psychiatric centers without providing for appropriate alternative care.



Lelia Hoskins, a MHTA at Creedmoor Psychiatric Center for the past 34 years, has personally witnessed the reckless disregard for the mentally ill at a private home not far from her facility. “I see that a lot of our former consumers are going there, and they are just walking around,” said Hoskins. “They are not tidy, and often they are out there begging. To me, they don’t seem to be caring for the consumers like we do.”

Jake Deas, also a Creedmoor MHTA, has heard plenty of complaints from consumers who have been sent to these private homes. “A lot of times, when the consumers are being discharged they tell you, ‘I don’t want to go there,’” said Deas. “They tell you about the things that go on in some of these places that we really don’t know anything about because some of them have gone there and they either walk out or somehow eventually return. Then, if they know us, they start telling us these stories.”



Women’s health law boosts health services

New York’s new women’s health legislation, signed into law this past fall, expands the scope and availability of basic women’s health services for all New York women and sets minimum levels of women’s health services that must be covered under health insurance plans.

A workshop outlining the law’s key points was given at CSEA’s recent Women’s Conference. This legislation:

- Prohibits any insurer from limiting in any way a woman’s right to directly access primary and preventative obstetric and gynecological care;
- Requires insurers to cover annual mammograms for women

beginning at 40. Previous law required annual mammogram coverage beginning at 50;

- Provides that all medical insurance coverage shall include coverage for osteoporosis (declining bone density) detection, prevention and treatment;
- Allows health insurers to charge co-payments and deductibles for certain cancer screenings;
- Requires that any health plan that contains prescription drug coverage shall also provide coverage for approved contraceptive drugs and devices.

The bill contains provisions that will allow religious organizations that primarily serve and employ individuals of the same religion

an exemption from providing contraceptive coverage. However, where an exemption is allowed, employees will have to be provided with the ability to purchase contraceptive coverage on their own.

- Establishes a statewide breast cancer detection and education program known as the Healthy Women Partnership Program. The Healthy Women Partnership Program will expand services provided by the state to include provision to women that have difficulty affording the insurance deductibles for breast cancer screening and detection, as well as continuing services to women with no or inadequate health insurance.

CSEA Voices



“**C**SEA protects the rights of all workers and makes sure all labor laws are being followed.”

— Ana Arenth, 20 year CSEA member, LPN, Delaware County Local

Member's efforts brighten holidays for kids

WASHINGTONVILLE — A CSEA member is giving back by leading her school district's effort to make the lives of children with serious illnesses a little more joyous during the holidays.

Reaching out to the school community

Doreen Diemer, secretary to the principal at Washingtonville High School in Orange County and a 13-year union member, has been reaching out for years not only to seriously ill children but to members of her school community by spearheading a drive to purchase holiday gifts for children.

Diemer works in cooperation with the Friends of Karen, a non-profit organization that provides emotional, financial and advocacy support to children with life-threatening illnesses and their families. The organization has offices in Westchester County and Long Island and serves children between birth and 21 years old.

Every year around Thanksgiving, Diemer decorates a tree in the high school's main office with tags noting a child's gender and age. Participants take a tag off the tree, purchase an appropriate gift for the child and return the unwrapped gift to Diemer, who brings the gifts to the Friends of Karen offices for distribution.

While there is no specific price range or gift selection criteria, the Friends of Karen determines which children receive which gifts based on a child's health and/or abilities.

Everyone gets involved

"I really love helping others," Diemer said. "Every year, people start asking me when I'm going to put the tree up. Everyone gets involved with this — staff, faculty and students all love to help."

CSEA member Doreen Donohue places a donated gift under the district's holiday giving tree.



Diemer added that many of the gift-givers choose tags belonging to children who are either their own age or the age of their children.

CSEA members and school district employees Steve Bardin and wife Patti selected a gift tag for a 7-year-old girl.

"It's a good thing for all of us to do because there are a lot of people who are less fortunate than us," Steve Bardin said. "We have an obligation to help people in any way we can."

A personal connection

Diemer deeply understands the difficulties that families with children suffering from life-threatening illnesses face.

Her own daughter, Michele, was diagnosed with leukemia at 7 and underwent treatment until she was 14 years old.

"It was tough on all of us," Diemer said. "She went into remission, but she still went through a full course of

treatment until she was considered cured."

While Michele was actively suffering from the disease, Diemer discovered a similar holiday giving tree at her daughter's doctor's office in White Plains and became involved in the program along with other parents of childhood cancer patients.

"I started doing these holiday gifts for children at the doctor's office," she said. "Once we weren't going there anymore, I wanted to keep on giving so I began the program at the school."

Although Michele is leukemia free, Diemer will continue leading the district's gift donation program to reach out to children with life-threatening diseases and their families.

"I just want to give back for what people have done for me," she said.

— Janice Marra



Friends of Karen

For more information on the Friends of Karen program, contact either of the following offices:

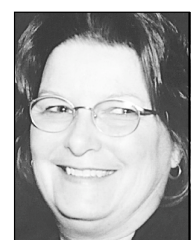
Main Office:

Friends of Karen, Inc.
118 Titicus Road,
P.O. Box 190
Purdys, NY 10578-0190
(914) 277-4547
(800) 637-2774
Fax: (914) 277-4967

Long Island Office:

Friends of Karen, Inc.
21 Perry Street
Port Jefferson, NY 11777
(631) 473-1768
Fax: (631) 473-1790

CSEA *Voices*



"There's so much I trust CSEA to take care of — protecting my job, equitable pay, health insurance and rights in the work place."

— **Darlene Skinner**, keyboard specialist II, New York State Dept. of Tax and Finance, 18-year CSEA member

Onondaga parks workers bring holiday light show to life

LIVERPOOL — Even if you didn't notice the new giant CSEA logo in lights at the entrance to Onondaga County's "Lights On The Lake" holiday display, as you drove along the two-mile stretch of Onondaga Lake, you'd still be looking at the handiwork of the CSEA members who put it all together.

It's one of the Northeast's largest holiday light displays, and it's another success story for the CSEA work force.

Up until a few years ago, the display was set up and maintained by a private company. When the county realized that their own parks workers could do the work better and at a considerable savings, they brought the work in-house. Since then, the display has become better.

"It's a great union success story," said Eric Burbidge, Parks Department Unit president. "Our members do it all, from putting in the electric service, to getting the scaffolding up to put up the large displays, to plowing the roads, to replacing burnt-out bulbs."



CSEA President Danny Donohue meets with members and their families at the special CSEA Night at Lights On The Lake.



Left to right: Senior Recreation Leader Jim Buchanan, Parks Interpreter I Christopher Lenze, and Labor Crew Leader Don Bassett work to erect the new CSEA display at Onondaga Lake Park.

And their success hasn't gone unnoticed. New to the display this year is the giant CSEA logo, along with a special display from Onondaga County Local 834, recognizing their work with a sign that reads "Parks CSEA Unit... we make Lights On The Lake happen." Local President Frank Forte said he wanted to make sure the workers got noticed for their hard work.

