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Vol. 4 / No. 12

DECEMBER 2001

# THE WORK FORCE

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



## Strengthening the fabric of our union

See pages 3, 10, 11, 20



## Photo of the Month



**CSEA Town of Oyster Bay Local 1st Vice President Robert Rauff shows his enthusiasm during the unity rally at CSEA's Annual Delegates Meeting recently in Buffalo. For more convention coverage, see Pages 3, 4, 10, 11, 18 and 20.**

# CSEA fights to save Yonkers schools

YONKERS — The 2,000 CSEA members employed in Yonkers schools are fighting to save not only their jobs, but their schools as a multi-million dollar deficit wracks the city budget.

Union members are vigorously defending school programs and services that face the budget ax.

CSEA activists are rallying and protesting, meeting with community members and political leaders, distributing literature and participating in a media campaign to educate the public.

Union members and community supporters signed more than 20,000 postcards urging the city not to deeply cut district programs.

"The thousands of postcards that were delivered to Yonkers leaders demonstrate the concern of thousands of voters for education in our city," CSEA Yonkers School District Unit President Mae Tyropolis said.

"Cutting millions in funding from the Yonkers public schools will destroy our school system," she added.

CSEA's mounting public pressure has

prompted Yonkers Mayor John Spencer to delay impending school layoffs indefinitely.

Because the state didn't pass a budget this year, school districts are being forced to operate with taxpayer dollars and the same level of state aid that was given last year.

The economic pinch is particularly painful for the state's "Big Five" school districts, including Yonkers, which are funded with city money.

Yonkers, facing a \$57 million gap, wants to funnel all of its budget cuts into the school district.

Cuts to the schools, if implemented, would include 1,400 jobs, including 700 CSEA positions, all extracurricular activities, the school safety program and all non-essential programs and services.

"It's time to make education a priority in the City of Yonkers. We urge all parties involved to get their heads together and come up with the money. The children of Yonkers deserve no less," CSEA Southern Region President Carmine DiBattista said.

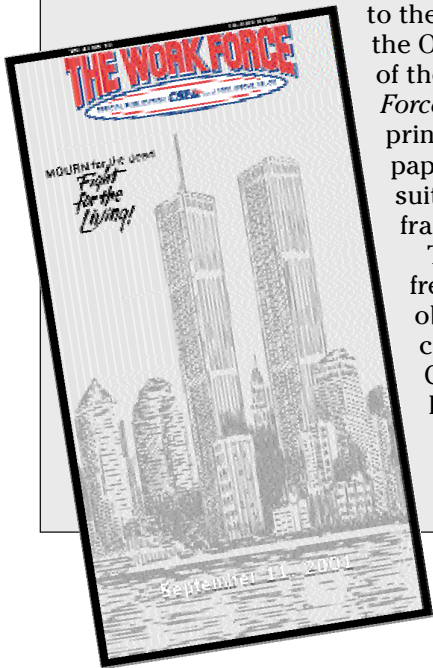
— Janice Marra

## Free World Trade Center commemorative posters

Commemorative posters of the World Trade Center, designed and illustrated by CSEA graphic artist Ralph Distin, are available from the CSEA Communications Department.

The design, similar to the front page of the October edition of the CSEA *Work Force* newspaper, is printed on glossy paper and is suitable for framing.

The posters are free and may be obtained by calling the CSEA Communications Department at 518-257-1271 or 800-342-4146 ext. 1271.



## CSEA grant eyes nursing home staffing

CSEA, in partnership with County Nursing Facilities of New York, has won a \$6.6 million state grant to help solve the staffing crisis at county nursing homes.

It is the largest grant in the nursing home sector.

CSEA has been working with the organization of public nursing home administrators on a plan to attract qualified people to the nursing home industry.

The union will use the money to recruit and train unemployed or underemployed individuals to be certified to work in a nursing home.

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

Grant money will also be used to help current employees advance their careers, which will help retain experienced workers.

CSEA President Danny Donohue said the staffing shortage is a serious problem both labor and management share and he's proud of this groundbreaking labor-management achievement.

"Finally, nursing home patients and the people who care for and about them will get some long-awaited and much needed relief," Donohue said.

— Ed Molitor

## CSEA mourns loss of organizing director



**Floyd**

ALBANY — All of CSEA was shocked and saddened by the untimely death of the union's Director of Organizing Nadra Floyd on Nov. 7.

Floyd joined CSEA in August 2000 to help the union gear up efforts to organize private-sector workers.

She began working for AFSCME in 1976 as an organizer for a local representing state clerical workers in San Diego. In 1979, she became business representative of Council 57, which represented workers in the Oakland Unified School District.

Floyd left AFSCME in 1991 to work on the Clinton-Gore campaign and several California races.

Floyd returned to AFSCME in 1995 as area director for Washington, D.C., where she helped organize 40,000 Maryland state workers before joining the AFL-CIO as assistant organizing director.

"CSEA lost a great advocate for working people," said CSEA President Danny Donohue. "Nadra was deeply committed to the labor movement and challenged all of us to do our jobs better."



# Dynamic speeches, valuable workshops highlight 91st CSEA convention

BUFFALO — High-powered speakers, including former President Bill Clinton, labor education workshops and community service projects highlighted a full agenda at CSEA's 91st annual convention in Buffalo recently.

Richard Trumka, secretary-treasurer of the national AFL-CIO and Gerald McEntee, president of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), two of the most dynamic leaders in the union movement, also delivered firebrand speeches to more than 1,000 CSEA delegates.

The fiery union leaders both noted that despite the horrific events the nation, and in particular, thousands of union members have experienced the past few months, working Americans are what keeps the nation strong.

## Presidential addresses

Clinton urged union members to act fairly and with forethought during the difficult times the United States is facing.

"We all need to fight for what we believe in, but you have to think about what you say and how you say it," Clinton told the delegates.



**CSEA Executive Vice President Mary Sullivan and former President Bill Clinton.**

"You've done a lot to make America and New York a better place," Clinton said, noting "What we have in common is more important than our differences and that is what your union is about," Clinton said.

CSEA was the first major union in the country to endorse Clinton's fledgling presidential bid in December 1991.

He did not receive a fee for his appearance in Buffalo.

CSEA President Danny Donohue praised union members for their resolve, caring and sharing during the traumatic events that shook the nation.

"Even in the early days following the incident, the response of CSEA members, like all of the labor movement, was tremendous," Donohue said, noting blood drives, monetary contributions and the many CSEA members who were involved either directly or indirectly in the rescue and recovery efforts.

A year ago, Donohue said, CSEA had much to celebrate: CSEA's 90th anniversary, members were mobilized like never before, a good state contract was ratified, a COLA for retirees and sweeping pension reform that benefits all union members.

