

CSEA fights contracting out
page 9

Inside The Work Force:
Life on the wards
pages 10-11

Thousands offered in
union scholarships
page 17

Your Reference Guide to CSEA
member services & benefits
is on page 16

Vol. 2 / No. 3

MARCH 1999

THE WORK FORCE

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION



Local 1000, AFSCME, AFL-CIO

**IS THIS
THE
MENTAL
HEALTH
FACILITY
OF THE
21ST
CENTURY?**

See pages 3, 4, 10 and 11 inside...



Photo of the month

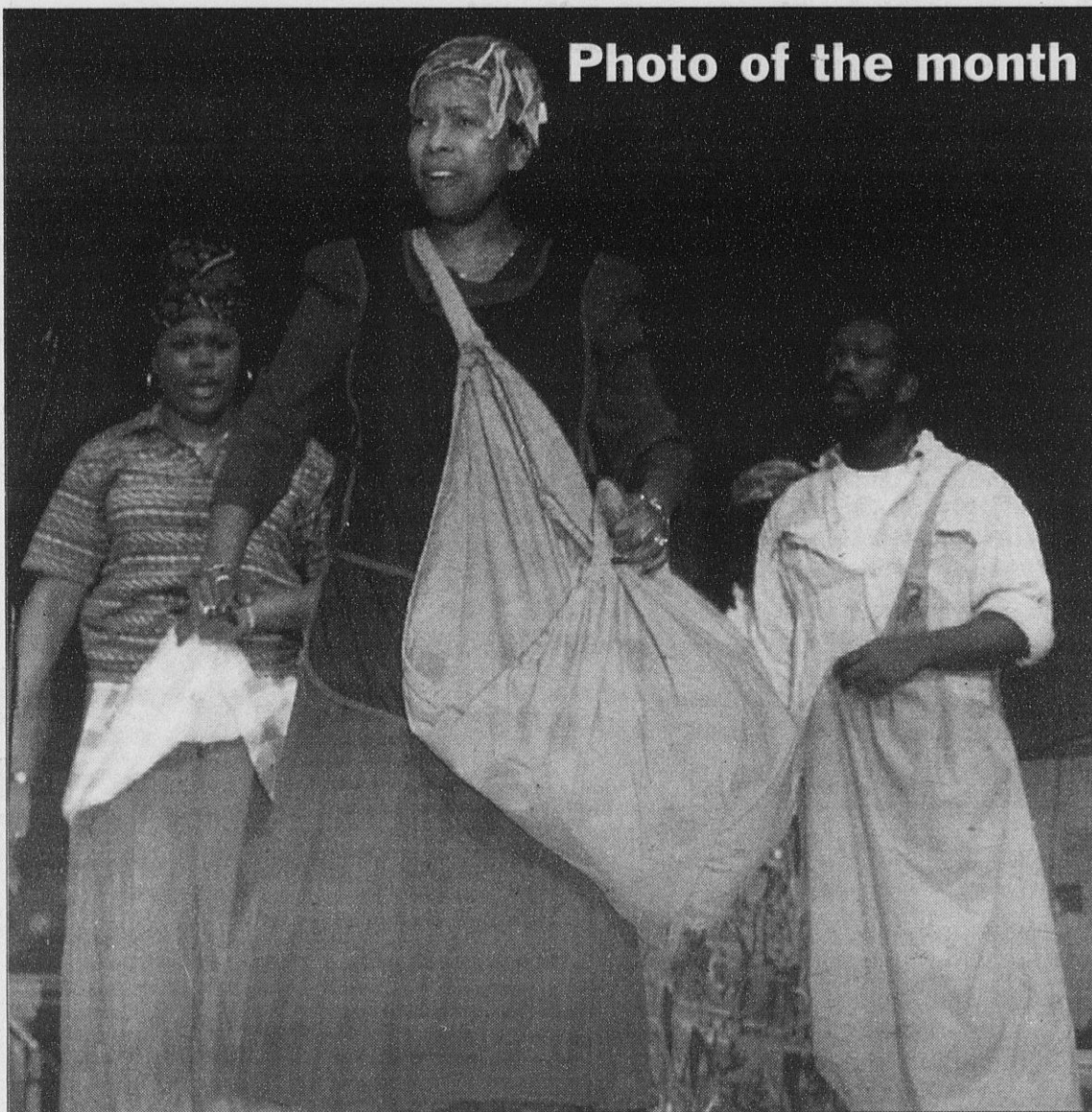


Photo by Ron Wofford

CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH — Buffalo Psychiatric Center member Deatra White-Paris, a "New Beginnings" choir member in Buffalo, performs at a Black History program honoring the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. She also performed with the choir at the recent Buffalo visit of President Bill Clinton.

March 18 is Hunger Awareness Day

CSEA members and officers are encouraged to take part in the Hunger Action Network's Hunger Awareness Day scheduled for March 18.

Last year, CSEA was a Hunger Awareness Day co-sponsor.

The day is designated for all New Yorkers to focus attention on hunger in communities across the state.

Take part in Hunger Action Network activities

One of the featured activities this year will be the children's poster project.

The posters will be displayed in the Legislative Office Building in Albany from March 23 to April 2. Children may display their art work in their community before sending it to Albany.

Hunger Action Network's goal this year is at least 100 events across the state, and the group seeks creative suggestions on materials and events to involve additional participants.

Hunger Action network also wants have more state legislators accept its challenge to live one week on a food stamp budget.

Last year, North Country Assembly member Chris Ortloff took the challenge.

CSEA encourages members to take part in local food drives or other projects.

For more information or to check local hunger awareness day events, call (518) 434-7371.

CSEA Nassau County reaches tentative deal

NASSAU COUNTY — CSEA Nassau Local 830 members voted overwhelmingly — 5,987 to 276 — for a new five-year pact after a lengthy hard-fought negotiation.

"We struggled to gain a fair deal and protect our members and it was not easy," CSEA Nassau County Local President Tony Giustino said. "I'm so very proud of all our members for pulling together to produce a good result."

The deal was monumental in clearing the way for a Public Benefit Corporation to manage the Nassau County Medical Center and A. Holly Patterson Geriatric Center.

President Donohue honored for efforts to bring peace to Northern Ireland

NEW YORK — CSEA President Danny Donohue recently was honored by the Irish-American Labor Coalition for his efforts to bring peace to Northern Ireland.

He is credited with helping focus the American labor movement on Irish issues beginning in 1992, when he led an official labor delegation to Ireland, North and South.

The delegation forged links with public service unions which led to a reaffirmation of support for fair employee principles in northern Ireland.

"Unions have always been in the front lines of the fight for equal rights for working people," Donohue said. "And just as our early support for the Solidarity Labor Movement in Poland finally paid off, we see our support for human rights in Northern Ireland beginning to pay off, too."

The Irish-American Labor Coalition campaigns for equal rights for all working people in the north of Ireland and highlights human rights abuses.

It is also involved in the Irish peace process and promotes reconciliation and political progress.

AFL-CIO President John Sweeney made the presentation.

Like all New Yorkers, CSEA members want better, cost-effective government but

Some budget proposals could cost taxpayers more in the long run

CSEA is taking strong issue with several key aspects of the proposed \$72.6 billion state budget, particularly plans to cut nearly 800 Office of Mental Health jobs.

The union is also worried about planned cuts in funding for education, BOCES and Medicaid, and the New York Cares initiative.

"Like all taxpaying New Yorkers, CSEA members want better, cost-effective government," President Danny Donohue told members of the state Senate Finance and Assembly Ways and Means committees.

"But some of the budget proposals will not make New York a better place to live and will cost us all more in the long run," Donohue testified.

Mental Health

The OMH centers are treating an increasingly dangerous and difficult patient population, and the state cannot afford to cut another 800 positions, Donohue said.

Many new admissions to the state mental health centers are mentally ill substance

abusers and forensic patients, the union has demonstrated.

CSEA believes proposed OMH budget cuts will force counties, towns and villages to pick up expenses when persons who should be treated in psychiatric centers instead land in jail for "the 'crime' of being mentally ill," Donohue said.

Recent highly publicized cases of former OMH patients killing an innocent bystander on a subway platform and killing a home

health aide point to the need for better OMH policies and resources (*See related story and President's column on pages 4, 10 and 11.*)

Mental Retardation & Developmental Disabilities

Donohue also applauded the state's New York Cares initiative aimed at creating more services and residences for the developmentally disabled who are on waiting lists across the state. But CSEA believes the state should build on the strength of the existing system.

CSEA members staff 1,175 groups homes and provide direct care for nearly 10,000 people. There is no guarantee the New York Cares program will use the CSEA workforce.

School Services

CSEA, which represents more than 43,000 school district employees, is also concerned the governor's proposed budget doesn't include enough money for some school districts to keep pace with their growing student numbers.

Medicaid Cuts

Donohue also criticized proposed cuts in Medicaid which will total more than \$1 billion when federal and local shares are included. These cuts will hit public hospitals, nursing homes, and home health care services hardest.



CSEA wants tobacco lawsuit funds used for public services

New York State is in line for more than \$25 billion over the next 25 years as part of a tobacco lawsuit settlement, and CSEA will work to make sure that cash is used for public services.

The state will get approximately \$12 billion, New York City \$6 billion and all other counties will share \$6 billion as part of the settlement with five tobacco companies. Forty-six states are sharing the historic settlement.

CSEA will work on a county-by-county basis to have the money used for public hospitals and nursing homes, salary and benefit increases for union members, infrastructure and other public services.

Our job is to ensure the counties spend this money responsibly. The counties most likely will push for tax decreases and CSEA will recommend the money be used to improve and enhance public services provided by members.

There's another possible danger.

When the counties receive the tobacco settlement money, the governor and Legislature will probably cut the money that goes to counties for services such as probation, inmates ready for transfer to state prisons, Medicaid and others.

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

Asst. Director of Communications

RONALD S. KERMANI, Editor

LOU HMIELESKI, Assistant Editor

CATHLEEN HORTON

Graphic Design & Support Services

RALPH DISTIN, Graphic Artist

JANICE NUSBAUM

Communications Production Coordinator

BETH MCINTYRE

Communications Secretary

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 web site
can be accessed at www.cseainc.org

Readers:

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

COMMUNICATIONS ASSOCIATES

SHERYL C. JENKS	Long Island Region (516) 462-0030
ANN CARROLL	Metropolitan Region (212) 406-2156
ANITA MANLEY	Southern Region (914) 831-1000
DAN CAMPBELL	Capital Region (518) 785-4400
MARK M. KOTZIN	Central Region (315) 433-0050
RON WOFFORD	Western Region (716) 886-0391
ED MOLITOR	Headquarters (518) 257-1272

The Committee

LONG ISLAND REGION John C. Shepherd
METROPOLITAN REGION vacant
SOUTHERN REGION Diane Hewitt
CAPITAL REGION Marguerite Stanley
CENTRAL REGION Bruce Damalt, Chair
WESTERN REGION James V. Kurtz



In Touch with the WORK FORCE



CSEA President Danny Donohue

CSEA has long described New York State's
mental health policies as "the shame of all New York."
Now a state budget proposal to further downsize
state psychiatric centers and eliminate another 800 jobs will only make that
shame even greater.