"Our members have done such a great job putting this together every year, and every single year it gets bigger and better. It's become part of our local tradition and it's about time our CSEA-represented parks employees got recognized for it," Forte said.

Along with the new signage, CSEA, Local 834 and Onondaga County Parks collaborated to hold a special "CSEA Night" at Lights On The Lake. CSEA President Danny Donohue and statewide Treasurer Maureen Malone had a guided tour through the display from Forte

and County Executive Nick Pirro.

They greeted CSEA members who took advantage of a special discount admission for the evening. Donohue said the display was a source of pride for all of the union.

"Our sign shows everyone the special pride we take in our work, and reminds the public that we are a big part of our community. CSEA is very proud to be such a big part of this wonderful event," he said.

Another first this year was a toy drive in conjunction with the event, which Forte said was the idea of the local's Lights On The Lake Committee. Along with drop boxes in various county locations, the parks workers collected donations for the Marine Corps' Toys For Tots program, which Forte said resulted in, "hundreds and hundreds of toys worth thousands and thousands of dollars."

— Mark M. Kotzin



- ✧ It takes five straight weeks to set up all the light displays.
- ✧ There are about 81 major displays throughout the two miles.
- ✧ About 70,000 light bulbs run throughout the display.
- ✧ It costs around \$20,000 in electricity to power the display annually.
- ✧ About 36,000 vehicles pass through, with 175,000 people viewing the displays.
- ✧ The biggest display is the Fairytale Castle, which is about 35 feet tall, and cars pass through it.
- ✧ One of the displays, the jumping gingerbread man, was featured on Jay Leno's Tonight Show a few years ago.

CSEA Voices



"It is a great feeling to know that CSEA is working as hard as we are to maintain the great benefits we enjoy."

— James Donnelly, custodian II, Smithtown Fire District Local

Southold holds line on give-backs, fights for fairness

SOUTHOLD — As Southold School District Unit President Don Fisher greeted neighbors and friends outside the Southold Post Office with homespun banter, he handed them a flier summarizing his local's fight for a fair contract.

Fisher's friendly approach to bringing attention to his local's situation is a far cry from the cold shoulder the local has received from the school district.

The Southold Unit, which represents teachers aides, school bus drivers, clerk typists, custodians, plumbers and electricians in the Southold School District, has been without a contract since July 1, 2002. Since negotiations have broken down, and no new talks are planned, the frustrated workers took their fight to the streets.

Troops on a mission

For two cold days and nights outside of a local supermarket and the post office, Fisher led his troops on a mission to educate area residents about their plight, and ask residents to call on the school board to return to the bargaining table.

"We have talked and talked, and weren't getting anywhere," said Fisher, referring to the contract talks. "The school board will not budge. We are essentially negotiating with ourselves," he said.

The two sides remain at odds primarily, although not exclusively,

over salary and health insurance issues.

"Under the school board plan, everybody's going to pay more for their health insurance. Some would even lose a benefit they already have, worth about \$3,000 a year," said Fisher. "And we would have to absorb any future increases in the premiums because they will not even discuss a cap on member payments. This plan doesn't look to the future. It throws us back to the dark ages," he said.

As far as salaries, the negotiating team is asking for modest increases per hour across the board for each of the next three years. The district hasn't met their offer.

"The last school board tinkered with our starting salaries, and just kept lowering the threshold. If the superintendent could, she would have paid us minimum wage. We need increases now just to catch up," said Fisher. "If not, we're going to lose people to the higher paying surrounding school districts."

Turning up the heat

At a recent public meeting, the members turned up the heat on the school board by speaking out about their situation.

Linda Carlson, a teachers aide in the elementary school, announced that she was being forced by circumstances to resign. Through her



Southold Unit member Bill Metz Sr. hands out leaflets at the Southold Post Office.

tears, she said that despite her love of working with the children, she had to obtain a more lucrative position elsewhere. "As parents and as taxpayers, isn't it time for the school board to acknowledge the help of the CSEA members in running the schools?"

Stating their case with passion

Carlson continued, "This board has had such a negative effect on us. This board has made me feel so replaceable!"

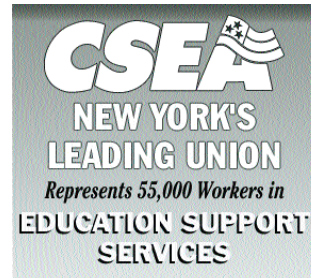
Time after time, members of the Southold Unit told similar tales of distress. "I have worked for three years in this school district and make \$8.98 an hour," said Karen Kowalski. "My 17-year-old daughter, who works part time, will have earned more in the year 2002 than I did!" she said.

Resident John Wagner observed that the Southold Unit is stating its case with a passion.

"They had more signs in town than the candidates for the recent elections did! They're certainly making their case loud and clear," said Wagner.

At press time, the Southold Unit was continuing to turn up the pressure by planning a peaceful demonstration outside the next school board meeting. "We will hold the line! We refuse to fold. We will continue to fight for our members," said Fisher.

— Rachel Langert



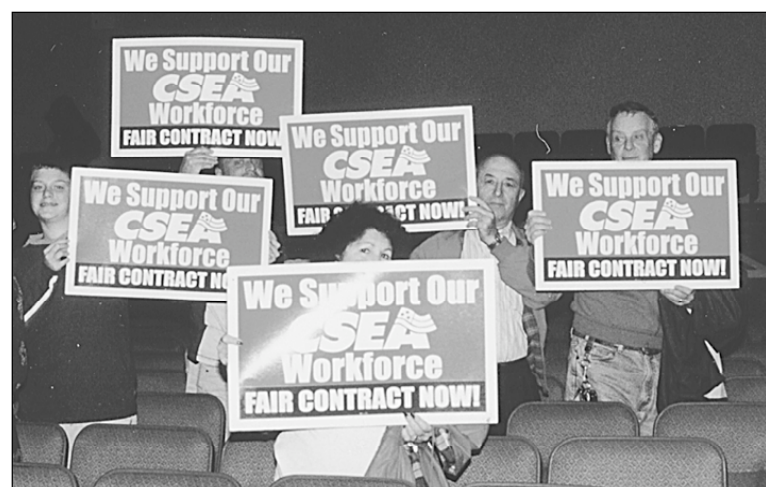
"I have worked for three years in this school district and make \$8.98 an hour. My 17-year-old daughter, who works part time, will have earned more in the year 2002 than I did!"

CSEA Voices



"CSEA has been a lifesaver to us. We had no voice and now we have protection."

— Vi Boyko, teaching assistant, Rensselaer County Educational Employees, seven year CSEA member



Southold CSEA members show their support for a fair contract at a Southold public meeting.

INSIDE

THE WORK FORCE

CSEA has got the power!