"Today, our future depends on getting our membership — the rank-and-file — to take ownership in their union. We are facing unprecedented challenges.

"As we pursue CSEA's priority areas of organizing, representation



**CSEA delegates hold a solidarity rally in Buffalo.**

and political action, we must make sure our members are fired up!" the president said.

## Defining "union family"

National labor leaders Trumka and McEntee both referred to the outstanding work CSEA members did at the World Trade Center disaster.

"Indeed, with some 750 union members lost in the World Trade Center, and scores more helping in the recovery effort, the house of labor is teaching the entire world a lesson about family ... about solidarity," McEntee told the hushed crowd.

Trumka's speech also resonated with CSEA members, who lost five colleagues in the terrorist attack.

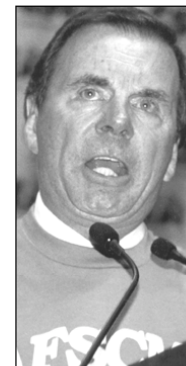
"I want you to know that the sheer horror of these evil acts has been more than matched by the incredible goodness and generosity of working people all over the world who have come together in compassion and community," Trumka said.



**Donohue**



**Trumka**



**McEntee**

## Skills enhancement

Union-building skills were also part of the weeklong agenda.

Author David Weil, a research fellow at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, told delegates the keys to union building are getting members involved, having union leaders play new roles and improving internal union structure.

Weil said delegates should set a two to five-year goal to increase member participation and union strength and work toward that goal daily.

— Photos by Ron Wofford

**For more on the CSEA Annual Delegates Meeting, see Pages 4, 10, 11, and 20, or visit CSEA online at [www.csealocal1000.net](http://www.csealocal1000.net)**

## On the Cover



This is one section of the huge CSEA quilt which was assembled during the 91st Annual Delegates Meeting held in Buffalo recently. Union Locals from across the state sewed portions of the quilt, which were arranged and stitched to show union unity. See more about the quilt on Page 10.

**Photo by Ron Wofford.**

# THE WORK FORCE

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## IN TOUCH WITH THE WORK FORCE

CSEA President Danny Donohue



What a week it was!

CSEA's 91st Annual Delegates Meeting was proof positive that CSEA activists are fired up about their union, fired-up about democracy and fired up for the challenges that lie ahead!

The week of activities and programs covered the full range of what we are all about as a union. Take the time to read the stories in this edition and talk to your elected delegates to gain a full appreciation of the meeting's importance.

There were emotionally moving moments, such as a remembrance service for our five brothers and sisters who remain among the missing at the World Trade Center. It featured inspirational music from Buffalo's Mount Olive Baptist choir and words of encouragement from our friend, state Comptroller Carl McCall.

There was insight and thought-provoking commentary from former President Bill Clinton, who came to thank CSEA for its long-standing support and challenged us to be active participants in our democracy.

There were rallying cries about the importance of CSEA's role in strengthening the labor movement from AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Richard Trumka and our own AFSCME President Gerald McEntee.

There was lively debate about issues that are important to the future of CSEA and every one of its members, along with action in the streets where we rallied for unity and a greater appreciation for the work we perform every day.

And then there was "the quilt."

The brainchild of statewide Secretary Maureen Malone, the CSEA quilt (pictured on pages 1 and 10 of this edition) captured the imagination of CSEA delegates and served as a dramatic symbol of all that is good in CSEA.

Hundreds of CSEA members and locals contributed their handiwork to quilt and an enthusiastic group worked tirelessly to assemble it on site. They all deserve our thanks and praise for an exceptional job.

Truly the quilt, like the delegates meeting itself, demonstrates that the fabric of our union is strong.

*Danny*



# CSEA Orange Co. workers demand change at infirmary

GOSHEN — Many CSEA workers at the Orange County Infirmary are physically exhausted because of ever-increasing amounts of mandatory overtime at the facility.

Because of short-staffing among health care workers at the infirmary, CSEA employees there are forced to work overtime at least three or four days a week.



With what energy they have left, the CSEA members are demanding county legislators hire more workers to ease the problem.

“The workers used to give 150 percent to get things done there,” Sharon Jones, a 29-year nursing employee and CSEA member, told Orange County legislators.

“Now, we’re giving less because we’re all so exhausted. These are human lives we’re

dealing with,” she said.

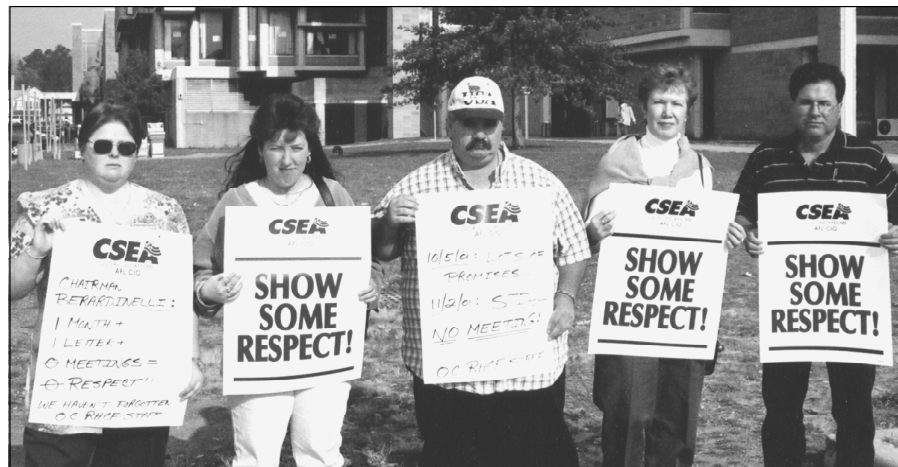
“We are tired,” added Carrie Maher, a 19-year CSEA member and a nursing supervisor at the facility.

“We can’t keep up this pace anymore. We have asked (Orange County) for relief from this and there’s none in sight.” Maher said.

CSEA has asked the county to hire additional staff and use temporary help to ease overtime. To help maintain staff at the infirmary, CSEA has recommended the county establish training and hiring incentives for health-care workers, said CSEA Orange County Unit President Ron Greene.

## What days off?

While Orange County has raised rates for per diem workers, the county has



proposed cutting more registered nurse jobs at the facility. Five of those positions are filled.

“We are severely understaffed here,” said Lucy Leary, an eight-year CSEA member and a nursing supervisor at the infirmary.

“This is not good for the staff — they never know when they are going to be forced to stay for an extra shift. Worse, this is not good for the residents,” Leary said.

— Janice Marra

# Beaten up on the job, members fight for hazardous duty pay

CSEA members who work in dangerous state mental health centers aren’t giving up their fight for hazardous duty pay.