CSEA direct care workers remaining at
state psychiatric centers are left at risk to
handle an increasingly dangerous and
difficult population without the help they
need.

Just as bad, seriously mentally ill
people are being dumped into our
communities without regard for what
happens to them. Tragically, some will
commit violent crimes that could be
prevented with adequate care and sane
policies.

Sadly, public officials, the media and
general public only take interest in the
problems of the mentally ill and the policies
that abandon them when people die or there
is some sensational incident.

There are thousands of New Yorkers with mental illness who are not
getting the help they need. The vast majority of these individuals are not
dangerous and they suffer in silence. They need more services and support.

But there clearly are individuals who need treatment and care in more
secure settings or supervised conditions. They should not just be rushed out
the door to meet census reduction projections. Neither should they be left on
their own.

There must be improvements in New York's mental health policies. The
people of New York deserve better, the employees who work in the mental
health field deserve better, but most importantly, people with mental illness
deserve better.

Danny

*Sadly, public officials,
the media and general
public only take
interest in the
problems of the
mentally ill and the
policies that abandon
them when people die
or there is some
sensational incident.*

Proposed legislation would allow disability benefit for county law enforcement workers

CSEA is pushing a bill to give corrections and county sheriffs' employees a solid disability retirement package if they're hurt on the job by an inmate.

Because county sheriffs, deputy sheriffs, undersheriffs and correction officers have dangerous jobs, the union wants a performance-of-duty disability retirement package that would give them three-quarters of their final average salary.

CSEA President Danny Donohue said the benefit is well-deserved.

"The constant risk of injury and the stress of doing this vital job merits this protection," he said.

"These employees and their families deserve the peace of mind that in the event of a life-threatening injury, their livelihoods will not be jeopardized," Donohue said.

These employees guard and supervise prisoners in county jails and are constantly exposed to violence, assault, transmissible diseases and other life-threatening situations.

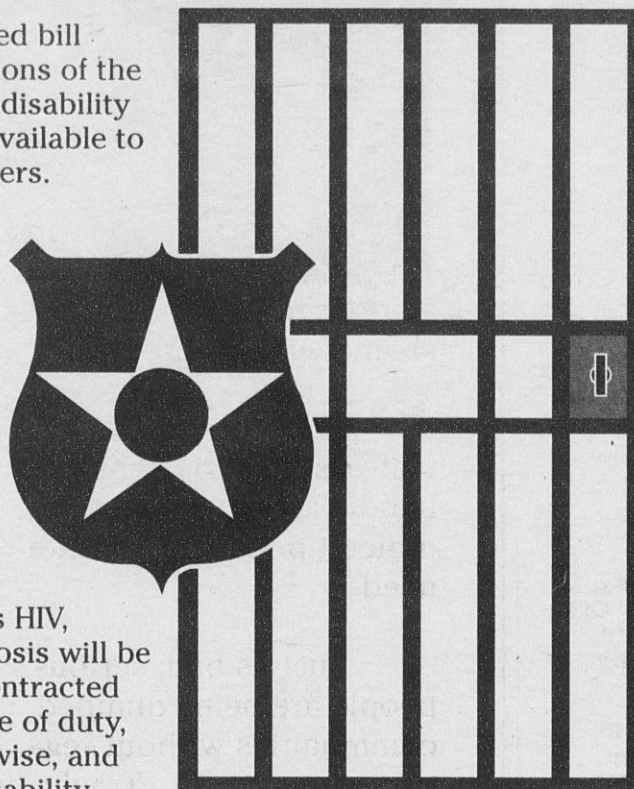
The CSEA-supported bill would extend provisions of the performance-of-duty disability retirement benefits available to state correction officers.

Section 63 of the Retirement and Social Security Law provides a three-quarters disability for state correction officers who are injured on the job by an inmate.

The law also says any state correction officer who contracts HIV, hepatitis or tuberculosis will be presumed to have contracted the disease in the line of duty, unless proven otherwise, and be eligible for the disability retirement benefit.

The bill would allow counties the option of offering the benefit. Once passed by state lawmakers, the bill must be approved by the county government.

CSEA Legislative and Political Action Director Fran Turner said county employees serve in the same capacity as their



counterparts in state service and often supervise inmates ready for transfer to state prisons.

The local correction officers should be entitled to the same benefit, she added.

For more information, contact your region's political action coordinator.

CSEA REPRESENTS
**Corrections
and Law
Enforcement**
15,000 WORKERS IN THIS INDUSTRY

CSEA is one of the largest corrections and law enforcement unions in New York State, representing more than 15,000 local and state employees in this industry.

For example, our members are police officers, deputy sheriffs, county correction officers, probation officers, parole officers, and civilian employees in the state Department of Correctional Services.

Working for counties, towns and villages, in sheriff's departments, probation offices and town and village police agencies, we provide the necessary protection for the public's safety.

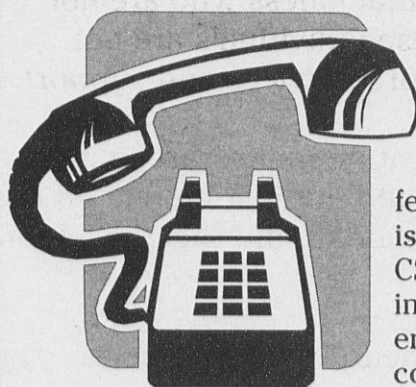
CSEA is committed to meeting the special needs of our members in this industry.

For example:

- CSEA has obtained Hazardous Duty Pay for civilian employees working with dangerous inmates in state correctional facilities;

- We've supported beneficial legislation, including laws which offer early retirement for local law enforcement personnel.

The union strives to bring respect and attention to all the men and women who risk their lives daily protecting our communities.



Have a story? *Pass it on ...*

The Work Force is committed to featuring stories and issues concerning CSEA members involved in law enforcement and corrections-related fields.

While the public often hears of the heroics of corrections and law enforcement officers — and their safety and health concerns — little is published concerning civilian members working in corrections and supporting law enforcement.

We want to hear your stories, from officers keeping the peace behind bars, to the cooks and medical staff, office and clerical employees who keep the system working.

Have some news to share, a topic for discussion, or an interesting human-interest feature? Contact the communications associate in your region and tell them your story.

Long Island Region:

Sheryl C. Jenks, (516) 462-0030

Metropolitan Region:

Ann Carroll, (212) 406-2156

Southern Region:

Anita Manley, (914) 831-1000

Capital Region:

Dan Campbell, (518) 785-4400

Central Region:

Mark M. Kotzin, (315) 433-0050

Western Region:

Ron Wofford, (716) 886-0391

Headquarters:

Ed Molitor, (518) 257-1272

Welfare reform means more work for welfare recipients and workers

"The caseloads may have decreased, but the assessments, referrals and tracking have all increased tremendously," said Sherrie Rotella, a chief welfare examiner with the Niagara County Department of Social Services.

Rotella was describing the changing role of front-line welfare workers in the year since welfare reform took hold in New York.

CSEA REPRESENTS
**Social Services
and
Administrative
Services**
50,000 WORKERS IN THIS INDUSTRY

As the state requires more personal responsibility from welfare recipients, it is also heaping more responsibility onto welfare workers.

"We've seen added work duties

because we're now expected to do case management for each individual who comes through," said David Kircher, assistant director of the Albany County Generic Assistance Bureau and CSEA unit president.

"You have to have expertise to do employment counseling to see what their employment needs are, and you've also got to look for issues of domestic violence or whether they're showing signs of an addiction problem," Kircher said.

The office workers, he added, often don't have training in those social service areas.

Most difficult cases remain

As clients move from welfare to work, welfare workers now must assist the most difficult cases — including clients with learning disabilities, limited skills, and little or no education.

In Albany County, staff has reduced its caseload from 2,700 persons to its low point of about 568. But Kircher said the remaining caseload consists mainly of the most difficult people to place.

"We have the drug addicted and alcohol addicted. We have people who are disabled but not disabled enough to get Social Security or SSI benefits. We have people who are marginally employable because of educational or functional disabilities," he said.

Consequently, caseworkers face the challenge of working with a base of clients who will remain on the welfare rolls for years because of these limitations.

"We're working with hard-to-place people," said Howard Hudson, a job developer with the Rockland County Department of Social Services.

Job more rewarding

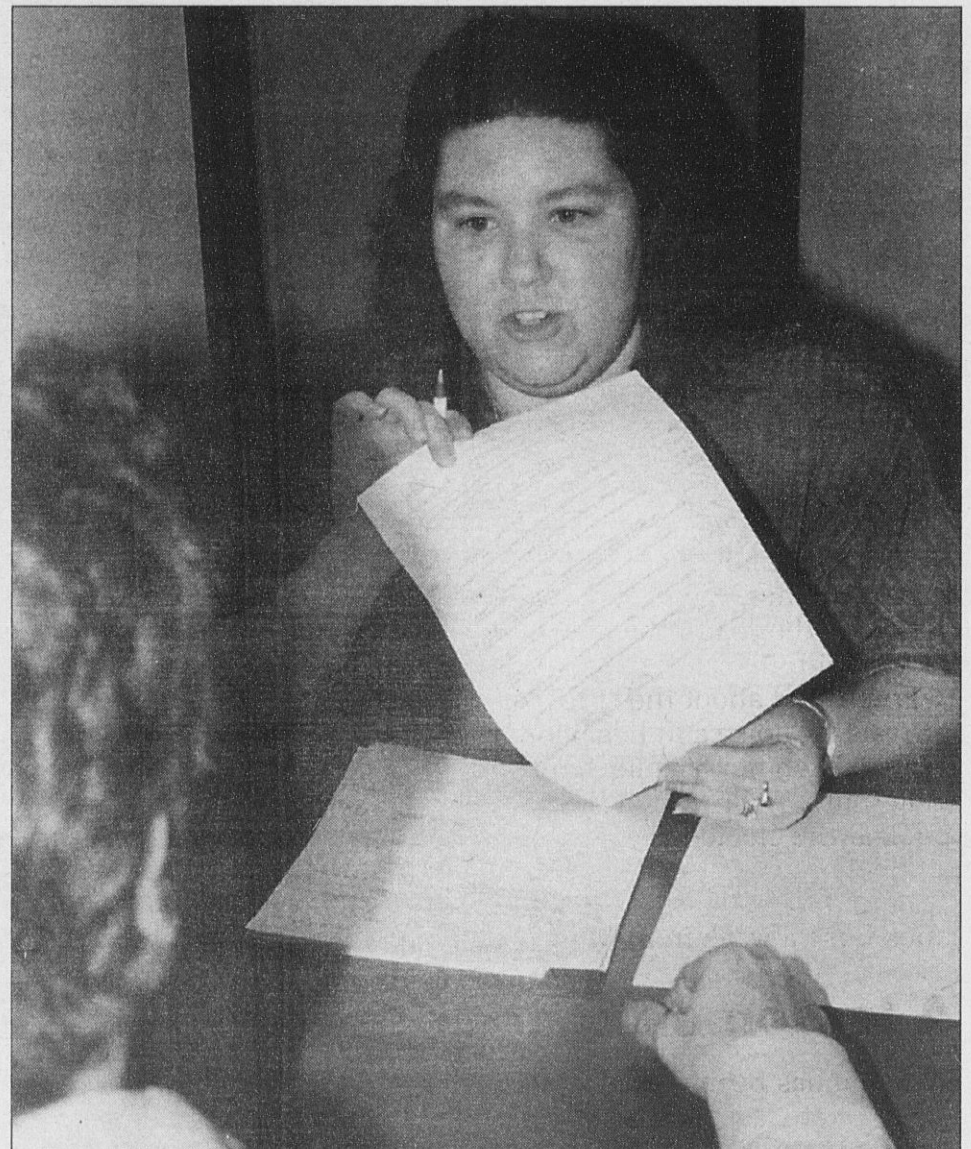
While the job may be more difficult, it's also more rewarding.