The agenda for the 2002 CSEA Women's Conference was: "Building Power for Ourselves, Our Union and Our Community." The title couldn't have been more fitting.

More than 500 women and men convened in Rye Brook, Westchester County to participate in many energy-packed programs and workshops that empowered members personally and professionally. And, with that empowerment, the Women's Conference laid the foundation to build an even more powerful union.

During the opening plenary session of the conference, participants heard the moving stories of female leaders involved in organizing workers in a wide variety of professions. The session described the solidarity, struggles and triumphs these women have experienced in their fight for representation. Their stories were representative of the range of organizing activities under way in CSEA.

Providers will be heard!

Fran Nantista, a NYS Registered Family Day Care Provider is leading a drive to organize child care workers to gain fairness and respect.

Nantista described the low pay child care workers often receive, despite the importance of their jobs. Nantista was inspired to unionize for better wages and benefits.



Nantista

In her efforts to organize, Nantista shared with conference attendees the song she sings at rallies and meetings to the tune of the Battle Hymn of the Republic: "Hurry, hurry join the union. Providers will be heard!"



Metropolitan Region Women's Committee person Carlotta Williams wears a vest of union made packages as part of the program "A Day in the Life — the Union Label Way!"

"I am optimistic. I have seen the power of strong women when they come together," she said.

Women activists from the Southern Westchester BOCES, Stonehedge Nursing Home and SUNY New Paltz shared their stories as well. Although details differed from case to case, the power of forming a union was woven throughout.

The Union Label Way

Participants were treated to a special performance by the Women's Committee titled: "A Day in the Life — The Union Label Way."

The committee took a humorous but heartfelt look at what a day in the life of a union member should be like.

"CSEA members should wake up in the morning in union-made pajamas, drive to work in a union made car, shop after work at a union grocery store and buy union made products," said Maureen Malone, CSEA Statewide Treasurer and emcee of the performance.

Women's Committee members donned clever outfits and toted union made goods to prove their point. One member went so far as to bring her union-made bowling ball to the conference all the way from Buffalo.

Rights for Working Families

U.S. Rep. Nita Lowey, who represents Westchester County, fired up the conference attendees with a rousing speech on the power of working families.

"Together, we must stand up for working families at the federal, state and local levels," Lowey said. "We must unite to bring the issues that matter to us to the forefront of the agenda: the solvency of Social Security, health care insurance for all and the end to skyrocketing prescription drug costs."

She thanked the attendees for "being part of this great union," and urged them to continue their activism and involvement.

Unique Workshops

Throughout the weekend, members were able to choose from a wide variety of workshops. At the open and close of the day, attendees were invited to participate in exercise and yoga programs.

"We intend for the Women's Conference to take a holistic approach to the personal and professional growth of our members," said Barbara Reeves, CSEA Statewide Secretary and officer liaison to the Women's Committee.

With an information fair, relevant and informative workshops, prominent speakers, entertaining performances and a community service project, it's fair to say the Women's Conference met and exceeded its goals.

— Amy Scharf



U.S. Rep. Nita Lowey fires up the crowd with a speech on the power of working families.



Above, attendees at the information fair gather materials.

Right, CSEA Executive Vice President Mary Sullivan greets former Wal-Mart executive Gretchen Adams. Adams spoke on the anti-union practices of Wal-Mart and the current campaign to form a union. See story on page 15.



Right, CSEA Statewide Treasurer Maureen Malone discusses the workshops with a Women's Conference attendee.



To view the photo gallery of the Women's Conference, visit CSEA's website: www.csealocal1000.net

CSEA honors women for excellence

'I have gained so much by being involved with CSEA.'

CSEA President Danny Donohue presented Ellen Burke with the 2002 Irene Carr Leadership Award at the CSEA Women's Conference. Burke, a former SUNY Albany Local activist and now member of the Capital District Retirees Local, has dedicated more than 37 years of activism with CSEA.

Burke has served as a shop steward, second and first vice president of her local as well as chair of the Capital Region Women's Committee.

In her Women's Committee position, she helped develop a set of goals that expanded the traditional union agenda. She understood that society dictated a woman's self worth for too long and knew it was time that women took control of their own destiny.

"I felt the union needed to do more to address the personal needs of women in order to be more productive in the work place," said Burke. "I wanted the Women's Conference to address child care, domestic violence and self esteem issues."

And being a part of the Women's Committee gave Burke an additional boost of confidence as well. "The Women's Committee helped me to become the real me," she said. "Prior to my involvement, I wouldn't have dared to ask my boss to attend trainings or to expand my job duties. I have gained so much by being involved with CSEA," said Burke.

One innovation, out of many worth noting, was Burke's involvement in developing a Basic Skills program for the cleaning services staff at SUNY Albany. The program offered employees (predominately women) an opportunity to get a high school equivalency diploma.

"Many of the women on the cleaning staff were handling dangerous chemicals without having the ability to read the warning labels in English," said Burke. "We instituted courses for them. That program really helped to change many lives for the better," she said.

"Ellen Burke's dedication to the union as well as her 37 years of activism coincides with CSEA's evolution into the forefront of advocacy for working women," said CSEA President Danny Donohue. "I couldn't think of a better person to present the 2002 Irene Carr Leadership Award."

Burke is currently working part time, attending classes and is working on setting up her own business.

"I am honored and thrilled to accept the award. I wouldn't be the person I am today without my experiences with CSEA," said Burke.

Also honored at the Women's Conference was Cathy Collette, retiring director of AFSCME's Women's Rights Department.

CSEA saluted Collette for more than 21 years of service and expertise on women's issues on and off the job. Since 1981, Collette has served at AFSCME as the Director of the Women's Rights Department.

Through her long and distinguished career, Collette has worked tirelessly to broaden the opportunities for working women. And her efforts has helped ensure a long and distinguished career for thousands of other working women as well.

"CSEA has always been able to turn to Cathy for leadership and advice on a wide range of women's issues," said Donohue. "She will be sorely missed but the impact of her work will always be with us."



Ellen Burke, third from left, receives the Irene Carr Leadership award from (left to right) Statewide Secretary Barbara Reeves, President Danny Donohue, and CSEA Standing Women's Committee Chairperson Jackie Stanford.

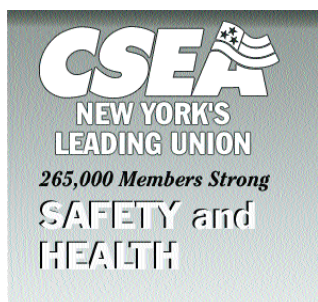


Cathy Collette was honored at the Women's Conference for her 21 years of service as Director of AFSCME's Women's Rights Department.

PESH trashes unsafe truck riding in Brighton

BRIGHTON — Department of Public Works members won't be hanging on the sides of trucks as they pick up lawn trash in the Town of Brighton anymore.

The unit's safety complaint has been upheld by the state Public Employee Safety and Health (PESH) Bureau of the New York State Department of Labor.