Members who work at the South Beach Psychiatric Center said they will continue to push the issue of hazardous duty pay.

The state Civil Service Commission recently denied the South Beach workers’ appeal for the hazardous pay at four of the center’s units at the Staten Island complex.

Getting the extra 50 cents an hour as hazardous duty pay may hinge on the interpretation and nuance of a few words in state regulations, CSEA leaders said.

“The definition that the state Office of Mental Health (OMH) has for who gets hazard duty pay is outmoded,” said Joel Schwartz, president of the CSEA Local at South Beach Psychiatric Center, who testified before the Civil Service Commission.

Citing the Hazardous Duty Differential Program guidelines, the commission ruled the psychiatric center units would have to qualify as admission units if CSEA members

were to get the hazardous duty pay.

An admission unit is defined as a ward in which 50 percent or more of the admitted patients have an average stay of 30 days or fewer.

## Old words; new clients

While Schwartz knows the center does not receive acute direct admissions, he maintains the 15-year-old guidelines used to establish hazardous duty pay should be revised because the clients have changed.

“The type of patients we deal with these days is much more dangerous,” said Schwartz.

“A lot of them are coming from court settings or from jail,” he said.

“The criteria (for hazardous duty pay) do not apply in any way, shape or form to us now,” said Susan Townley, a CSEA member who works in one of these units.

Client attacks are frequent, and often debilitating

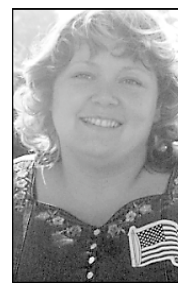
“I have a number of staff members here who have been attacked in the last two

years,” said Townley, a unit coordinator.

“Two of them required surgery and we had a nurse who was beaten very badly,” she said

— David Galarza

## Voices of the Work Force



“The operating room was shut down because we were expecting casualties. Unfortunately, that was not the case and it was so hard to get back to normal since the Sept. 11 tragedy affected our way of life.”

— Elaine Farrington, registered nurse, Nassau University Medical Center



# 30 years after the riot, Attica workers still remember the fear, uncertainty

ATTICA — Thirty years after the infamous and bloody Attica prison riot, Roger Durfee, the only CSEA member since the riot still working at the correctional facility, remembers the uprising like it was yesterday.

Inmates took control of the prison on Sept. 9, 1971, in a standoff that ended when State Police stormed the facility and regained control four days later.

Ten civilian hostages and 29 inmates lay dead in the nation's bloodiest prison riot.

"I was off from work the day it started, because I was with my wife at the hospital, as my first son was being born," recalled Durfee, a steamfitter-plumber at Attica Correctional Facility since November 1969.

"But when I returned to work a couple of days later, as the standoff continued, I had to be escorted to the power house by State Police, since the prisoners had control of most of the prison. We worked 12 hour shifts, trying to keep power on, and waiting for it to end."

During the tense hours before it ended, Durfee was also called to help move bodies that went to the morgue.

"After it was all over, it took at least three months before things got around to any semblance of routine," said Durfee. "But it took even longer for reforms that emerged afterwards to take place. And they are still evolving."

## Unintentional "star" in anti-terrorism campaign

No one can confuse CSEA activist Yvonne Brown with a terrorist, but the burly National Guardsmen at the Newport News, VA airport did a double take and then some recently.

Brown, treasurer of the judiciary Local in Buffalo and an employee of the Wayne County Family Court, cleared security checkpoints for the trip home but her purse pursed the lips of guards working the X-ray machine.

"My purse was causing a ruckus," recounted Brown, accompanied by her 65-year-old mother on the family trip.

"There were more guards around me now, with big guns and dressed in camo," she said.

They passed Brown's stuffed purse

**Changes came slowly**  
What are the changes between then and now at Attica?

"There are a lot of prisoner rights reforms in place, more training for civilian staff and corrections officers, for starters," said George Phelps, president of the CSEA Attica Correctional Local.

"Most of the corrections officers are younger, there is more camaraderie between the officers and civilian staff."

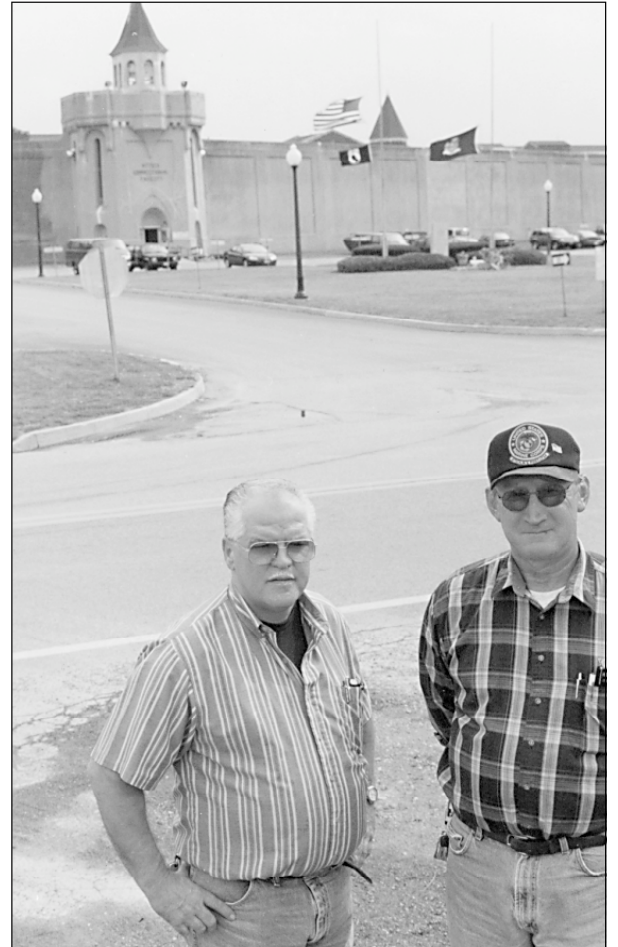
But Durfee and Phelps both agree it will be a long time before the Attica riot will be forgotten by those at the prison and the surrounding community.

— Ron Wofford

See related information on Page 14

### WORK FORCE FACTS

- ✓ CSEA Local President George Phelps represented CSEA at several community observances of the 30th anniversary of the riot.
- ✓ CSEA members hold 159 civilian maintenance and clerical jobs at Attica
- ✓ CSEA members joined a T-shirt fundraising effort for the World Trade Center disaster relief fund.



Attica Correctional Local President George Phelps, left, with Roger Durfee, last member still working since before the riot.

### Voices of the Work Force

"Naturally, we were devastated that something like this could happen. But good things seem to be coming in the aftermath of Sept. 11 — there is more togetherness and purpose. If we stay together, we'll come out stronger than ever before."