"I'm glad to see it going in this direction," Hudson said. "I might have a client who may have a problem with transportation, child care, and previously ended up losing a job," Hudson added.

"Now we have a program that lets us keep in contact with them and make sure they are able to keep working.

"We've done things like paying car insurance for a month, or paying for a repair on the car," he said.

"We had a case where someone's car broke down, and he couldn't afford to rent a car; so a caseworker took the person to



Laura Spencer, a senior reviewer with the Albany County Department of Social Services, helps a client understand new welfare regulations. Spencer said her Medicaid caseload has doubled since welfare reform eliminated sanctions and work requirements for Medicaid cases.

work. It makes me happy we can give our clients that kind of support," Hudson said.

Employees key to success

The individual efforts of front-line employees are making welfare reform a success.

"After five years, clients have to be cut off," Hudson said.

"We make it clear, there will be no more benefits. We tell them 'every day you use benefits is one day less you'll have later on.' We try to get them to think of what they have as a savings account. It's the carrot and stick approach to move them to do what they have to do," Hudson said.

"We encourage people to work," Kircher said. "We look at their backgrounds and say 'look, you can do something, try this' and they've had success as a result of our efforts."

Hannibal bus driver's charges succeed in reading challenge

HANNIBAL — Like many bus drivers, Kelly Wells wanted to build a better relationship with the children she transports, but she first had to turn down the volume.

"When I first started in September, I wasn't sure it was for me," Wells said.

"It was very loud. I couldn't deal with it safely. Any attention that brings your eyes from the road is a safety problem. If I'm watching them in the mirror, I'm not

watching the road," the new driver said.

Frustrated about the distracting noise and behavior problems on her 30-mile, hour-long route, Wells tossed the book at the elementary students.

"I told them 'let's just read a book once a week from when

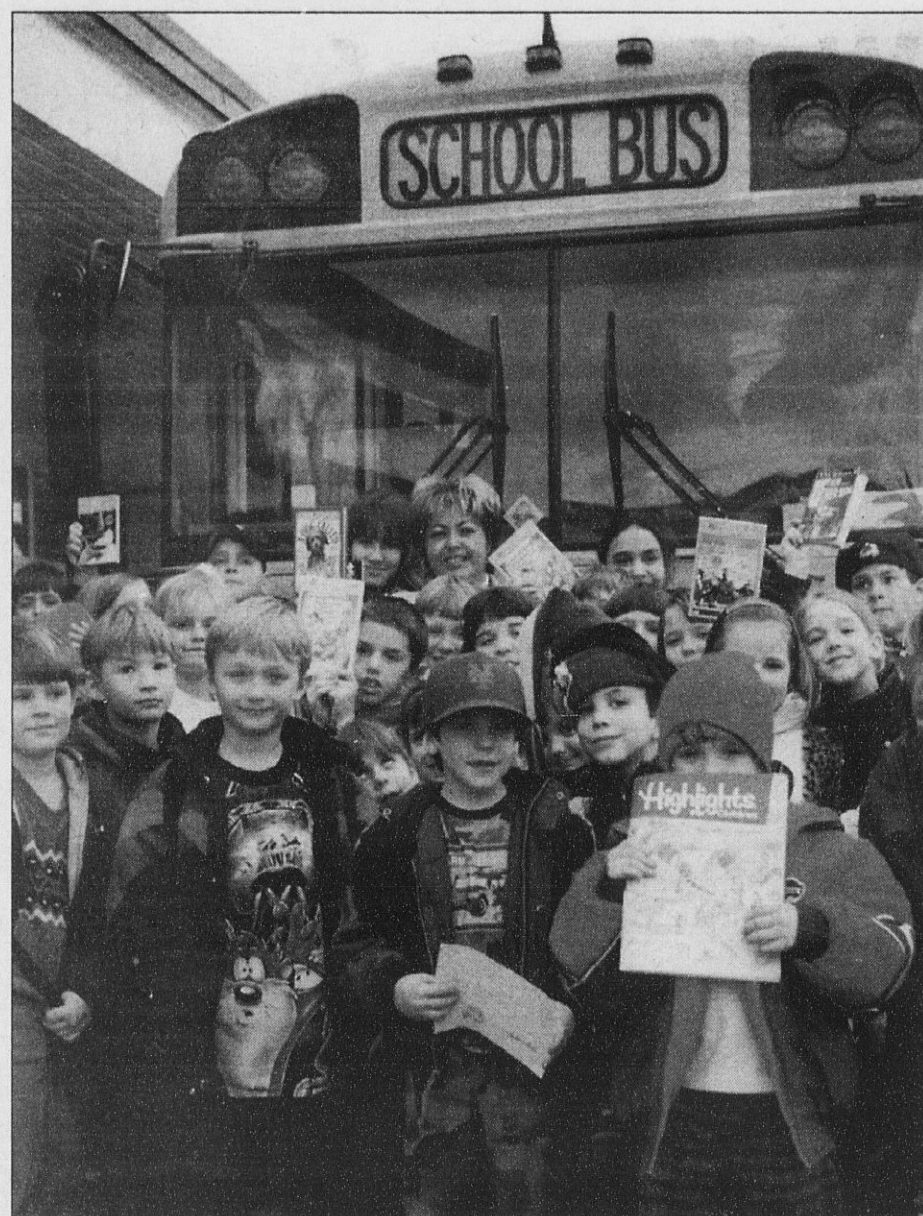
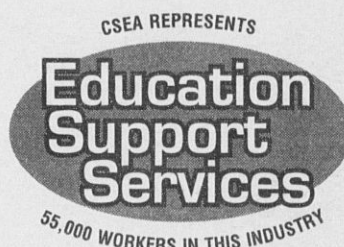
you get on the bus until when you get off.' They did it for five weeks. It was all voluntary, but there were only two kids out of 50 or more who didn't participate," she said. "It's just amazing. I couldn't believe how well it worked. It helped me reduce the problems and the

noise, and they paid more attention to the rules of the school bus," Wells added. Wells rewarded the elementary

schoolers with a certificate of reading completion and treated them to a roller-skating party.

— Mark Kotzin

At right, bus driver Kelly Wells is joined with her passengers, who took up her challenge of reading while on the bus.



A lesson on charter schools, and how they may affect CSEA members

Much has been written about a new state law allowing charter schools. Here is some information about the law, and how it may affect you as a CSEA member.

Who can operate a charter school?

Any combination of teachers, parents, school administrators, community residents alone or with a college, university, museum, educational institution, not-for-profit corporation or corporate entity.

Who can grant a charter?

The Board of Regents. Applications may be made to the SUNY Trustees or a local board of education.

Can existing public schools become charter schools?

Yes, if a majority of the parents of children in the school vote in favor of it, and the school district approves it.

What collective bargaining rights do employees of charter schools have?

Charter school employees are public employees for the purpose of the Taylor Law. They may be deemed public employees for retirement system benefits, subject to regulations to be issued by the Commissioner of Education. In the case of a public school conversion, employees remain within the negotiating unit and covered by the collective bargaining agreement of the school district. A majority of the members at the charter school may vote to modify the

collective bargaining agreement for the charter school.

Can Charter Schools be organized?

Yes. They may be organized as any other new public employer. A new collective bargaining agreement must then be negotiated. Employers must allow reasonable access to employees.

Who will oversee charter schools?

The school district and the Board of Regents or the SUNY Trustees have the authority to visit and inspect the school to ensure it meets relevant laws, regulations and charter provisions.

How many charter schools can be operated in New York State?

A total of 100 charters for new schools can be issued. There is no limit to the number of existing public schools that can be converted.

How are charter schools financed?

The school district must pay the charter school an amount equal to the "Operating Expense Per Pupil" calculated as part of the state aid formula. This is approximately 2/3 of the aid a district receives for each pupil. The district also must pay any additional state or federal aid to a disabled child who attends a charter school. Charter schools do not receive state aid for textbooks, school library materials, computers, transportation and health services.

Finger Lakes DDSO cares about "CSEA cares"

ROCHESTER — Finger Lakes DDSO activists are letting their members know the importance of the "CSEA Cares" campaign in meetings which promote the quality care union members provide.

Jody Bombase is a 20-year state DDSO employee and CSEA member, working at the South Bristol group home since 1985.



Jody Bombase is one of many CSEA Finger Lakes DDSO members helping make the "CSEA Cares" campaign a success.

"I think it's important for every DDSO employee and all CSEA members to join in the CSEA Cares campaign," said Bombase.

"State employees provide a tremendous service to individuals in need, and if that was lost, it would be a great disservice to all concerned."

"It's important that the public knows the high-quality, specialized services we provide for autistic and other developmentally disabled clients. We provide good quality services all around."

"It's also important to stress to our members that our jobs are on the line — maybe not immediately — but down the line. We

must stress to the governor and state legislators, and our own community citizen groups how important it is that the beds being devoted to the developmentally disabled be shared between state-operated facilities and the not-for-profits.

"We all have to pitch in to make this a successful campaign."

"Writing our own letters is a very important part of the overall campaign."

"We have a time-proven tradition of caring and providing for our long-range clients," she added.

"For many of them, we are their family — the only people they've known over a long period of time.