The PESH bureau issued a Notice of Violation and Order to Comply to the town, terming the violation a "serious" one, and issued a list of remedy, or abatement

methods, to eliminate the offending practice.

"The guys are happy to know the state has agreed with them, and issued an order on it," said Ernie Heinsbergen, CSEA unit president. "It was something that really bothered them, to have to hang on the side of the truck, while picking up lawn and



Town of Brighton workers demonstrate the unsafe method of riding on refuse trucks.

yard trash. And they know that other towns don't allow their workers to hang on like that. But the largest concern was about safety."

John Bieger, CSEA occupational safety and health specialist, helped the unit file its PESH complaint, after reviewing the practice.

The PESH order said employees who rode on the exterior riding step of the trash packer trucks were exposed to the hazard of falling while the truck was in motion, and when the truck was in reverse, to the potential of being run over, if they slipped off.

"Reasonable and adequate abatement methods" prescribed by PESH included; development of written safety procedures for safe truck operation; written safety rules for safe refuse collection; providing a regular training and education program for employees, with routine reinforcement; audit and supervise the work force to determine level of compliance; requiring helpers to walk between stops or ride in the cab of the collecting vehicle.

"Most of this is pure common sense," said Bieger. "But it's better to have the policy hammered out before someone is seriously hurt."

It's no doubt that Town of Brighton workers agree.

— Ron Wofford

CSEA fights for member security

In the wake of international and domestic terrorism, the safety and security of public employees is at risk now more than ever. After years of pressure by CSEA and other organizations, the New York State Department of Labor Hazard Abatement Board (HAB) has finally proposed a NYS Safety and Security Act for Public Employees.

"The act is vital in alerting the work force of safety needs and ensuring a safe and secure work place for everyone," said CSEA statewide Safety and Health committee member Jim McHugh.

The HAB will hold public hearings to determine the fate of the proposed act. These public hearings can make or break the legislation since both sides — for and against — will be presented.

"The outcome of the hearings are critical to the passage of the act," said Clarence Russell, Capital Region Chair of the Safety and Health Committee.

"The HAB must hear what CSEA members endure day in and day out as part of their jobs," Russell said.

No dates have yet been set for the hearings. However, in the past the HAB has given a very short time frame between when the hearings are announced and when they are scheduled. The lack of time leaves CSEA and other labor organizations with little room to organize and prepare.

We want to hear from you

In order to ensure this critical standard is passed into legislation CSEA is looking for compelling stories that illustrate unsafe situations such as working alone, threats, harassment, working in high crime areas, etc.

If you have a story that supports the need for this standard, CSEA wants to hear it. Forms are available on the CSEA website: www.csealocal1000.net in the Safety and Health section. The form can be photocopied if you need extra copies or for other co-workers.

Once completed, please mail the form back to the address listed. CSEA's Safety and Health Department hopes to select some situations or experiences to be heard during testimony when the hearings take place.

Your help is vital to ensure this standard passes. The safety and security of all public employees depends on it.



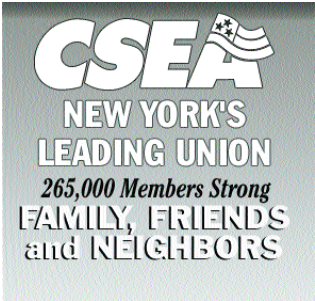
Spending more time indoors means breathing less fresh air. Here are a few tips to keep in mind:

- **Dumpsters should be cleaned out and moved from proximity to air intakes.**
- **Humidity levels may have to be adjusted to reduce air moisture which could be causing mildew and mold on walls, ceilings, floors and interior furnishings**
- **Duct cleaning should be scheduled when buildings are unoccupied to prevent exposure to chemicals and loosened particles.**
- **Cleaning materials should be stored in a closet with separate well-ventilated areas.**

CSEA community spirit rings loud and clear

CLIFTON PARK — Dave Kohls is a busy guy these days. He's a full-time bus driver for the Shenendehowa School District, works part-time as a bailiff for the Halfmoon Town Court and coordinates a community-wide cell phone collection drive to aid victims of domestic violence.

Kohls felt compelled to help after seeing many domestic violence cases come through the court. He started a campaign



to collect used cell phones, answering machines and caller-ID boxes.

Kohls is also getting some help from several of his friends and fellow CSEA members at the school where he works. Bus drivers Linda O'Connor decorated the boxes and Bill Uber designed the posters. Evone Martin, 22-year CSEA member, alerted fellow secretaries throughout the district of the project via email. And Judy Gardner, CSEA unit president, is asking the 700 members in her unit to donate at membership meetings.

Collection boxes are placed in offices and schools throughout the region. Kohls

picks up the items and delivers them to a local community services center where they are reconditioned and repaired as 911 emergency phones. Then, they are distributed to victims of domestic violence through the Domestic Violence Advocacy Program.

The program provides legal advocacy, counseling and resource advocacy to persons in southern Saratoga and northern Rensselaer counties. "Response to the cell phone program has been overwhelming," said Darlene Klemm, a legal advocate for the program. "It is so heartwarming that Dave has taken such an active interest in the safety of our clients," she said.

As word spreads, the phones and equipment keep coming. An article in a local paper also helped to inform the community and boosted collection numbers.

Kohls remembers one donor distinctly: "I opened the bus door and one of my kindergartners got on the bus holding a shoe box filled with phones," said Kohls. "I'll never forget it."

Kohls, an 18-year CSEA member, and Gardner, a 25-year CSEA member, want to encourage other CSEA members to take up similar collections to help in their own communities. "It's for a good cause and it's fairly easy. All you need is a poster and a



CSEA members Dave Kohls and Judy Gardner collect used cell phones on behalf of the Domestic Violence Advocacy Program.

box," said Kohls. As for Kohls' tireless schedule, he has no plans of slowing down. People ask him when he will stop collecting phones. "When domestic violence stops," he said without hesitation.

— Therese Assalian

CSEA members talk turkey

ALBANY — Every year just prior to Thanksgiving, a special group of CSEA members from the Capital Region meet in an underground location. They put on



Clockwise from front left: CSEA members from the Capital Region, Gerald Graham, Kim Norwood, Lea Steele and Sallye Furbert peel potatoes at the annual Equinox holiday dinner preparation.

special clothing and select their tools. No, they're not a negotiating team readying for a contract battle! They are volunteers helping to prepare a Thanksgiving dinner. The meeting place is a large commercial kitchen in the basement of the Empire Plaza. The special clothing includes hairnets, aprons and rubber gloves. And the tools of the trade are potato peelers and knives.