— Charlene Finnegan, of Livingston Correctional Facility

the highlight of her trip," joked Brown.

And yes, Brown said she never leaves home without it — her CSEA treasurer's pin.

— Ronald Kermani



The suspect pin



# CSEA members respond to anthrax scare

Across the state, union members who work in mail rooms in government and the private sector are rolling up their sleeves and pulling on gloves when they go to work.

From hospitals to schools to the basement mail rooms in county office buildings, CSEA members are keeping an eagle's eye for suspicious-looking mail or packages in the wake of the anthrax scares.

CSEA members who work in the state Health Department labs in Albany are helping test mail, clothing and other items for anthrax.

CSEA is also making sure union members take the proper precautions and have the right safety equipment

to process the day's mail. "I would like to thank CSEA for making sure the hospital took the precautionary measures to ensure our safety.

We were given latex gloves and notices on what we needed to look out for," said William Ippolito, a mailroom worker at the Nassau University Medical Center for six years.

The hospital mailroom has been cleared out twice because of suspicious letters it received.

At the State University of New York at Old Westbury, CSEA mailroom workers received similar protections thanks to the efforts of Mary D'Antonio, Local president.

D'Antonio made sure the school administration provided the mailroom staff with plenty of information about the anthrax scare and latex gloves for mail handling.

"If it wasn't for Ms. D'Antonio and CSEA we probably still would be opening and receiving mail with our bare hands," said Felipe Martinez, six-year mailroom worker at SUNY Old Westbury.

**Safety at school**  
Schools are also taking



From left, Joyce Menist, William Ippolito and Carolyn Diaz inspect incoming mail at Nassau University Medical Center.

necessary precautions.

Two recent anthrax scares at Newburgh's South Junior High School have spurred CSEA members at the district to take extra precautions.

While the substances found on a school bus and in a classroom tested negative for anthrax, CSEA Newburgh School District Unit President Chris Sladeski said the incidents

quickly brought the reality of anthrax scares home for the district.

"Each school received a letter from the superintendent on procedures on how to handle anthrax contamination," he said. "We are definitely being more careful."

— Rolando Infante,  
Mark Kotzin and Janice Marra



## Anthrax scare hits CSEA's NYC office

Days before the anthrax hysteria swept the nation, CSEA New York City Region President George Boncoraglio received a mysterious blue envelope from the African nation of Ghana.

"I don't know anyone in Ghana and we were suspicious as to whether we should open it or not," said Boncoraglio, who was concerned about the threat of bio-terrorism following the attack on the World Trade Center.

After consulting with Office Manager Yolanda Colon's husband, a city police detective, Boncoraglio opened the letter.

"It appeared to be a child who was perhaps looking for a pen pal."

The letter also looked eerily similar to the handwriting on anthrax-laced letters that were sent to news outlets and members of Congress.

Among the questions asked by the author in the letter is, "Please, are you a Christian?"

Although he was initially puzzled, Boncoraglio thought nothing of the letter and left it on his desk.

A few days later a worker at American Media in Florida contracted and later died after being exposed to anthrax which was sent through the mail.

"Yolanda called me and asked me how I was feeling because when I opened the letter I was in the office with Yolanda and Matt D'Amico,



CSEA Metropolitan Region President George Boncoraglio with suspect letter.

our political action coordinator, and he had started coming down with some flu-like symptoms and Yolanda was also feeling sick," said Boncoraglio, who admitted he wasn't "feeling too good either."

An FBI check proved the letter to be safe.

— David Galarza



### Voices of the Work Force



"This was a horrible loss of life that struck too close to home, making us concerned more than usual about our children, and its effects on them. The world we're living in has changed."

— Bill Stanton,  
president, the health research CSEA  
Local at Roswell Park Cancer  
Institute in Buffalo



# Bright lights, big-city savings after member switches traffic light bulbs

EAST SYRACUSE — When CSEA member Dennis Schuelke started work as the traffic signals supervisor for Onondaga County's Department of Transportation, he began hunting for ways to save money.

Suddenly, it was like a light bulb went on in his head — actually, it was more like a light emitting diode.

Schuelke, who has worked his way up the DOT ranks over 29 years, researched using light emitting diodes, or LEDs, as a cost-saving alternative to standard incandescent bulbs found in most traffic signals.

He reviewed some electric bills and realized the county was paying too much to power the incandescent bulbs.

"We had some bills that were awful high," he said.

Schuelke researched the LEDs, talked to sales representatives from the companies that manufacture the newer bulbs and read articles. He discovered the LED bulbs, once too expensive to consider as a

realistic alternative, were dropping in price.

They actually paid for themselves after a few years. They use less electricity, last 10 times longer than standard bulbs, and require little maintenance.

In the 20 intersections now using the bulbs, the county is saving about \$1,000 a month in electric costs.

"Now we're saving man hours, so we're not going out on overtime calls, and it's much safer — we're not sending someone out on the street in the middle of the night to replace a burned out bulb. It's also safer for the motoring public, because the lights are more visible, so maybe people wouldn't run red lights as much," Schuelke said.

"I pay taxes too like anyone else, and if I can find a way to save myself some money as well, I figure why not try it?" he said.

## Lighting the way for savings

Schuelke's idea has taken off, and the county has been steadily replacing all its traffic lights with the LED bulbs.

The state Department of Transportation has also picked up on the trend and is replacing bulbs around the state.

His innovation is not only saving big bucks, it's getting him some well-deserved kudos.

After an article in the local newspaper highlighted his money-saving suggestion, an editorial in the paper followed, urging other municipalities to hop on the LED bandwagon.

"We ask our public servants to do a good job. Schuelke did. We ought to reward him — and ourselves — by heeding his advice," the newspaper editorial stated.

Schuelke said the recognition was a nice surprise, but that's not why he did it.

"For me it's more personal. I know I'm doing my job and I'm doing something for safety and I feel good about it," he said.

— Mark M. Kotzin



**ON THE BEAM** — CSEA member Dennis Schuelke of the Onondaga County Local put the red light on wasted money by replacing the incandescent bulbs in traffic signal lights with light emitting diodes (LEDs). Photo by Mark Kotzin.

## WORK FORCE FACTS

Onondaga County paid \$80 a month in electricity to power traffic lights at one intersection.

Using the light emitting diodes (LEDs), the county now pays \$23.

Multiply the \$50 a month savings by the 20 intersections using the new bulbs, the county is saving about \$1,000 a month on its electric bill for traffic lights at those 20 junctions.

## Voices of the Work Force



"I couldn't believe it. Terrorism is real, and we must be seriously concerned about protecting all we believe in."