"It would be very stressful for them to be separated from the 'family' of providers they are accustomed to. And we work with a lot of hard-to-care-for clients, with very high needs.

"We have a very dedicated, caring work force, and to make sure it's maintained into the foreseeable future, we all have to pitch in to make this a successful campaign.

"We must have a fair share of the beds the state allocates and budgets for," Bombase added.

— Ron Wofford

CSEA REPRESENTS

Health Care Services

60,000 WORKERS IN THIS INDUSTRY

**Tell us who you
think deserves
the CSEA
Caring
Community
Award**

Every day, in every way, members of the CSEA OMRDD work force go above and beyond the call of duty, not only to care for the individuals they work with, but to form special bonds with them as well.

Here's your chance to recognize those in OMRDD who go out of their way to make life special for the clients they serve. As part of our CSEA Cares initiative, we're honoring a select few individuals who are nominated by their co-workers for special recognition — with the CSEA Caring Community Award.

If you or someone you work with deserves this honor, contact the communications associate in your region for a nominating form or more information.

Forms must be returned by March 26. Soon after, we'll announce the winners and feature their stories on our campaign to bring more funding and beds into the OMRDD system. For your region, contact:

Long Island Region: Sheryl C. Jenks, (516) 462-0030; Metropolitan Region: Ann Carroll, (212) 406-2156; Southern Region: Anita Manley, (914) 831-1000; Capital Region: Dan Campbell, (518) 785-4400; Central Region: Mark M. Kotzin, (315) 433-0050; Western Region: Ron Wofford, (716) 886-0391; Headquarters: Ed Molitor, (518) 257-1272

Unit fighting town's move to subcontract treatment plant

NORTH TONAWANDA — CSEA members at North Tonawanda's wastewater treatment plant will try to sink a subcontracting plan by showing how the plant saves taxpayers thousands of dollars.

The subcontracting plan could combine the plant with the city's water filtration plant.

"We don't think subcontracting is the way to go," said Bill Davignon, unit vice president and a 12-year treatment plant lab technician.

"Even though we've generated big savings, we feel the city has not reinvested properly."

Bill Davignon
unit vice president

"Our members have been doing plenty to save money, and I plan to take that message to the council president's committee which will study the issue," Davignon said.

Davignon is a committee member.

The plant has an impressive record of saving money and generating revenue since 1991.

A co-generation plant that uses methane gas from wastewater, sludge dewatering, and other measures has put cash in the county's coffers.

"Even though we've generated big savings," Davignon said, "we feel the city has not reinvested properly. And they've let our unit slip in manpower from 138 employees in 1989 to 122 now, and they're not replacing retirees."

"Our plant has a large unused capacity which is attractive to privateers, but the unused capacity is something the city may be able to market on its own under state guidelines," he said.

"With CSEA's help, we're going to do all we can to make sure it remains a facility operated by public employees," Davignon added.

— Ron Wofford



Clearing roadkill from a busy highway can take as little as five minutes or several hours, depending on the situation. Above, a DOT crew in the Capital Region makes quick work of cleaning up. But on the job below, just feet from the first pickup, the carcass was frozen into a snowbank and couldn't be shoveled out. Another piece of equipment was called to the site.



CSEA: Roadkill outsourcing plan a real stinker

ALBANY — "It stinks," said CSEA Capital Region State DOT Local Vice President Bill LeBaron about the state's decision to contract out roadkill carcass removal.

LeBaron said the Department of Transportation should have discussed the decision with CSEA before going public.

"If you ask our members do they like removing rotting deer, horses, cows, squirrels and foxes from the roadway they would say no," LeBaron said. "But they would also add they do it because it's their job."

Carcass removal is more than just picking up a dead animal's remains. If a clean-up crew isn't quickly dispatched, carcasses rot and are mutilated by passing traffic.

These facts make LeBaron skeptical that private contractors can meet the state's expectations.

"It's often not a 15-minute roadside stop," he explained.

"Carcasses can be spread out and this requires more time," LeBaron said. "And if there is other damage caused by the incident, we then do such repairs as fixing fencing and guardrails."

He believes once contractors learn more about the job, they will boost their rates and even charge separately to pick up various sections of the same carcass. "Remember, they're in this to make money," LeBaron said.

One solution is for DOT to patrol the roads more often, especially in the summer and dispatch clean-up crews more quickly.

LeBaron finds it revealing that specifications put out to contractors describe the work to be performed as:

"Required service Monday-Friday 8 a.m.-4 p.m., excluding holidays; 50 percent premium for weekend and holiday requests."

"The small roadkill incidents are not a problem," LeBaron said. "It's larger remains that cause the trouble. And, while it is a dirty job, we think the state could make the work more efficient by dispatching clean-up crews quicker."



— Daniel X. Campbell

State of shame

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Carolyn Gray has been working for the New York State Office of Mental Health for 31 years as a Mental Health Therapy Aide [MHTA] at the Creedmoor Psychiatric Center in Queens. Roger Waterman has been at Creedmoor for 35 years, where he works as a Licensed Practical Nurse [LPN] in the medical infirmary. They recently discussed their long careers in the mental health field and life at Creedmoor today. These are their stories as told to Communications Associate Ann Carroll.*

"After 31 years, it's still the toughest part of my job, seeing patients being released who aren't ready," said Carolyn Gray, a veteran MHTA.

"We like to see them go, we are happy for them when they are discharged, but a lot of these people can't cope outside. The state is just discharging them to empty the facility. Years ago, there were not so many incidents. We were supposed to prepare them to live on their own. Today, half the patients who go out wind

up living on the street. I walk down Jamaica Avenue and I see homeless people who were patients here."

"It's a shame. They stick them in hotels and they are just out wandering the streets. The clients get better care here."

"With mental illness, there is no cure," said LPN Roger Waterman. "We must realize that and deal with it."

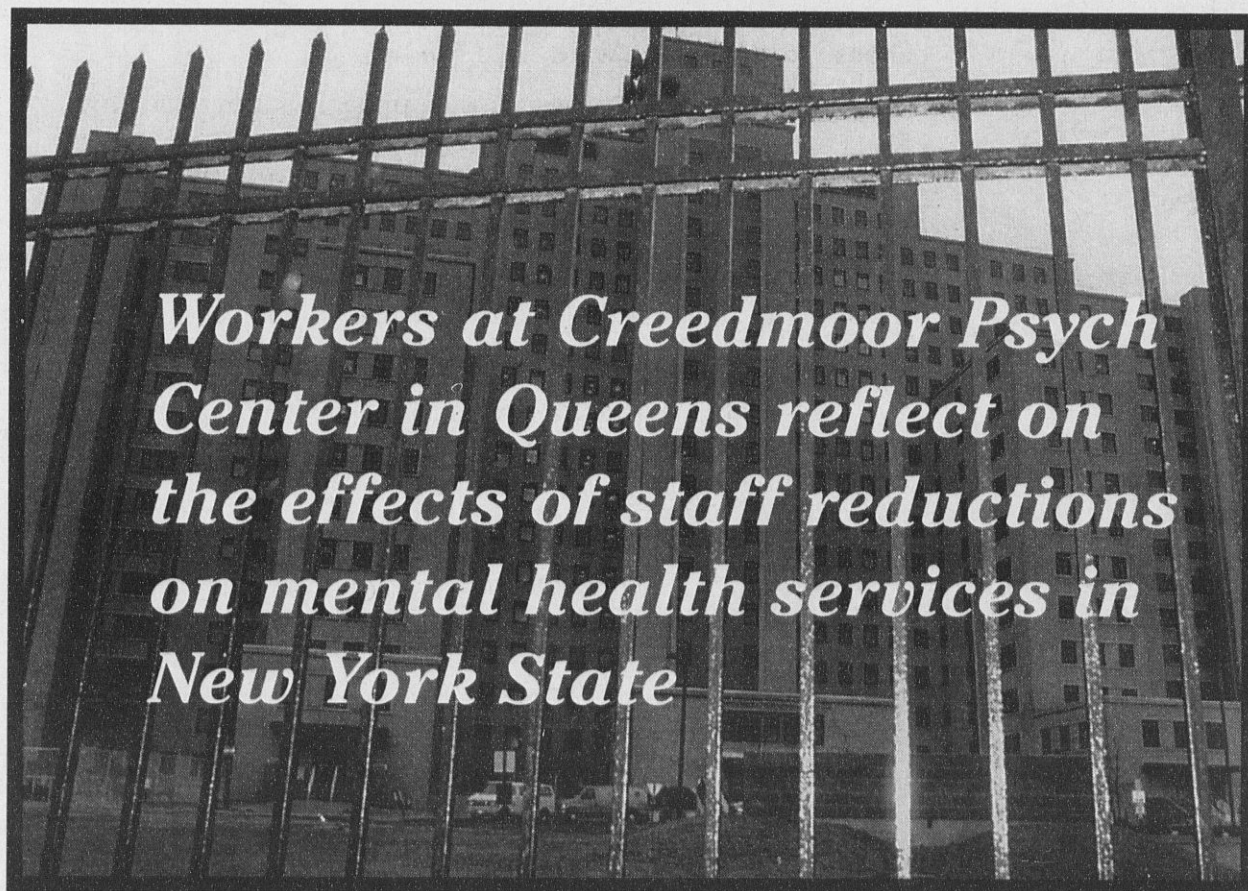
"After 31 years, I'm no longer surprised when incidents and tragedies happen," said Gray, referring to the former Creedmoor patient who pushed a woman to her death under a subway train.



Carolyn Gray



Sam Waterman



Workers at Creedmoor Psych Center in Queens reflect on the effects of staff reductions on mental health services in New York State

"Today, half the patients who go out wind up living on the street. I walk down Jamaica Avenue and I see homeless people who were patients here."

"It's a shame, and I'm shocked and saddened when it happens, but I'm not surprised. They are pushing them out too fast and the patients are not ready."

In three decades, Creedmoor's population has dropped from 7,000 to 600. Staffing cuts have followed suit.

CSEA has strongly objected to the new state budget proposal to eliminate 800 OMH jobs. (See story on page 3.)

CSEA also strongly objects to the Office of Mental Health policies that virtually ignores what happens to patients after discharge.