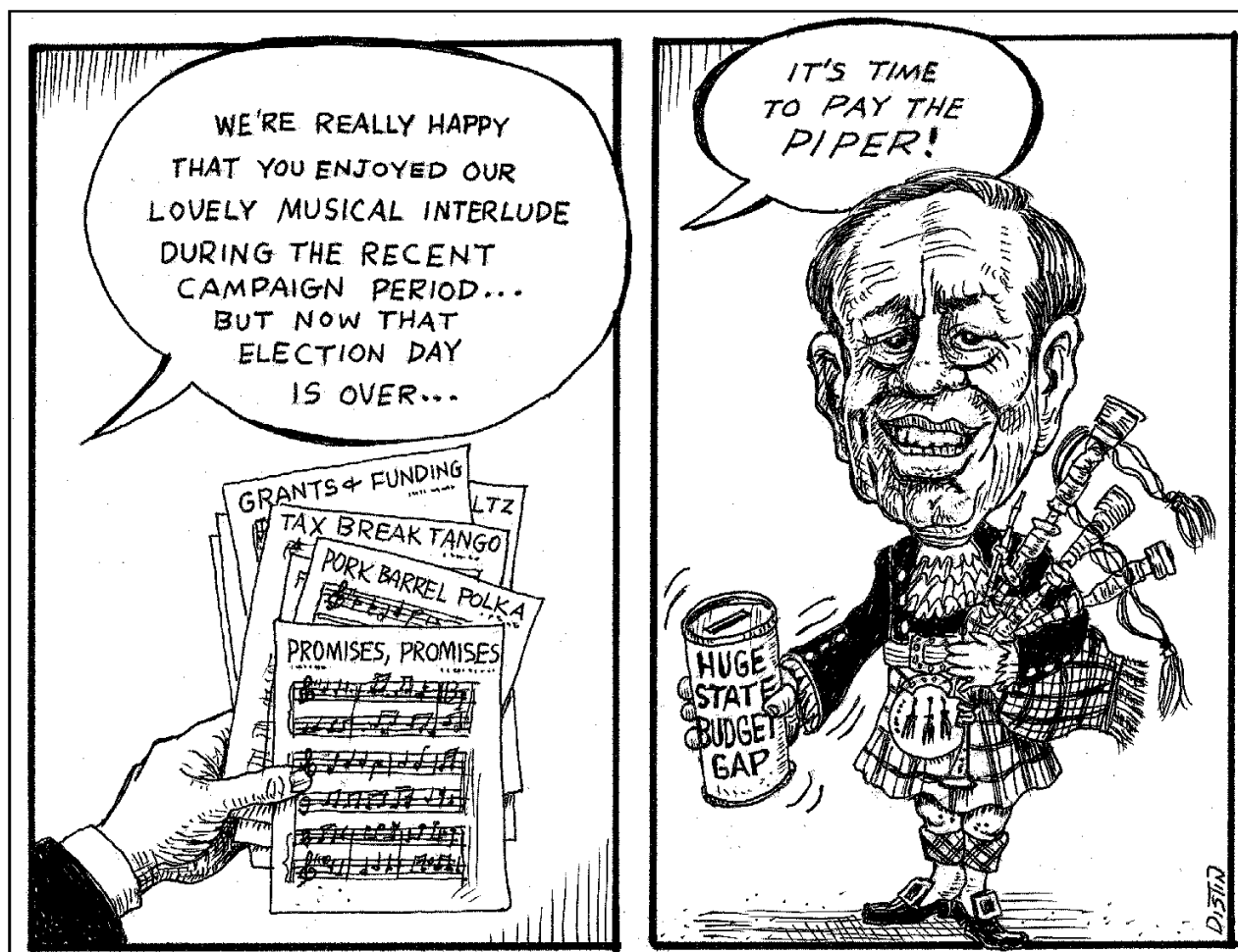
The annual dinner is offered through Equinox, Inc., a community services agency that provides a holiday feast for over 6,000 Capital District residents. The dinner benefits persons who are homeless or homebound.

The CSEA contingent has grown over the past three years. This year, more than 30 members showed up for the four-hour shift. During that time, hundreds of pounds of potatoes are peeled, chopped and prepped for cooking.

Feeding the hungry



Members of the CSEA Standing Women's Committee collected non-perishable food items from the Women's Conference attendees to donate to local food pantries.



38 years ago...



As CSEA's 18th president, Joseph F. Feily, held his term from 1959-1967. During his tenure, CSEA grew from 85,000 members to 150,000 members primarily by affiliating in local government.

Before he became president, Feily served as the president of the Rensselaer Junior Chamber of Commerce. He also served as the vice president of the State Junior Chamber of Commerce. After he became CSEA president, he worked for improvements in the retirement system for state workers and was a driving force for legislating bonuses for state workers before the advent of

the Taylor Law, which provided public employees with the right to collective bargaining.

Feily was instrumental in the Taylor Law's passage.

Feily's hard work and dedication were evident long before he became president. In 1941 CSEA awarded him the Distinguished Service Medal for Outstanding Civil Work.

Also in 1965:

- * The first U.S. combat troops arrive in Vietnam. By the end of the year, 190,000 American soldiers are in Vietnam.
- * The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and more than 2,600 others are arrested in Selma, Ala., during demonstrations against voter-registration rules.
- * Boston Celtics beat the Los Angeles Lakers, (4-1) in the NBA Championship.
- * *The Sound of Music* premieres. An instant hit, the film was one of the top-grossing films of 1965 and remains one of the most popular musicals.
- * Early Bird, the first commercial communications satellite, is launched.
- * The Beatles play Shea Stadium and the Grateful Dead are founded.

Wal-Mart's war on workers

Wal-Mart founder Sam Walton built his company on the simple values of being a decent neighbor and good employer. Today's Wal-Mart is not the Wal-Mart of Sam Walton. Although Wal-Mart may be the leading retailer, company management has failed to follow Walton's lead in respecting individuals and practicing integrity.

Before your next shopping trip to Wal-Mart, consider this: More than 500 attendees at CSEA's Women's Conference recently heard first-hand about Wal-Mart's war on its own workers.

Gretchen Adams, a former Wal-Mart senior executive now working to help organize Wal-Mart employees for the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW), told CSEA members about the anti-worker practices of the company and the up-hill struggles to unionize.

Adams described how Wal-Mart employees are increasingly complaining not only of low wages and poor benefits, but mistreatment on the job. Among the conditions employees face include: off the clock work (including being locked in the building by management after hours in some stores); sexual harassment and discrimination; lack of dignity to workers and



Former Wal-Mart executive, now union organizer, Gretchen Adams accepts a CSEA tee-shirt from the CSEA Women's Committee during the union's recent Women's Conference in Rye.

retaliation against employees who attempt to improve conditions by organizing a union.

Union ties prohibited

As a successful manager for Wal-Mart, Adams opened several stores across the U.S. In her duties to open a store in Las Vegas, Adams was prohibited from hiring anyone with union ties.

"The company had a four level inquiry process for prospective hires. There was no way a pro-union or union-leaning person would be hired," Adams said. "They even went so far as to inquire if your mother, father, sister, brother, etc. was tied to a union in any way."