— Roland Gray,  
Monroe County  
Unit, transportation  
department





## Penn Yan school workers picket for contract; show disparity in benefits

PENN YAN — Penn Yan Schools Unit members crowded a recent school board meeting to tell board members they make less money yet pay more for the same health coverage as teachers.

“How can it be fair, when a 10-month employee CSEA member pays \$2,121 for family health insurance, while a teacher who makes a considerably larger salary, pays only \$848 per year?” asked Frank Modaffari, Unit president.

“This is what we want the board to recognize and correct. It’s a matter of

fairness,” he added.

Unit members, who are negotiating a new contract with the district, also picketed the board before the meeting.

The protesters were joined by other CSEA activists, including Flo Tripi, CSEA Western Region president.

Many community members gasped when they heard the disparity in health insurance contributions.

The Unit also passed out fact sheets detailing the wide differences between members’ and teachers’ insurance costs.



### WORK FORCE FACTS

**\$ Now-retired CSEA members, Dorothy Simmons and Shirley Jensen, operated the Penn Yan district’s food service department in recent years, and it was profitable when they retired.**

**\$ The district now claims the department is in the red. But the district has hired a director who makes more than twice the salary of the two retirees, and who also has a secretary. This contributes to the “deficit,” CSEA pointed out.**

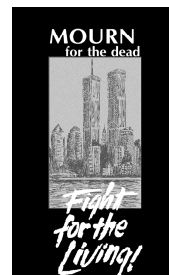
### Voices of the Work Force



*“Basically everything stood still Sept. 11. Everyone is still distraught. Our members are collecting for the Red Cross, and donating blood — anything we can do to help.”*

— Ed Quackenbush, SUNY College at Geneseo

## 8 hours at ground zero



AMHERST — Barry Kobrin is back at his SUNY Buffalo job, but he won’t soon forget the 48 hours of volunteer support work he put in at ground zero at the World Trade Center disaster.

“After the tragedy struck, besides being horrified, I was itching to do something to help,” said Kobrin, an assistant chief for the Town of

Lockport Volunteer Fire Company.”

“When I heard about the nearby South Lockport Fire Company joining up with several companies to send support teams to the site, I jumped at the chance to go,” he said.

Within days of the terrorist attack, Kobrin was in a caravan of ambulances headed to New York City, among 50 volunteer firefighters, emergency medical technicians and paramedics.

“Within two hours of our arrival, we were given an orientation and assigned to our ambulance on-call location. Our ambulances were marked with the codes for the types of skills our crews had — basic, intermediate, advanced and paramedic. And we received the radio calls based on the crew skills needed.”

Armed with his intermediate Emergency Medical Technician credentials, Kobrin and his ambulance crew were on call to help and treat hundreds of recovery workers at ground zero, site of the worst terrorist attack on America.

### Long, draining shifts

“We were supposed to be on 12-hour shifts, but mostly they were more like 17 and 18 hours,” said Kobrin. “But no one was complaining.”

For accommodations, the volunteers were given a bunk on the hospital ship, USS Comfort, docked near Battery Park, where they showered and rested before a shuttle bus picked them up for another shift.

“I saw the worst and best of humankind,” said Kobrin. “The worst, of course was the terrorist tragedy’s aftermath, but the outpouring of human kindness extended to us, and working with the brotherhood of other fire and rescue personnel, was something special,” Kobrin said.

“It’s going to be a long time cleaning it up. But if I was asked to go again, I would definitely do it,” said Kobrin, who is a caretaker of lab animals at the university.

— Ron Wofford

*The Work Force is preparing a profile of the five CSEA members who remain missing in the World Trade Center attack of Sept. 11. It will be included in the January issue*





## CSEA's 91st Annual Delegates Meeting in Buffalo



Photos by Ron Wofford

*"This really helped in showing me how to be more organizational in setting my goals and how to accomplish them."*  
— Kathleen Rath

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THIS TOPIC:**  
For more photos from the 91st Annual Delegates Meeting, visit: [www.csealocal1000.net](http://www.csealocal1000.net)

*"I learned how to get the members to be more active and to bring issues to them that are important to them."*  
— Scott Lowman



1. A month and a half following the Sept. 11 attacks, many delegates proudly displayed their patriotism.
2. Demonstrating labor solidarity in an atmosphere of tough economic conditions, delegates by the busload attended a unity rally in front of the Erie County Office Building.
3. State Comptroller H. Carl McCall speaks at a remembrance program to honor the memory of those killed in the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.
4. CSEA Treasurer Maureen Malone and Statewide Secretary Barbara Reeves thank members of the Mount Olive Baptist Church Male Chorus for singing at the remembrance. CSEA Buffalo Psychiatric Center Local President Robert Mootry, center, is a member of the chorus.
5. These delegates take a break from one of the many informative workshops to catch up on the news.



A CSEA quilt assembled during the annual delegates meeting from hundreds of patches sewn by CSEA Units, Locals and staff hangs proudly in the convention hall.



**Relentless pressure by CSEA:**

# Doused with chemicals, members tested for toxins four years later

ALBANY — Four years of state stonewalling may be over for five CSEA members, but the fight to find out whether their jobs made them sick is just beginning.

Five CSEA members who worked at the state sawmill and lumber treatment plant and were exposed to toxic chemicals, most likely pentachlorophenol



**Carlton Dibble**

(PCP), will finally be examined by an occupational health physician doctors to determine whether their symptoms are related to the exposure at work.

The workers said they have been receiving medical treatment for a host of ailments over the years, but no screening has been done to determine once and for all whether they can blame their illness on their jobs.

This screening — mandated in the union's contract — is the result of CSEA's relentless pressure over the years to hold the state accountable for the contamination of the union members.

The intensive physicals also end the battle for the five, Carlton "Vic" Dibble, Stephen Doan, Virgil Oakley, William Johnson and Gerry Hooper, and the CSEA Occupational Safety and Health Department.

### The long, hard fight

The saga began in April 1990 at the Camp Summit lumber treatment shed and recently reached an elusive goal — testing the workers' blood and fatty tissues for the presence of killer contaminants.

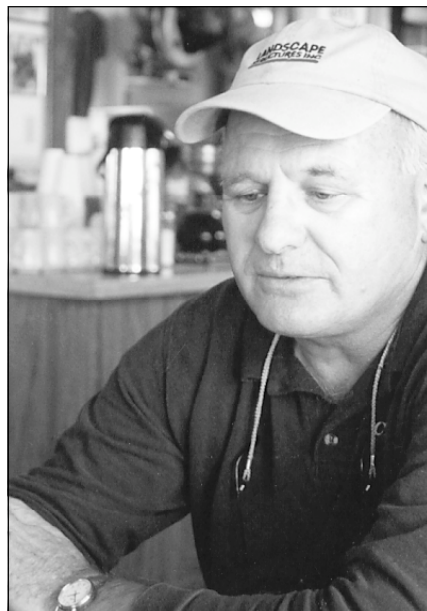
The state must abide by the doctor's findings should they warrant more treatment, CSEA health and safety experts said.