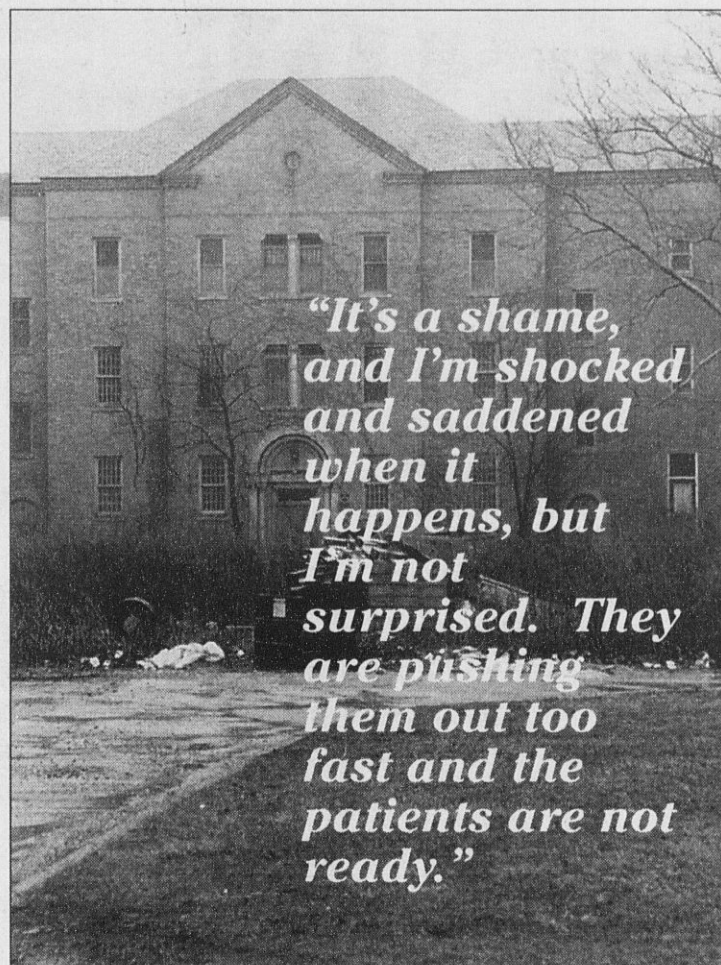
"The shortage of direct-care staff is really frustrating," said Waterman. "You can't do the job you want to do."

Creedmoor has 23 wards, each with 26 to 31 patients, plus a secure unit, a community residence, an alcohol treatment unit and a transitional unit.

Each ward has three therapy aides and one nurse, but four therapy aides are needed. Nurses and professional staff are busy with administrative duties, leaving three people to handle 30 patients. On the night shift, the therapy aides wake patients, supervise showers, make beds, and feed patients breakfast.

Day workers accompany patients to appointments and supervise them during their recreational activities and meals. All aides must wash and fold patient clothes and arrange their belongings in the patients' lockers.

"Patients today are different than those of 20, 30 years ago, because, more and more, they are coming from prison."



"It's a shame, and I'm shocked and saddened when it happens, but I'm not surprised. They are pushing them out too fast and the patients are not ready."

The aides manage, but problems arise when an aide accompanies a patient to a hospital.

With two aides left, one must supervise clients during their daily activities while the other attend to patients who choose to stay on the ward. This can be dangerous.

"Patients today are different than those of 20, 30 years ago, because, more and more, they are coming from prison," Waterman said.

"They are street-wise. In addition to psychological problems, they also have behavioral and drug problems. As a result of the short-staffing and the changing population, there are a lot of 'Code Greens,'" he added.

Code Green is the term used at Creedmoor when a patient attacks a staff member. Lacking intercoms or buzzers, staff at Creedmoor simply yell for help when attacked.

"It is a dangerous situation — staff are often attacked. It takes away from your ability to do your job. People become afraid when they see their co-workers get hurt," Waterman said. "It has a definite impact on morale."

"To make it better, the people in Albany must realize there is no cure, and instead try to make the time clients spend here the best it can be. We must help them, not try to cure them and send them out on the streets alone. We have seen what happens when we do that," said Waterman.

Do as we say, not as we do



These unidentified CSEA members have placed themselves in very real danger. The pit they have dug has no shoring.

Don't chuck trench safety down the hole



The spring construction season is nearly here and CSEA members should review trenching and excavation safety procedures.

Trenching and excavation are among the most hazardous construction operations.

Between 1980 and 1990, 607 workers died in excavation cave-ins nationally, according to the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

Trenches and excavations are often temporary, with less attention given to safe procedures and controls.

It doesn't take much for soil to cave in. Soils that appear stable can suddenly loosen and fall because of rain, snow melt, flooding, or vibration.

If the employer doesn't follow safe practices, workers may be seriously injured or killed.

OSHA has specific rules the employer must follow when workers are involved in trenching operations.

If these requirements are not followed, the public employer can be cited by the state Department of Labor's Public Employees Safety and Health (PESH) bureau.

Private sector employers may also be cited by OSHA.

A trenching safety booklet developed by CSEA will be available after April 1.

Call 1-800-342-3146, ext. 1308 for more details on the booklet.

— Lou Hmielecki

CSEA safety seminar lends a hand with lifting

POMONA — CSEA's safety and health staff recently lent a hand to help some members with lifting.

Rockland County Health Center workers participated in a two-day seminar where they learned how to do their jobs without hurting their bodies.

CSEA safety and health staff Janet Foley, Matt Kozak and Dan Morra taught the class.

"It answered a need — it answered a prayer," said Marianne Riccaldo, director of rehabilitation services. "There was no cost to the county and they gave us the material and anything else we needed. They were well prepared."

The safety and health folks provided information based on documented cases.

"It makes them realize they have the most hazardous jobs in the country — nurses aides suffer more back injuries than most other industries, including construction and trucking. They're number one," Foley said.

Nurses' Aide Molly Pacifico said 20 workers took the class. Not all were nursing staff.

"It was also for housekeeping, dietary and rehabilitation staff — anyone who has to lift and move," she said.

Pacifico, a 14-year employee, said the class helped her realize the potential for workplace injuries is great.

Riccaldo said the county is committed to reducing work-related injuries.

"If CSEA hadn't seen an institutional commitment to this project, they would have passed us by," she said.

The training is important because it involves the first-line direct care worker, Foley said.

"We gave them the tools to address those hazards by doing hands-on training," she said. "We walked through an investigation with them, evaluating the lifting equipment. It makes them feel that they're part of the solution."

— Anita Manley

This seminar is available to CSEA-represented nursing home employees. For more information, call Peter Jones at 1-800-342-4146 ext. 1311.



CSEA members, from left, Jean Simon, Donna Pacifico, and Ethlyn Atterbury operate a patient lift at the Rockland County Health Center.

Companion for foster 'dad' has noble duty in future

ENDICOTT — CSEA activist Bob Campbell was grief-stricken last year over the loss of the dog he had owned for 16 years.

He wanted another dog, but the pain of losing a pet was too fresh.

Then he found a unique way to help himself and others.

A program seeking "foster families" for dogs trained to aid disabled individuals was a perfect match for Campbell.

"I wanted to do some volunteer work to help the community, and I like to help people who have needs, and I like dogs," he said.

Campbell, a meter repairman in the Endicott Light Department, and CSEA unit secretary, interviewed with Canine Working Companions to see if he would be a good foster "dad."

Shortly after, he brought home Kyle, a yellow Labrador retriever, now one year old.

Campbell brings Kyle to work every day to get the dog used to being around people and a work environment.

"When he's assigned to someone in the future, they may have a job, or be able to get one because he's there. He'll be used to spending eight hours with someone at

work," Campbell said.

CSEA Endicott Clerical Unit President Roxann Mahoski, who works in the Light Department with Campbell and Kyle, agrees.

"He takes the dog everywhere ... restaurants, stores, so why not work? Everyone loves Kyle. Now we're used to him being here. I suppose we just treat him like any other co-worker," she said.

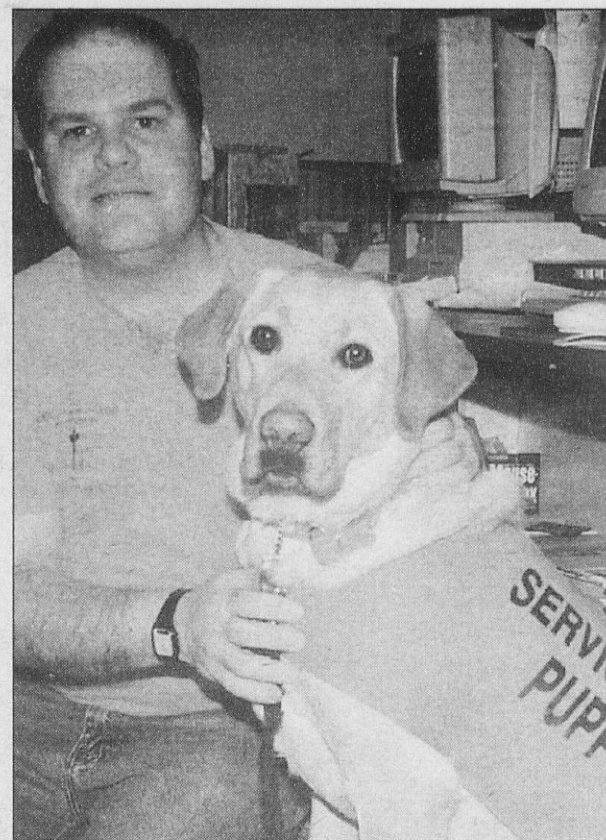
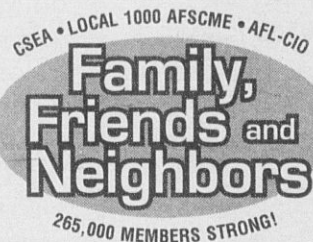
After 18 months, the dog will leave Campbell to be partnered with an individual and trained to handle that person's needs.

When fully trained, service dogs can open doors, turn on or off lights, pick up phone receivers, press elevator buttons, pick up dropped items, pull wheelchairs, and other duties.

Most importantly, said Campbell, they can also provide unconditional love and allow physically challenged people to live more productive lives.

"Many times these people are shut in and ostracized, and many times these dogs help them get out and interact with others," Campbell said.

Campbell says he can bear to part with Kyle when his foster parenting is finished, because he knows Kyle will be helping others.



CSEA activist Bob Campbell and Kyle, whom Campbell is helping to train to aid the disabled.

And, he can "trade him in" for another dog.

For further information about Assistance Dogs, contact: Canine Working Companions at 7453 Morgan Road, Liverpool, NY 13090 or call (315) 457-2938.

— Mark Kotzin

CSEA LEAP staffer's son finds fame in Disney TV series

ALBANY — Don't look back Michael J. Fox ... 15-year-old Ryan Baum is waiting in the wings.

Ryan, son of CSEA LEAP staffer Debbie Baum, is hot in the role of JB Hailliburton in a new Disney TV series called "The Famous Jet Jackson."

JB is the sidekick and comic foil to Jet Jackson (Lee Thompson Young), the young star of a fictional TV show set in North Carolina.

In the series, Jet copes with fame while trying to lead a "normal" life.

He soon learns it's not easy to escape stardom when the character is an action hero. The series is filmed in Toronto during summer, when the city can be passed off as a city in North Carolina.