Union busting acceptable

Wal-Mart leads the way in union-busting activities. Management uses anti-union propaganda, pressure and fear tactics to discourage its employees from organizing, despite their interest in forming a union.

Adams described how several times a week, she and her colleagues who are trying to unionize employees are thrown out of Wal-Mart stores when trying to talk with workers.

"Our photos are in the back

rooms of Wal-Marts across the United States — sort of like "WANTED" posters," she said.

Wal-Mart has been cited by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) with 40 unfair labor practice complaints. In addition, Wal-Mart is facing a class action suit in federal court over charges that the company is discriminating against women in hiring, promotions, assignments, training and pay, as well as retaliation against women who complain about these practices.

Susan Clauson, a CSEA member from the NYS Bridge Authority Local was so moved by Adams' speech that she cut up her Wal-Mart charge card on the spot. (See photo of the month, page 2.)

"Gretchen's speech left a big impression on me," said Clauson. "Prior to today, I didn't have a clue about Wal-Mart's business practices. I used to shop there all the time. Now, I won't go in and I'll urge my family and friends to not shop there as well," she said.

— Amy Scharf



Take action to help Wal-Mart workers gain a voice!

While Wal-Mart imposes low wages, substandard benefits and poor working conditions on its employees, the stores remain popular — even among union members who may not be aware of their anti-union practices.

Recognizing that in some towns and cities, Wal-Mart may be the only place to shop, the UFCW does not advocate a boycott against Wal-Mart. However, CSEA statewide Secretary Barbara Reeves at the Women's Conference suggested several actions union members can take to encourage the company to become more worker-friendly.

Among the actions you can take:

✓ If you shop at Wal-Mart, let the workers know that as union members and customers, you support them and their right to win union representation so they can gain fair wages and benefits — and a voice at work.

✓ Let Wal-Mart management know that union members who shop at the stores object to the company's anti-union propaganda, pressure and fear tactics to which the workers are subjected. Tell company managers that unions and the communities will monitor their actions and hold Wal-Mart accountable for depriving employees of their right to organize.

✓ Participate in community meetings regarding Wal-Mart location plans that would affect zoning, sprawl and tax abatement.

Wal-Mart:

- is the largest retailer in the United States as well as the largest employer, employing more than 962,000 workers;
- on average, pays its employees \$2 to \$3 an hour less than unionized employees in equivalent jobs;
- workers who opt in to the health insurance plan (two out of every five employees) pay nearly half the company's costs.

Important Reminders for State Employees

The following information is intended for CSEA represented Executive Branch enrollees — enrollees employed by the state of New York 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.

Deadlines for 2002 Empire Plan claims

Empire Plan enrollees have until March 31, 2003 (90 days after the end of the calendar year) in which to submit medical expenses which were incurred during the 2002 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;

ValueOptions
P.O. Box 778
Troy, N.Y. 12181-0778

For non-network mental health and substance abuse services received in 2002;

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.

Enrollees can call the Empire plan at 1-877-NYSHIP (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.

Empire Plan changes

In accordance with the CSEA-NYS 1999-2003 Collective Bargaining Agreement, the following health insurance changes affect CSEA Active State members enrolled in the Empire Plan.

Effective Jan. 1, 2003:

Participating provider office visit co-payments will increase from \$8 to \$10. (A co-payment is the fixed out-of-pocket expense the patient pays each time he or she visits a health plan provider or receives a covered service.)

Health Insurance Option Transfer Period extended until Dec. 31

Members who are considering changing health insurance options for 2003 should weigh many factors before making a decision. A good source of specific health insurance information is the free *Choices* guide available from the agency benefits administrator. *Choices* contains information on the Empire Plan and the health maintenance organizations

which participate in the New York State Health Insurance Plan (NYSHIP).

Check the Rates

Rates are another factor that will affect health plan decisions.

At the time this article went to press, the health insurance rates and deadlines publication for 2003 was being printed and mailed to enrollees' homes.

Members who want to change health insurance options must submit a signed Health Insurance Transaction Form PS-404, to their agency health benefit administrator by Dec. 31.

The 2003 biweekly health insurance premium deductions (including the new prescription drug enrollee contributions) for CSEA Active State employees are as follows:

NYSHIP 2003 Premium Rates

(For CSEA Executive Branch Active Employees)

Health Plan Name	NYSHIP Option Code	2003 Individual Premiums	2003 Family Premiums
The Empire Plan	001	\$15.57	\$64.68
Aetna	210	\$43.65	\$143.59
Blue Choice	066	\$28.57	\$113.63
CDPHP (Capital)	063	\$12.28	\$61.95
CDPHP (Central)	300	\$12.52	\$68.08
CDPHP (W. Hudson Valley)	310	\$12.92	\$78.43
Community Blue	067	\$12.67	\$74.11
Empire BC/BS (Upstate)	280	\$12.59	\$66.10
Empire BC/BS (Downstate)	290	\$27.37	\$120.89
Empire BC/BS (Mid-Hudson)	320	\$39.27	\$152.13
GHI HMO	220	\$45.30	\$162.43
HIP	050	\$17.78	\$75.89
HMO Blue (formerly HMO CNY)	072	\$41.39	\$169.84
HMO-Blue	160	\$73.50	\$229.61
Independent Health	059	\$10.37	\$56.84
MVP	060	\$22.79	\$110.27
Preferred Care	058	\$15.90	\$80.83
Univera Healthcare	057	\$11.06	\$60.04
Vytex Health Plans	070	\$16.15	\$94.86

Payroll Dates

New health insurance options for Administrative Lag-Exempt employees will begin Jan. 2, 2003. If you change options, the earliest paycheck in which an adjustment will be made is the paycheck of Dec. 18, 2002.

New health insurance options for Administrative Lag payroll employees will begin Jan. 2, 2003. If you change options, the

earliest paycheck in which an adjustment will be made is the paycheck of Dec. 31, 2002.

New health insurance options for employees under the Institutional payroll will begin Dec. 26, 2002. The earliest paycheck in which you will see a health insurance deduction change will be the payroll check of Dec. 26, 2002.

Because of processing time,

most paycheck changes will be made retroactively in mid to late January and will include retroactive deductions to the effective date of coverage. More information about the option transfer period is available at the agency personnel office.



Prescription drug co-payments will increase from \$3 generic/\$13 brand name (no generic equivalent) to \$5 generic/\$15 brand name (no generic equivalent).

The non-participating provider annual deductible will increase from \$175 to \$185. (A deductible applies when using non-participating providers under the Empire Plan.) The enrollee is required to pay a fixed dollar amount of covered expenses each year before the health plan will begin

to reimburse for covered health care expenses.

HMO out-of-pocket costs are not negotiated by CSEA. Enrollees should contact their HMO for clarification of office visit or prescription drug co-pay changes.

If you have any questions regarding your health benefits, please contact the CSEA Joint Committee on Health Benefits at 518-785-4774 or 1-800-286-5242 (JCHB) or you may send e-mail to jchb@cseainc.org.