Persistence and determination by the Camp Summit CSEA members and the CSEA OSH Department Director Jim Corcoran and Industrial Hygienist Matt Kozak pushed the state to finally acknowledge the workers' contractual rights for physicals conducted by an occupational health physician.

### The dousing

For Dibble, this journey to justice started with a dousing of unknown liquid as he jack hammered a concrete floor in the aging and rural lumber treatment facility which was being renovated into a sawmill for the state Department of Environmental Conservation.

Dibble said he tried to continue working after the dousing with chemicals, but he



**William Johnson**



**Virgil Oakley**

couldn't. He became ill. The first of a series of hospitalization and personal frustrations began.

The five members who renovated the facility demanded the state provide a medical screening for toxic chemical exposure.

The state refused.

The employees turned to CSEA for help.

A CSEA investigation revealed the shuttered lumber treatment plant was highly contaminated by potentially lethal combinations of heavy metals, dioxins and PCP.

The contamination was so great that rather than being reported in parts per million, it was reported in percentages, CSEA experts said.

### State stonewalls, again

Even armed with scientific facts, the state still stonewalled CSEA's demand for a chemical contamination test.

When CSEA discovered the sawmill was listed by the state as a contaminated site and was soon to be dismantled and buried, the union pushed the case as a health and safety grievance.

By this time, local and state politicians were getting



involved. CSEA negotiated a settlement with the state, and a physician was selected to examine the workers.

"When we were told the state had no objection to our selection (of the doctors), we knew we had won the issue, once and for all," CSEA health and safety expert Kozak said.

The five employees will have complete physical checkups and the long-sought medical screenings shortly.

The results of the testing will determine if the common questions the workers have asked over the years — "What's making me sick?" — is finally answered.

That answer could also send the five and CSEA into another uncharted quest for fairness and responsibility.

— Daniel X. Campbell



### You Have a Right to Know

If there are hazardous materials or wastes at your worksite, there should be a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) available explaining the materials and their dangers

The Federal Hazard Communication Standard and the New York State Right to Know laws require MSDS's at the worksite.

[www.csealocal1000.net](http://www.csealocal1000.net)

In the Members Only area, click on "Publications" for a complete list of OSH manuals, including two dealing with hazardous materials, that you can download online.

## **Irene Carr Leadership Award:**

# **Saving newborns the best award of all**

A union member who lobbied tirelessly for a state law that shields women from arrest if they leave their newborn babies in a "safe haven" has received one of CSEA's top awards for leadership.

Tim Jaccard, a Nassau County ambulance medical technician and the driving force behind



**Tim Jaccard accepts the 2001 Irene Carr Leadership Award from CSEA President Donohue at the union's Annual Delegates Meeting in Buffalo. The award is named in honor of CSEA's first statewide secretary.**

the Abandoned Infant Protection Act, received the Irene Carr Leadership Award at the union's annual convention in Buffalo.

"He stood up and reminded everyone around him that you just can't ignore the things in life that are not pretty, that are not what you want to see on the news," said CSEA President Danny Donohue as he presented the award.

"Many of us walk down streets every day and hear stories and wonder how could people do such things. But very few of us ever say 'what can we do to make sure they never happen again?'" Donohue said.

As an ambulance medical technician, Jaccard often found newborns who were abandoned and left for dead in a Dumpster or toilet by their mothers.

In 1998, he founded the AMT Children of Hope Foundation to prevent infant abandonment and provide dignified burials for deceased abandoned newborns.

Jaccard began a long and painstaking quest for a state law which protects mothers from



arrest if they bring the unwanted baby to a police or fire station, hospital or other haven.

Other states have followed New York State's lead and passed similar laws that have saved infants' lives. Jaccard credited CSEA's political clout for getting the bill passed.

"Without the strength of what we have here I could not have moved forward across this country to get this bill passed," Jaccard said.

"We now have this bill passed in 35 states and at least 73 babies are alive today because of it," he told convention delegates.

"This (award) is given to me but it's given to you, every one of you because you support what we are trying to do in the communities across this country," Jaccard said.

Jaccard is a long-time union activist and co-chairs the CSEA Long Island Region's Human Rights Committee and Violence in the Workplace Committee.

He also lobbies for pay equity at the local and state level.

— Ed Molitor

## **That rosy glow you get from helping others**

LATHAM — The public is seeing red when it comes to CSEA lately.

Red T-shirted CSEA members are showing up in the most unexpected places — leading the Special Olympics parade at the Hudson Valley Community College, serving as pledge takers on public television stations, walking to raise money for breast cancer research, the March of Dimes, diabetes and other charities.

The recent Feast For Famine featured red T-shirted CSEA members as hosts and servers, a wall of red crosses was built by CSEA members in a local mall and thousands of potatoes served at the Project Equinox Thanksgiving dinner were peeled by CSEA members wearing red T-shirts.

All of these community-based events were assisted by CSEA volunteers on the ever-growing CSEA Capital Region Outreach Committee, created by region President Kathy Garrison.

### **Members making a difference**

"Our members are involved in each of these community-based charities and more," Garrison said.

"It is time for CSEA to show these charities and the communities just how deep our roots of community service really are," she added.

"I've had CSEA members come up to me at



**Wearing their red CSEA shirts at the Project Equinox Thanksgiving dinner preparations are, left to right, Ed Eades, Sarah Roberts, Johnnie Yarborough, Linda Schwabb and Kathy Garrison.**

various events and tell me that they're proud to see their union helping out," outreach committee coordinator Ken Koopman said.

"I turn the tables on them and ask them if they'd like to get involved in CSEA's effort to continue helping their charity by wearing a CSEA T-shirt and being identified as a CSEA member and not just as a volunteer. Most are happy to do it, and that seals our relationship with that member and that charity," he said.

The Capital Region plans to continue expanding the Outreach Committee — hopefully

to all of the region's 14 counties, activists said.

### **Changing public's view**

"If a community really understands how its public sector work force is involved in the whole community, not just in government-based services, perhaps they will be more supportive of the needs of those workers who really give back to their local communities by being the backbone of churches, social programs, volunteer groups," Garrison said.

"We can change the image of public workers by showing what a good citizen, community member our members really are," she said.

Ed Eades, president of the CSEA Higher Education Services Corp. Local in Albany, has been very active and supportive of the Outreach Committee.

"This gets our image out into the community," Eades said.