The younger Baum already has made a name for himself in the Albany area by starring in many local productions.

That reputation won him a Hollywood screen test and the role of JB.

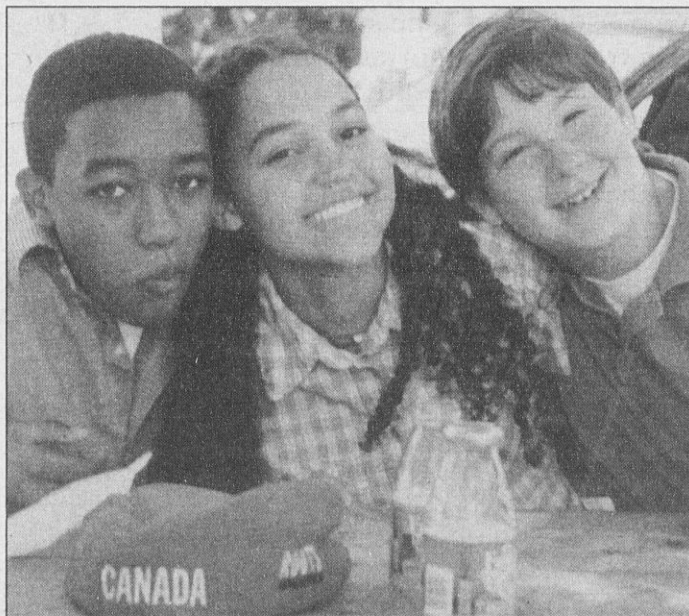
The role requires him to play a toned-down character who must show emotions without overacting.

Baum recently told a local newspaper that "normal is boring," to which his mother replies, "Life with Ryan is certainly never boring. "But I wouldn't have it any other way," she adds. "It's Ryan and his life."

His life right now includes balancing school with extracurricular activities and acting.

He will also be back on the set in Toronto because Disney recently ordered 26 more episodes of the series.

— Daniel X. Campbell



Ryan Baum, right, in his role as JB Hailliburton on the Disney TV series 'The Famous Jet Jackson.'

LOCAL 1000 **CSEA** AFSCME AFL-CIO

Workers' Compensation

LEGAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

*Covering Workers' Compensation
and Social Security Disability*

If you have a possible Workers' Compensation or Social Security Disability case, the CSEA Workers' Compensation Legal Assistance Program will

provide you with honest, courteous and professional representation, at no out-of-pocket cost to you.

Know Your Rights!

The representation is provided by the firm of **FINE, OLIN AND ANDERMAN, P.C.**, through its statewide network of offices staffed by attorneys who specialize in workers' compensation / social security law.

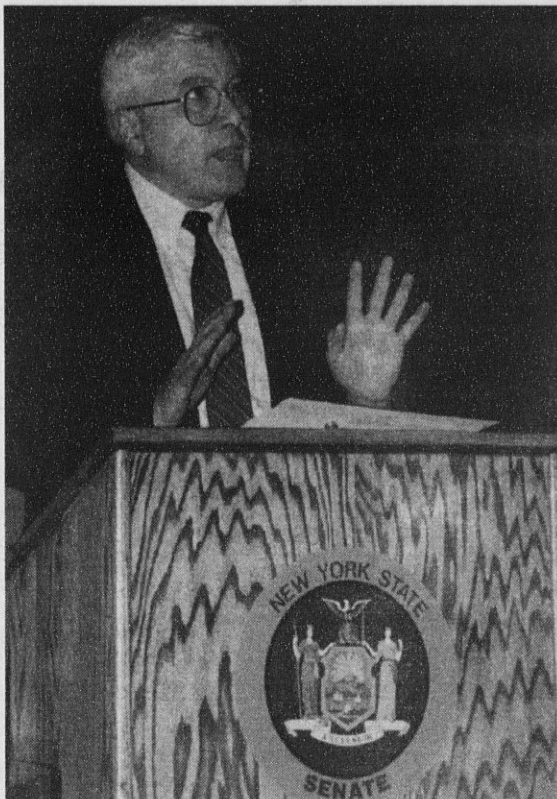
CSEA
LOCAL 1000 AFSCME, AFL-CIO

1-800-342-4146

Call during normal business hours, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m., Mon.–Fri., and follow the menu instructions for the Workers' Compensation Legal Assistance Program.

CSEA Headquarters, 143 Washington Ave., Albany, NY 12210

Danny Donohue, President



Fiscal Policy Institute Director Frank Mauro addresses lawmakers, staffers and the media.

Fiscal Policy Institute sees budget's blind eye

The latest state budget proposal turns a blind eye to the major fiscal challenges and responsibilities facing the state, fiscal policy expert Frank Mauro says.

Insignificant job growth, misleading and stale information and get-rich-quick financing based on the current Wall Street boom are faults the governor's budget doesn't address, Mauro told a hearing room packed with lawmakers, staff and reporters during his annual February budget address.

"We basically think the budget is unresponsive to the needs of New York State," Mauro said.

Mauro heads the Fiscal Policy Institute, a progressive Albany-based think tank backed by CSEA and other unions.

Mauro's annual state budget surveys provide an alternative to information coming from the Capitol, and his suggestions are gaining credence with budget planners.

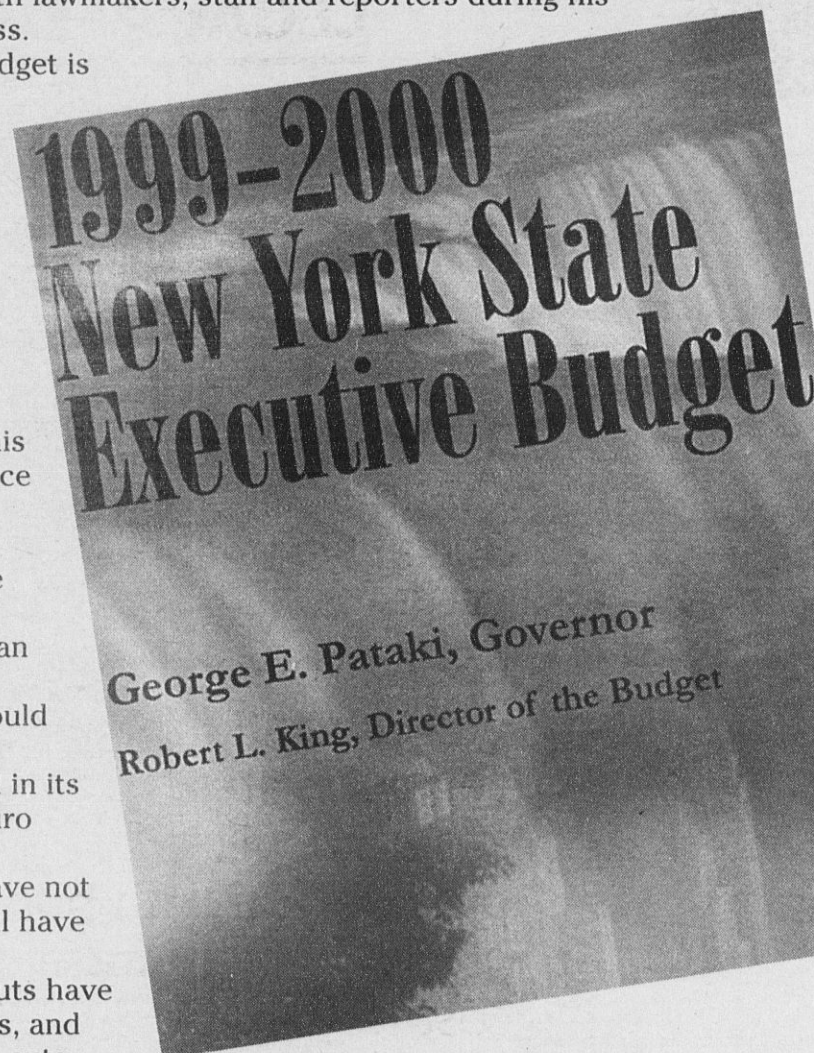
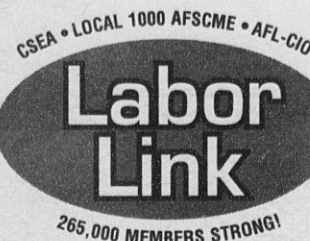
The governor's claim to 419,000 new jobs does not take into account the national economic recovery, which began in 1992.

"A 400,000-job creation would imply that national economic growth would've stopped dead in its tracks in December 1994," Mauro noted.

"In effect, state policies have not accelerated job growth. We still have a very flat economy," he said.

Nearly half of recent tax cuts have gone to out-of-state contractors, and there is no clear indication the cuts have spurred growth in New York, Mauro said, adding most growth is tied to the Wall Street boom.

Most new jobs are in low-wage industries, where workers average \$20,000 a year and are uninsured.



WORK FORCE FACTS

- ☐ While 1998 saw improvement, New York's recovery remains weak.
- ☐ New York lags behind most urban industrial states.
- ☐ Multibillion tax cuts of recent years have not boosted the economy.
- ☐ Economic growth is concentrated downstate.
- ☐ Manufacturing-dependent upstate remains stagnant.
- ☐ New York City and state economies heavily depend on a volatile Wall Street sector.
- ☐ Some growth in middle income jobs in media and computers, but tens of thousands of middle income jobs lost; most job growth is low-wage.
- ☐ The rich grew richer while poor and middle class incomes declined.
- ☐ Proportionately more of New York's population left the state in the 1990s than any other state; many regions face net declines.

Labor Religion Coalition slates annual 40-hour fast

On March 8, many New Yorkers will begin a 40-hour fast to bring attention to the world's working poor.

This year's Forty-Hour Fast focuses on those who have jobs, even full-time workers, who cannot escape poverty because they are paid a poverty wage rather than a living wage.

The fast will begin at 8 p.m. on the 8th and continue for the next 40 hours, ending at noon on March 10.

Join with the New York State Labor-Religion Coalition in participating in the fast. Invite others to join.

To participate, call Susan Zucker at 518/459-5400, ext. 6294 or these contacts:
 Albany: Bill Peltz 518/459-5400, ext. 6294.
 Buffalo: Joan Malone 716/894-2013.
 Rochester: Denise Young 716/647-6013.
 New York City: Rabbi Michael Feinberg 212/406-2156.

— Lou Hmielecki



Your Reference Guide To CSEA Member Services & Benefits

Your Toll-Free Connection To The Employee Benefit Fund – 1-800-323-2732.

In the 518 area, call 782-1500. For answers regarding the Dental Care, Vision Care and Prescription Drug for state employees and participating local government employees. **TDD for hearing impaired only:** 1-800-532-3833. Mailing address: CSEA Employee Benefit Fund, One Lear Jet Lane, Suite One, Latham, NY 12110-2395.