Important reminder
for State employees

Prescription Drug Premium
Requirement For State
Enrollees

In accordance with the CSEA-NYS 1999-2003 Collective Bargaining Agreement, the following health insurance change affects CSEA Active State members enrolled in the New York State Health Insurance Plan (NYSHIP) approved HMO’s and the Empire Plan.

Prescription Drug Premiums for 2003

Effective Jan. 1, 2003, active CSEA Executive Branch enrollees became responsible to contribute the enrollee portion of the cost of individual and dependent prescription drug premium under the Empire Plan or Health Maintenance Organization.

New York state will continue to pay the majority of the health insurance and prescription drug premiums. The state contributes 90 percent/75 percent toward the individual/family portion of the prescription drug premium, regardless of whether the enrollee is covered by the Empire Plan or an HMO.

For Empire Plan enrollees, New York state will contribute 90 percent of the hospital, medical, mental health/substance abuse components of the health insurance premium for individual coverage and 75 percent of the cost of these components for dependent coverage. For HMO enrollees, New York state will contribute 90 percent/75 percent for individual/family coverage, however, the state’s contribution is limited to its dollar contribution towards the Empire Plan. If the HMO premium is higher than the Empire Plan, the amount above the state’s Empire Plan contribution becomes the enrollee’s responsibility

If you have any questions regarding your health benefits, please contact the CSEA Joint Committee on Health Benefits at 518-785-4774 or 1-800-286-5242 (JCHB) or you may send e-mail to jchb@cseainc.org.

Scheduled AFSCME dues adjustment

The scheduled adjustment in membership dues and agency shop fees is effective Jan. 1, 2003 to reflect AFSCME’s minimum dues structure approved by delegates at the 1998 AFSCME convention and reported to the membership in 1999.

The change applies to annualized salaries, not including overtime or location pay, based on salary at Jan. 1, 2003. No adjustments will be made during the year for raises or increments.

New hourly and per diem employees have dues deducted at the “Under \$5,000” category of \$4.28 bi-weekly.

CSEA’s membership dues and agency shop fee structure effective Jan. 1, 2003 is as follows:

Annualized Salary as of Jan. 1, 2003	Bi-weekly Dues/ Agency Shop Fee Rate
Under \$5,000	\$4.28
\$5,000-\$9,999	6.41
\$10,000-\$12,999	8.79
\$13,000-\$15,999	10.99
\$16,000-\$21,999	12.46
\$22,000-\$27,999	13.97
\$28,000-\$29,999	14.25
\$30,000-\$31,999	15.20
\$32,000-\$33,999	16.03
\$34,000-\$35,999	16.34
\$36,000-\$37,999	17.23
\$38,000-\$39,999	18.13
\$40,000 and higher	18.58

What’s In It For You?



Employee
Benefit Fund
Retiree Dental
Plan

In July the CSEA EBF announced the creation of its new Retiree Dental Plan. This plan is offered as an alternative to the programs offered through CSEA and AFSCME and is designed to help both state and local government retirees manage the ever increasing cost of dental care. Some of the plan features are:

- \$1,200 Annual Maximum with a \$25 Annual Deductible / \$100 Family Maximum per year billed after first claim submission of the year.

- Plan services cover many types of dental services. Orthodontics are not included.

- Three tier monthly rate schedule: \$30 Individual/\$60 Retiree & Spouse/\$90 Retiree & Family. One year mandatory contract is required.

- 20 percent discounted rate on the second year. This discount is offered to retirees when signing up for a minimum of two years.

- Statewide listing of Participating Plan Providers that accept the program as payment-in-full for covered plan services.

- Members may also use non-plan providers when traveling or living out of New York state. Members will be responsible for dentist’s charges that exceed the fee schedule of allowances.

Enrollment is not automatic and certain requirements must be met for plan eligibility:

- Members must have been covered by either the EBF State Dental Program, one of the EBF’s four local government dental plans (Sunrise, Horizon, Equinox, Dutchess), or covered by any other dental plan (i.e.: GHI) within 90 days prior to enrolling in the EBF Retiree Dental Plan.

- For local government retirees (counties, towns, cities, school districts, etc.) there is an EBF/Employer Memorandum of Agreement that must be signed in order for these retirees to be eligible. If your employer has refused to sign, that municipality cannot participate in the Retiree Plan.

- Retirees who are currently continuing their coverage through COBRA may elect to purchase the EBF Retiree Plan at the end of their COBRA coverage period.

It’s not too late to sign up. For further information on this program, interested retirees may fill out the coupon below and return it to the address listed or they may

contact the fund directly at 1-800-323-2732 extension #803.

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION FORM

For members interested in enrolling in the CSEA EBF Retiree Dental Plan

Name

Address

City

State

Zip

Telephone

Please return this form to:
CSEA Employee Benefit Fund
One Lear Jet Lane, Suite #1
Latham, N.Y. 12110
1-800-323-2732

CONGRATULATIONS

The EBF would also like to congratulate the following groups which have recently joined the Fund for benefit coverage:

City of Ogdensburg
Freeport School District (Cafeteria & Secretarial)
Greenport School District
Middle Country School District (Transportation)
Middle Country School District (Heads and Chiefs)
Pearl River Library
South Country School District
Town of Lloyd

and these groups that have either added a new benefit or upgraded an existing EBF plan:

Levittown School District
North Castle Library
Patchogue-Medford School District
Riverhead School District (Clerical)
Sayville School District
Town of Southeast
Village of Depew
Village of South Glens Falls
Watervliet Housing Authority

Are you missing out on something you really can’t afford to pass up? For more information about the CSEA EBF and its programs, please contact the Fund at 1-800-323-2732 or 1-800-EBF-CSEA or visit the EBF web page at www.csealocal1000.net and click on the Employee Benefit Fund in the Member Benefits section.

An Ever Better Future!

Important Reminder

RETIREE MEMBERSHIP REQUIRED TO CONTINUE
CSEA-SPONSORED INSURANCES

If you are planning to retire and wish to keep your CSEA-Sponsored Insurances, you must join the CSEA Retiree Division.

Retiree dues are \$12 per year.

Please call the CSEA membership department at 1-800-342-4146 ext. 1327

for a retiree membership application.



FROM



TO



Making a better union

When it comes to offering relevant programming for a member's personal or professional growth, CSEA is at the head of the class. CSEA believes that when an individual gains a work skill or broadens their knowledge base, the union as a whole benefits as well as the individual.

By building a better union through member involvement and input, and coordinating events and discussions, the union becomes stronger and more relevant to all workers.

As New York's leading union, CSEA is at the forefront of issues that affect working men and women across our state and our nation. And, our members are leaders at work and in their communities.