"For years and years our communities, the charities we support, the civil groups and so forth have been taking our donations and our volunteer work, but not recognizing us as public employees and CSEA members.

"Now we're getting the credit CSEA deserves!" Eades said.

— Daniel X. Campbell





**A GREAT GIFT**



## Attica remembered

Three decades ago the Attica state prison near Buffalo erupted in a four-day melee that killed 11 hostages and 32 inmates.

CSEA members who worked at the maximum-security prison were in grave danger during the riot but none were killed.

**See related  
story on page 6**

### **Also in 1971:**

- ❖ New York City police officers end their six-day strike against the city;
- ❖ Idi Amin seizes power in Uganda;
- ❖ In Britain, 1 million industrial workers strike to protest a bill in Parliament to curb unions;
- ❖ Ford recalls all Pintos for gas tank defects;
- ❖ A bomb explodes in the Senate wing of the U.S. Capitol, causing damage but no injuries;
- ❖ Off Track Betting (OTB) opens in New York City with a \$2 bet by Mayor John Lindsay;
- ❖ Lee Trevino wins the U.S. Open and British Open golf titles;
- ❖ Frank Sinatra retires;
- ❖ AFL-CIO leader George Meany urges Congress to take control of the economy from President Richard Nixon;
- ❖ Nixon commutes the sentence of Teamster boss Jimmy Hoffa.

# CSEA's McHugh has out-of-Body experience with St. Paul strikers

When pro wrestler turned Minnesota Gov. Jesse "The Body" Ventura called striking state workers there "un-American" in the wake of the World Trade Center attack, CSEA's Jim McHugh literally "flew" into a rage.

McHugh, fresh off a state transportation emergency stint at ground zero in New York City, flew to a huge state worker protest in St. Paul to remind Ventura the value of public employees everywhere.

"When Governor Ventura said you were un-American for striking, he forgot that everyone working at ground zero was a union member," McHugh told the cheering crowd of AFSCME brothers and sisters. In Minnesota, unlike New York, public employees have the right to strike.

"Governor Ventura insulted you when he said you were un-American for striking," said McHugh, who coordinated the state



**Jim McHugh, left, shows his support for striking Minnesota state workers in St. Paul.**

department's emergency relief work at the World Trade Center.

"Everybody knows union workers are probably the most patriotic people in the world," he added.

"Union workers are the first to respond to any crisis," McHugh told the strikers.

"Jesse Ventura may be 'The Body' (the governor's professional wrestling nickname), but you are the heart, soul and backbone of Minnesota."

Minnesota state workers were on strike for two weeks. A tentative contract, including raises and better health care language, was reached just days after McHugh stirred the crowd with his speech.

"I'm here because I want to give my brothers and sisters here a hand and some support," McHugh told the strikers.

"Just like we keep helping each other in New York," he added.

McHugh is no stranger to a picket line or a strike.

"We got union cards before birth certificates," he joked, noting he was on picket lines — pushed in a stroller — before he could walk.

Two generations of McHughs were steeped in labor's often tumultuous history. His grandfather was beaten and arrested during the Ford strike in Detroit, and his father was a business agent in the Teamsters in Southern California in the 1950s.

— Ronald Kermani



## **From Beantown to the Big Apple:**

### **AFSCME Women's Convention helps jumpstart NYC economy**

To help jump-start the faltering New York City economy, thousands of union members were converging on the Big Apple instead of Beantown for the AFSCME Eastern Women's Conference as this edition went to press.

The three-day event was moved from Boston to New York City after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center.

"In light of the Sept. 11 tragedies and the impact they are having on New York members and their city and state, we're showing our solidarity and support by moving the conference," said AFSCME President Gerald McEntee.

CSEA President Danny Donohue and William Lucy, AFSCME's international secretary-treasurer, are among the speakers during the program that will feature workshops, including one on grief counseling.

A memorial program honoring AFSCME members who were killed in the terrorist attacks — including five CSEA members — is also scheduled.

"We have a full contingent of New York City members attending this conference," said Jackie Stanford, chair of the CSEA Women's committee.

"This conference is great for all CSEA members because it shows our unity and strength as a labor movement," Stanford said.

"The World Trade Center attacks have torn us apart," she added. "We need to come together and just be one."



## **Prime U.S. economy with union-supported economic plan**

The national AFL-CIO, CSEA and other unions across the nation are lobbying Congress for an economic stimulus package that will work for all Americans in the wake of the Sept. 11 terrorist attack.

The package would provide significant federal help for working families hurt by the crisis through better unemployment benefits covering more unemployed workers and federal financial assistance to maintain health coverage.

Also included in the union-supported plan is greater access to job training and retraining, a raise in the minimum wage, and tax rebates for low and moderate-income families.

The plan also calls for a needed boost in spending to help struggling state and local governments and to invest in rebuilding the nation's roads, bridges and schools.

Security needs were also addressed in the union package.

"This plan represents a fairer alternative to the administration's plan to stimulate the economy," said CSEA President Danny Donohue.

The administration's proposal would offer many more tax breaks for the wealthy and corporations than help to working families "who need the federal government's help the most," Donohue added.



## WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?



**State Prescription Co-Pay Reimbursement Plan**

For New York State employees represented by CSEA in the Administrative, Institutional and Operational Services units, Division of Military and Naval Affairs, and the Roswell Park Cancer Institute Corp, it's time to submit claims for your prescription co-pay reimbursement plan.

This benefit covers members from these bargaining units who are enrolled in the New York State Health Insurance Program (either the Empire Plan or a Health Maintenance Organization).

This benefit can be used once annually for reimbursement of NYSHIP prescription drug co-pay expenses for these members and their dependents (including domestic partners).

The benefit reimburses up to a maximum of \$100 per family per calendar year after incurred prescription drug co-payments exceed \$300 in that year.

To obtain the maximum benefit, you should wait until your co-pay expenses reach \$400 before filing your claim.

The claim can be submitted before Dec. 31 if you have already exceeded \$400.

If you do not accumulate \$400 before the end of the year, submit your claim after Dec. 31 but before March 31 of the following year for costs incurred over \$300.

To obtain a prescription drug co-pay benefit claim form from the fund, call 1-800-EBF-CSEA or write the EBF at:

**CSEA Employee Benefit Fund  
PO Box 516  
Latham, NY 12110-0516**

Submit your completed claim form with original receipts or pharmacy printout clearly indicating the co-pay amount and a photocopy of your Empire Plan or HMO insurance card.

Co-insurance payments and cost differentials between brand name and generic drugs are not covered nor are charges for non-covered medications or prescriptions that cost less than the required co-payments of your plan.