Grievances & Discipline

Report any grievance immediately to your local grievance representative or shop steward. If they are unavailable, tell your CSEA Unit or Local President, or your CSEA Labor Relations Specialist at your region office. Don't delay if you believe you have a problem — grievances must be filed on a timely basis.

Workers' Compensation Legal Assistance Program

Covering Workers Compensation & Social Security Disability.

If you are injured on the job or sustain a job-related illness, CSEA's new Workers' Compensation Legal Assistance Program can help you navigate the maze known as Workers' Compensation. If you become disabled, the program can help you obtain Social Security Disability benefits. If you have a possible Workers' Compensation or Social Security Disability case, simply call 1-800-342-4146, toll-free, and select the proper menu option for Workers' Compensation.

Education & Training

CSEA provides workshops and training programs for union activists. For more information, call toll-free 1-800-342-4146; on a touch-tone phone, press 9, then extension 1294, then "#". On a rotary phone, ask the operator for extension 1294. Union-oriented videotapes are available from your CSEA region office.

Insurance

CSEA offers several insurance programs at low group rates with the convenience of payroll deduction.

For details on CSEA Security Life Plan, Disability Income Protection Program, Whole Life or Universal Life, and Hospital Income Insurance Plan, call toll free: Jardine Group Services Corp. 1-800-929-6656.

For details on Auto Insurance and Homeowners/Renters insurance, call toll free: 1-800-833-4657.

For details on the CSEA Long Term Care Program, call toll free: 1-800-366-5273.

Health Insurance

For answers to your specific questions about the New York State Health Insurance Program's Empire Plan:

Blue Cross Claims:1-800-342-9815
or (518) 367-0009

Metropolitan Claims
(MetraHealth)1-800-942-4640
Participating Providers1-800-942-4640
Home Infusion/Nursing, Diabetic Supplies,
Durable Med Equip Home Care Advocacy
Program1-800-638-9918
Hospital admission approval/ surgical review:
Empire Plan Health Call1-800-992-1213
Mental Health & Substance
Abuse Hotline1-800-446-3995
Managed Physical Medicine
(chiropractic & physical therapy) 1-800-942-4640

Civil Service Exam Help

The Labor Education Action Program (LEAP) can help you prepare for civil service exams with low-cost study booklets on a variety of relevant subjects. Call toll free: 1-800-253-4332.

Safety Concerns

Report serious accidents, unsafe and unhealthy working conditions to the CSEA Labor Relations Specialists at your region office.

For occupational safety and health information, call CSEA Headquarters at 1-800-342-4146; on a touch-tone phone, press 9, then extension 1465, then "#". On a rotary phone, ask the operator for extension 1465.

Retirement

For general information about retirement and retiree membership, call the Membership Benefits Department at Headquarters, 1-800-342-4146.

Talk to a CSEA-provided retirement counselor if you are retiring soon. It's important that you select the proper option from the Employees' Retirement system, so you can plan the lifestyle that you want to enjoy. Call toll free: 1-800-894-1960.

Advantage Union Family Savers

----- C S E A -----

■ **CSEA's Cellular Phone Program:** Keep in touch the union way with CSEA's economical and discounted cellular phone benefit. For more details on this members' only benefit, call CSEA's Member Benefits Department at 1-800-342-4146, ext. 1359.

■ **Buyer's Edge:** Get in on the buy-by-phone consumer buying service that many of your fellow CSEA members are saving money in. For details call the Member Benefits Department at 1-800-342-4146, ext. 1359.

■ **Quest International:** CSEA members pay a special annual membership fee of \$29.95.

- 50% Hotel Discount — subject to space availability
- 25% Hotel Dining Discount — at participating Quest Hotels
- Rental Car Discounts — National, Hertz and Alamo
- Guaranteed satisfaction or your money back

For an application and more information, call the CSEA Member Benefits Department at 1-800-342-4146, ext. 1359, or order by phone: 1-800-STAY-450 (access #1813-35).

----- A F S C M E -----

■ **AFSCME Advantage Mastercard:** Features one of the lowest interest rates. No annual fee. For an application form, call your CSEA Membership Benefits Department at Headquarters, 1-800-342-4146 or to apply by phone, call 1-800-522-4000.

■ **AFSCME Advantage Legal Services:** You can obtain high quality, affordable legal services for many personal legal matters through the AFSCME Advantage Union Privilege Legal Services Program. For details and a list of participating lawyers in your area, call your CSEA region office or the Membership Benefits Department at Headquarters 1-800-342-4146.

■ **Disney World, Theme Parks Discounts:** Discount admission to Disney World in Florida, Disney Land in California, Six Flags Amusement Parks, Universal Studio's Fan Club and Anheuser Busch Theme Parks Clubs (i.e. Sea World and Busch Gardens). To receive discounts, call 1-800-238-2539 between 7:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. Monday-Friday. Identify yourself as a CSEA/AFSCME Local 1000 member and provide your Social Security number.

■ **AFSCME Advantage Mortgage Program:** Makes buying a home or refinancing your mortgage easier and more affordable. Savings for buyers and sellers. Special help for first-time buyers. Call toll free: 1-800-848-6466.

■ **AFSCME Advantage Dental Program:** A discount dental program (not dental insurance) that allows you and your family to choose your dentist from a lengthy list of qualified professionals and receive instant discounts on a wide variety of dental services on every visit. May help lower your out-of-pocket expenses even more if you are already covered by dental insurance. Membership fee \$29.95 annually. For more information call toll-free 1-800-257-8352.

■ **AFSCME Advantage Loan Program:** Unsecured personal loans from \$2,500 to \$15,000, with affordable monthly payments, are available to credit-qualified applicants. Call toll-free 1-888-235-2759 for applications, information.

For more information on member benefits, call the CSEA Membership Benefits Department 1-800-342-4146

CSEA offering \$23,000 in scholarships

Graduating high school seniors who have a parent or legal guardian who is a CSEA-represented employee may apply for a total of \$23,000 in scholarships offered by or through CSEA. A single application covers three scholarship programs.

Irving Flaumenbaum Memorial Scholarships

Three \$1,000 Irving Flaumenbaum Memorial Scholarships will be awarded in each of CSEA's six regions.

The awards are presented in memory of the late Irving Flaumenbaum, who was a spirited CSEA activist for more than three decades. He was president of CSEA's Long Island Region and an AFSCME International vice president at the time of his death.

Jardine Award and Met Life Award

One \$2,500 Jardine Award scholarship will be awarded to a student entering the SUNY system.

This award is provided by Jardine Group Services Corp. and is given in memory of Charles Foster, a longtime CSEA activist in the 1930s who became the first business officer of the SUNY system.

One \$2,500 MetLife Award will be presented and is not limited to a student entering the SUNY system.

It is given in memory of the late Joseph D. Lochner, CSEA's first employee and former executive director who was a CSEA employee for more than 40 years.

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 these two awards.

Application deadline is April 15

Scholarship applications are available from CSEA local and unit presidents and at CSEA headquarters, region and satellite offices. Applications must be filed by April 15. Winners will be notified in June and winners announced in *The Work Force*. The CSEA scholarship program is administered by the CSEA Memorial Scholarship Committee.



\$8,000 AFL-CIO scholarship available

The New York State AFL-CIO will award a four-year scholarship to a 1999 graduating high school senior who intends to pursue a career in labor relations or a related field at an accredited college or university in New York state. The scholarship is for \$2,000 a year for four consecutive years for a total of \$8,000.

Candidates must be a son or daughter of a parent or guardian who is a member of a union (CSEA is) affiliated with the state AFL-CIO, a 1999 high school graduate and accepted in a course of study in labor relations or a labor-related interest at an accredited institution of higher learning in New York state.

For applications, write to Mario Cilento, New York State AFL-CIO, 48 East 21st St., 12th Floor, New York, NY 10010. Application forms, accompanied by other required documents, must be submitted by May 14 to: New York State AFL-CIO Scholarship Committee, c/o Dr. Lois Gray, Cornell University, ILR School, 16 East 34th St., 4th Floor, New York, NY 10016.

Introducing CSEA Protection Plus Voluntary Universal Life

What is it? Protection Plus is life insurance designed to provide insurance protection plus future cash value. Universal Life premiums are designed to remain level for the life of the policy. You can choose any amount of coverage. The rates are unisex and non-smokers are eligible for discounted rates. Premiums can be paid via payroll deduction.

When can I get it? A pilot program was launched in February at selected work locations throughout the state. There will be a six-month open enrollment period assigned by work location.

How much coverage can I purchase? During the open enrollment period, CSEA members under age 65 may apply for coverage up to three times their annual salary, or the amount purchased by \$20 a week (whichever is greater) up to a maximum of \$250,000.

What about dependent coverage? Spouses under age 65 may apply for the amount purchased by \$3 a week or \$10,000, whichever is greater. Children's coverage is available in amounts of \$15,000 and \$25,000.

Don't wait to enroll! Take advantage of this unique opportunity to apply during your initial eligibility period. If you plan to participate, apply now because:

- CSEA members who do not participate during their introductory period may have to meet more stringent underwriting requirements in the future;
- Your health could change before the next enrollment and you may be unable to obtain the insurance protection you need;
- Depending on when the next enrollment is scheduled, you could be a year or more older and your premiums would be higher.

Need more information about your open enrollment period? Contact your Jardine Insurance representative. A personal meeting with each CSEA member will be scheduled at your work location.

New York State
Employee Assistance Program



Practical help ...
from people you trust

A Joint Labor/Management
Program

**Providing problem
assessment and
referral services to
New York State employees
and their family members**

For **CONFIDENTIAL** help call ...
1-800-822-0244

(clip and save)

Summary from the January 1999 CSEA Board of Directors meeting

Editor's note: The Work Force publishes a summary of actions taken by CSEA's Board of Directors at the board's official meetings. The summary is prepared by CSEA Statewide Secretary Barbara Reeves for the information of union members.

ALBANY — CSEA's statewide Board of Directors met on Jan. 14. In official actions, the board:

- Placed into administratorship Wayne County Employee Unit 9100 of Local 859, Williamsville Custodial Unit 6755 of Local 868, and Copiague Public School Custodial P. T. Unit 8310 of Local 870;

- Named to the Southern Region Legislative and Political Action Committee Micki Thoms, chair, and Al Ackerman, Debbie Downey, Gary Conley, Ken Monahan and MaryJane MacNair;

- Named to the Capital Region Legislative and Political Action Committee Mike Febraio, chair, Jack Rohl, vice chair and William VanGuilder, Barbara Moloney, Patricia Antinello, Frank Brady, Linda Hillje, Corinne Daily, Chris Ross, Felice Schreiber, Mike Sposato, Jack Tassiello, Anthony Muscatiello, Paul Ruller, Hank Wagoner, Jeffrey Zabielski, Gordon Duprey, Thomasine Walsh, Edward Davis, Virginia Johnson, Steven Micelli, Lois Biette, Carol Bruno, Robert Calhoun, Hal Gray Jr., William Rosenberger, Philip Minnisale, Leslie Dussault, Marcy Donnini, Bill Meneghan, Joseph Rounds, Derek Miller, Scott Allison, Cheryl Abbott, Maria Markiewicz, Christine Benson and Committee Coordinator Barbara Stack;

- Named to the Central Region Legislative and Political Action Committee Mildred (Dolly) Petrychka, Joe Alcaro and Michael Kaiser, chair.