One way in which CSEA members can share their ideas, struggles or success stories is through conferences and workshops. More than 500 participants recently attended the CSEA Women's Conference in Rye and participated in a broad range of programming that covered a host of relevant topics:

Domestic Violence as a Union and Workplace Issue: Domestic violence is the leading cause of injury to women. It affects one out of every four women, and problems of domestic violence may spill into the workplace. Abuse can undermine job performance and it can cause lateness and absenteeism. It can also pose a threat to the safety of co-workers. Participants learned what domestic

violence is, why it's a union issue and strategies for union response and action.

Political Action — In Action, It Works: Milestone legislation impacting women and men was passed by the New York State Legislature in the 2002 session. The Women's Health and Wellness Act will significantly increase insurance coverage for the prevention and treatment of illnesses and medical conditions that affect millions of women — and men — throughout New York state. Participants gained a better understanding of this legislation and health care trends as well as an overview of the prescription drug spending that is increasing at four times the rate of inflation.



Building Power Through Coalitions: Coalitions provide an opportunity to join together with other labor unions and community organizations to address common concerns. This workshop provided an overview of the basic principles of coalition building and examples of where it has been effectively used by the labor community.



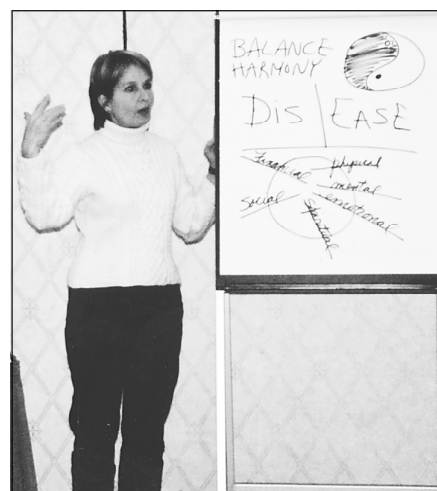
The union as a whole benefits when CSEA members attend workshops that broaden their knowledge base. By building a better union through member involvement and input, the union becomes stronger and more relevant to all workers.

In Our Diversity is Our Strength:

Everyone should learn how to become aware of the emotional and institutional impact of discrimination. Participants of this workshop learned how to remove the hurt, misinformation and powerlessness that keeps discrimination in place and divides workers. Also, they learned building community among members through welcoming diversity, thawing prejudicial attitudes and interrupting oppressive remarks and actions. Specific tools were taught that empowered members to be constructive allies on behalf of all groups that exist in their workplace and local.

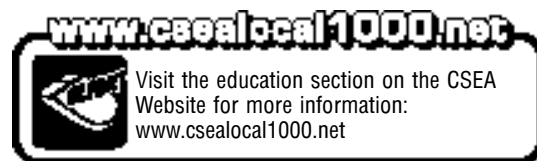
Engaging Generation Y: The future of the union movement will rely in part on engaging those newer to the work force to take an active role in their union. Generation Y numbers more than 60 million in America. There are 40 million 16 to 24 year olds working full time in the work force. This workshop explored the attitudes and behaviors of Generation Y'ers and provided perspective and strategies on how to relate the relevancy of the union.

Workshops are facilitated by leaders in their field so that a comprehensive and up-to-date



curriculum is offered. CSEA members are readily encouraged to attend and participate in these workshops and to bring the knowledge gained to their work sites and to share with fellow union members through their units or locals.

By participating in workshops and conferences, individuals gain valuable knowledge and skills. With a better informed work force, CSEA gains as well.



King commemorations set for Jan.

Several CSEA-sponsored events will take place in January in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

The CSEA Nassau County Local will host CSEA Statewide President Danny Donohue and AFSCME Secretary/Treasurer William Lucy as their guest speakers for the ninth annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day luncheon on Jan. 11, 2003.

The event begins at 12:30 p.m. at the Coral House in Baldwin. In addition to the speakers, the luncheon includes entertainment, raffles and door prizes. Tickets are \$30 per person.

For more information, contact Unity Committee co-chairs Rudy

Bruce at (516) 271-2919 ext. 16 or Tim Corr at (516) 571-2919 ext. 14.

The Capital Region will host the annual Labor Celebration to highlight Dr. King's commitment to workers' rights and civil rights.

The free event will be held on Jan. 20, 2003 at the Thomas O'Brien Acedemy of Science and Technology which is located in Lincoln Park off of Delaware Avenue.

Refreshments and entertainment will be provided.

For information, contact the Solidarity Committee of the Capital Region at (518) 869-9023.

Partnership offers winter courses

This winter, the NYS and CSEA Partnership for Education and Training (the Partnership) will offer a series of job skills and professional development training courses for CSEA-represented New York State employees. Skills for Success Winter courses are scheduled from February through March 2003.

All courses have an "apply by" date. Application forms and course schedules are available from your agency's personnel or training office and your CSEA local president. For more information, call the Partnership at (518) 457-6306.

Leave Accrual Form available on the web

The annual leave accrual form for CSEA members is now available on the CSEA website: www.csealocal1000.net. A link to the form is on the home page.

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.

PEOPLE PROGRAM

— The PEOPLE Person for the month of November is Nancy Hart of the Western Region's Judiciary Local. She has recruited 14 new members. In other news, the Town of Oyster Bay Local recruited 80 members for PEOPLE during two days of work site visits. President Augie Buckhardt and the executive board have set a goal to recruit 100 new PEOPLE members by Jan. 31, 2003. PEOPLE is CSEA and AFSCME's political action program aimed at electing individuals friendly to working families to Congress ... **EAP COORDINATORS HONORED** — CSEA Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte joined Long Island Regional Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Representative Beverly Liff to



present Certificates of Appreciation to New York EAP coordinators for their outstanding dedication and service. Above, Liff and LaMorte present a certificate to Kevin Doyle, EAP Wellness Coordinator



for the NYS Department of Transportation ... **AFSCME SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINE APPROACHES** — The AFSCME Union

Plus Credit Card Scholarship deadline for applications is Jan. 31, 2003. Members, their spouses and dependent children are eligible. The award amount varies between \$500 and \$4,000. It is a one-time cash award to individual winners for undergraduate study. Members can obtain an application by logging on to the AFSCME website: www.afscme.org ...



CAMPBELL HONORED — The Capital Region Labor-Religion Coalition recently honored the memory of CSEA's late Communications Associate Dan Campbell by dedicating their annual dinner to him. Campbell passed away suddenly last February. He had served as CSEA liaison to the Coalition. Pictured (left to right) are Campbell's son Brian, wife Lee, daughter Heather and son Colin following the dedication.

CSEA seeks members for grievance case payments

CSEA is trying to locate two members who are entitled to a significant amount of money resulting from a subcontracting grievance case the union filed against Nassau County many years ago.

Several unsuccessful attempts have been made to locate John

Prisco and Margaret Zawitowski. Both lived in Levittown and both worked for the Nassau County Department of Social Services.

If you can help us locate either of these individuals please call Ed Catrine of the CSEA Legal Department at 1-800-342-4146 Ext. 1443.