- Approved two CSEA-sponsored voluntary dental plans for retirees — Dental Health Maintenance Organization and Flexible Progressive Dental;

- Approved maximum miscellaneous allowances for 1999 CSEA events;

- Amended the CSEA Region Constitution to conform with recent changes in the Statewide Constitution regarding the election cycle and term of office for statewide, region and board positions; and

- Adopted a number of organization changes (created Staff Development Program Administrator, modified job specifications/Statewide Organizer, reclassified Computer Programmer/Analyst, created shared position for Printing Operations and Records Maintenance, and upgraded Records Maintenance Specialist) recommended by the Directors Personnel Committee.

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



Barbara Reeves

Break in membership affects eligibility for union office, voting privileges

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

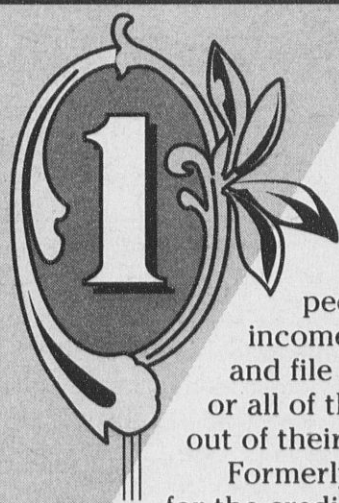
- seeking or holding union office;
- signing nominating petitions for potential candidates;
- voting in union elections, and;
- voting on collective bargaining contracts.

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

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

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

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



Earned Income Tax Credit eligibility extended

The Earned Income Tax Credit is a special tax benefit for working people who earn low or moderate incomes. Workers who qualify for the credit and file a federal tax return can get back some or all of the federal income tax that was taken out of their pay during the years.

Formerly, only families with children qualified for the credit; now, the credit is available to low-income workers without children. For working families with one child, the maximum income in 1998 is \$26,473. For working families with more than one child, the maximum is \$30,095.

The credit can make a real difference in the lives of many moderate and low-income workers, as long as they

know it's there and understand how to get it.

Workers should understand that they can get an advance payment of a portion of the credit in each paycheck during the year or a rebate when they file on April 15.

Low-income workers without children can also claim the credits for the past three years.

For a copy of prior year forms, please call 800-TAX-FORM.

The Internal Revenue Service also has new instructions on treatment of workfare. The 1997 Balanced Budget Act provided that compensation for workfare be excluded when calculating income for earned income credit purposes.

If you want to receive a kit explaining the Earned Income Credit, please call the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities at (202) 408-1080.

Reminder

1998 Empire Plan claims must be filed by March 31

All 1998 Empire Plan Basic Medical Claims must be submitted by **March 31, 1999 to:**

**United Health Care Service Corp.
(Administrator for MetLife)**

P.O. Box 1600

Kingston, N.Y. 12402 - 1600

Basic medical claim forms may be obtained from your agency's personnel office or from United Healthcare.

Make sure you complete the requested subscriber information and don't forget to sign the claim form.

Please be certain to have your doctor or other provider fill in all the information asked for on the claim form. If the claim form is not filled out by the provider, original bills must include all medical/diagnostic information asked for on the claim form.

Missing information will delay the processing of your claim.

If you have any questions concerning your claim, you may contact United Healthcare directly at: **1 (800) 942-4640**

May 15 is deadline for submitting proposed resolutions, changes to CSEA's Constitution & By-Laws

Proposed resolutions and proposed amendments to the CSEA Constitution & By-Laws for consideration by CSEA delegates to the union's 1999 Annual Delegates Meeting **must be submitted by May 15, 1999.** 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 By-Laws must be submitted no later than May 15 to Statewide Secretary Barbara Reeves, CSEA Headquarters, 143 Washington Ave., Albany, N.Y., 12210-2303. The 1999 CSEA Annual Delegates Meeting will be held Oct. 18-22 in Washington.

Procedure protects your rights

AFSCME's Constitution includes a rebate procedure to protect the rights of members — except those who are members under a union shop or similar provision — who disagree with how the union spends money for partisan political or ideological purposes.

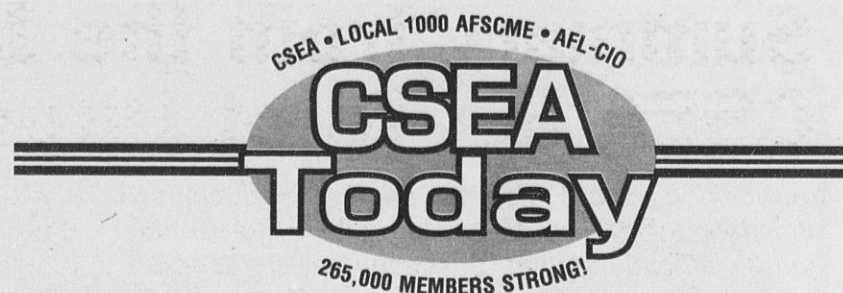
Pursuant to a constitutional amendment adopted at the 1986 International Convention, this procedure is no longer open to non-members who pay agency shop or similar fees to the union or to members who are employed under a union shop.

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, 1999. That request must be timely filed by registered or certified mail with the International Secretary-Treasurer. The request must contain the following information: the member's name, Social Security number, home address and the AFSCME local and council number 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, by registered or certified mail. Requests from 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 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.

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.



AMITYVILLE — CSEA has filed an improper practice charge against the village for attempted union-busting because it negotiated an excellent contract for the men in the highway department but offered nothing to the newly organized clerical unit. ... **NASSAU COUNTY** — CSEA Nassau Local members and retirees are breathing easier since the county has struck a deal with its health insurance plan administrators to clear up a \$33 million deficit. Despite assurances all medical bills would be paid, county employees and retirees worried their coverage might lapse. Those fears, however, were unfounded after the county stepped in to protect all union members' and retirees' health coverage. ... **ALBANY CAUCUS** — CSEA members were out in force at the Black and Hispanic Legislative Caucus recently in Albany. While labor issues were not the event's focus, participants met one-on-one with legislators, discussing issues affecting CSEA members and their communities. ... **VIGILS** — CSEA joined other union members statewide at candlelight vigils to honor the memory of PEF member Judi Scanlon, who was killed by a client while working alone on a home visit. ... **CANCELED?** — CSEA members who have discovered their dental, drug and vision benefits were wrongly canceled by a payroll computer glitch should immediately call their payroll or personnel office or the state Department of Audit & Control at (518) 486-1213. ... **OOOPS** — A computer glitch forced the delay of 24,000 of 330,000 W-2 forms produced by the State Comptroller's Office. The recalled W2s mistakenly recorded employees tax expenses as fringe benefits. Meanwhile, 200 local government workers in Saratoga County discovered their employer had declared them "deceased" on their W-2 forms. The error attracted the attention of Comedy Central's "The Daily Show," which interviewed the "deceased" workers. Please be sure to check your own W-2 forms for any mistakes. ... **NEW JERSEY HIP** — CSEA members who are enrolled in HIP of New Jersey should contact their agency's health benefits administrator because that plan will not provide services after March 31. Members will have a special option transfer period to select a new health plan. Retired members should contact the state Department of Civil Service at 1-800-833-4344 or write: Division of Employee Benefits, W. Averell Harriman State Office Building Campus, Albany, New York, 12239. ... **SMITHTOWN** — More than 200 CSEA members swarmed Smithtown Town Hall recently to protest the lack of a contract. Town leaders took a 41 percent pay hike, but offered zip to union members. A mediator is scheduled to be appointed. ... **HELP A MEMBER** — CSEA member Sonya Malone and her family lost everything in a house fire in Oswego recently. Donations in Sonya's name may be sent to: ALCAN Employees Federal Credit Union, 300 West 1st St., Oswego, NY 13126.



**430,000 strong...
fighting for working families...**

Who are we?

We are affiliates in New York State of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees.

We are workers joined together in Solidarity.

We represent a rainbow of people in every job imaginable.

We're on the job 24 hours a day seven days a week.

We're downstate and upstate.

We're in the public sector, private sector and not-for-profit agencies.

We're 430,000 members — and their families.

We're your family, friends and neighbors.

AFSCME or the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees is a 1.3 million-member International union.

In New York, our membership is organized this way:

District Council 35

+ **District Council 37**

+ **AFSCME Council 66**

+ **District Council 82**

+ **CSEA Local 1000**

+ **District Council 1707**

= 430,000 members

AFSCME NEW YORK

Lobby Day

TUESDAY, MARCH 16

Empire Plaza Convention Center, Albany

AFSCME New York Lobby Day Keynote Speaker:

AFSCME President Gerald McEntee

STATE'S TOP ELECTED OFFICIALS INVITED!

Rally begins at 11 a.m.

Appointments with legislators scheduled in afternoon.

AFSCME New York legislative agenda:

- More quality, lost-cost Day Care!
- COLA 2000 (Cost-of-Living Adjustments) for retirees!
- Agency Shop!
- Empire Jobs Program!
- Opposition to Medicaid cuts!
- Retirement Tier Reform!

FOR MORE INFORMATION, IMMEDIATELY CONTACT CSEA POLITICAL ACTION COORDINATORS:

Long Island Region.....*Position currently vacant.*
Contact Ed LaPlante at
CSEA Headquarters.....(800) 342-4146

Metropolitan RegionMax Neuberger(212) 406-2156

Southern RegionJason Haenel(914) 831-1000

Capital Region.....Adam Acquario(518) 785-4400

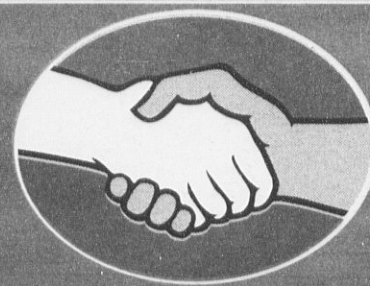
Central RegionGerry Fidler(315) 433-0050

Western Region.....Bill Benfanti(716) 886-0391

*"Politicians respect numbers so let's show them
the power of our AFSCME Family."*

-CSEA President Danny Donohue

**Big
Turnout!**



**Union
brothers
and
Sisters!**