## AN EVER BETTER FUTURE!

### General Announcement:

## Notice of nomination and election of 2002 AFSCME Convention Delegates

Meetings will be held in all CSEA regions to nominate candidates for the position of delegate to the 2002 AFSCME convention, scheduled for June 2002 in Las Vegas.

The region nominating meetings kick off the AFSCME delegate election process, which continues in accordance with the schedule of election that will be presented to the CSEA Board of Directors on Nov. 29.

CSEA delegates will be elected by region by the members in each CSEA region.

The number of delegates to which each region is entitled is based on region membership strength, in accordance with the AFSCME and CSEA constitutions.

#### Who is eligible

Any member in good standing will be entitled to be nominated to be a delegate to the AFSCME convention.

Any member in good standing will be eligible to nominate delegates.

Any qualified CSEA member will be eligible to nominate as many candidates for delegates as he or she desires, not to exceed the total number of delegates to be elected from the region.

Nominees do not have to be at the nominating meeting.

Nominations may be made by slates of two or more individuals who will appear on the ballot as running together under a particular designation.

Candidates nominated as slates will appear on the ballot in the order they are nominated.

The ballot will also allow slate candidates to be elected individually, separate from the slate.

Expenses for transportation, room and board at the AFSCME convention will be paid by CSEA.

### CSEA Region Nominating Meeting AFSCME Convention Delegates Election

Saturday, Jan. 5, 2002  
All meetings will start at 11 a.m.

**LONG ISLAND REGION**  
(41 delegates)  
Region Office, 3 Garet Place  
Commack

**METROPOLITAN REGION**  
(15 delegates)  
Region Office, 40 Fulton St.  
21st Floor Conference Room,  
New York City

**SOUTHERN REGION**  
(40 delegates)  
Region Office, 735 State Route  
52, Beacon

**CAPITAL REGION**  
(38 delegates)  
The Desmond, Room 5 Fort  
Orange, 660 Albany Shaker  
Road, Albany

**CENTRAL REGION**  
(41 delegates)  
Region Office,  
6595 Kirkville Road,  
East Syracuse

**WESTERN REGION**  
(40 delegates)  
Batavia Holiday Inn  
8250 Park Road (Thruway Exit  
48) Batavia

Here is a tentative schedule to be presented to the CSEA Board of Directors on Nov. 29 for adoption:

**Jan. 5, 2002**  
Region nomination meetings.  
**Feb. 15**  
Ballots mailed  
**Feb. 25**  
Replacement ballots available  
**March 11**  
Ballots due 8 a.m.; tally commences

### KNOW YOUR RIGHTS!

Have you:

⇒ Recently been injured on the job and gotten medical treatment?

-OR-

⇒ Been diagnosed with:

• carpal tunnel syndrome • rotator cuff (shoulder) injury  
• back injury • knee injury • tendinitis • dermatitis • hearing loss

-- and your doctor believes it's job-related?



CALL THE CSEA

WORKERS' COMPENSATION LEGAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM  
1-800-342-4146

Follow the menu options. Your call will be answered by the CSEA Board-approved law firm [Fine, Olin & Anderman, LLP] with offices throughout NYS, and staffed by attorneys who specialize in Workers' Compensation.

Did you know?

⇒ You can be eligible for Workers' Compensation without losing a single day of work?

-AND-

⇒ You have 30 days to notify your supervisor and 2 years from injury date to file a claim?



**CALL NOW** if you think you have a Workers' Compensation case or just need answers to your questions. There is no out-of-pocket cost to CSEA members or their dependents for program services.

1-800-342-4146

## Important updates for state Empire Plan enrollees

### Complementary Alternative Medicine (CAM) Program

#### New Benefit Available 10/1/01:

A network of providers who specialize in massage therapy, acupuncture and diet/nutrition is now available to CSEA-represented state enrollees and their eligible dependents enrolled in the Empire Plan.

CSEA negotiated an agreement with the state, which established a discount-based program for alternative medicine providers under the Empire Plan.

The CAM program is a discounted program administered by the Managed Physical Network/American Complementary Care Network (MPN/ACCN).

The Empire Plan's CAM program consists of a network of licensed acupuncturists, massage therapists, and dietitians/nutritionists who have agreed to accept a discounted fee from Empire Plan enrollees.

This is an enrollee-pay-all program (affinity product), however, the enrollee receives a 25 percent discount off the provider's normal rates.

MPN/ACCN has established a network of providers, who have agreed to accept the 25 percent discounted fee. However, if an enrollee has a provider they would like to nominate to become a network provider, they can contact MPN/ACCN.

To find an Empire Plan CAM network provider in your area, or to nominate a provider, contact MPN/ACCN at 1-888-447-2144.

Provider information and other information can be obtained on the Internet at [www.empireplancam.com](http://www.empireplancam.com).

### Empire Plan Changes Effective 1/1/02

In accordance with the CSEA-NYS 1999-2003 collective bargaining agreement, the following health insurance changes are effective Jan. 1, 2002 for CSEA active state members enrolled in The Empire Plan.

Hearing aid reimbursement increase to \$1,200 every four years for adults and once every two years for children ages 12 and under when medically appropriate (benefit reimbursement was \$1,000 in 2001).

Emergency room co-pay increase from \$30 to \$35. Outpatient co-pay will continue to be waived for persons admitted to the hospital as an inpatient directly from the outpatient setting.

## Empire Plan Benefits Management Program Change Effective January 1, 2002

Effective Jan. 1, 2002, there will be a change in the vendors who administer the Empire Plan's Benefits Management Program.

Intracorp will no longer administer the Benefits Management Program (BMP).

Empire Blue Cross and Blue Shield, the Empire Plan hospital vendor and United HealthCare, the Empire Plan medical vendor, will jointly administer and coordinate this existing program.

The procedures to follow for the program will not change.

### Empire Blue Cross and Blue Shield

1-800-342-9815 or 518-367-0009

Effective Jan. 1, 2002 enrollees must contact Empire Blue Cross and Blue Shield for pre-admission certification, concurrent review of hospital and skilled nursing facility (SNF) admissions, discharge planning, inpatient complex medical case management and high-risk pregnancy program.

### Pre-admission certification

- Any elective (scheduled) hospital admission that will include an overnight stay in the hospital
- The birth of a child (call as soon as the doctor confirms the pregnancy) — an additional call is required if admitted to the hospital during the pregnancy for complications or for anything other than the delivery of the baby

• Within 48 hours after an emergency or urgent situation — this includes admission if scheduled for outpatient surgery and the patient remained in the hospital overnight due to complications.

• Admission to a skilled nursing facility, including transfer from a hospital to a skilled nursing facility.

### Concurrent review of hospital and skilled nursing facility (SNF) admissions

Once the Empire Plan member is hospitalized, the Empire Plan's BMP continues to monitor the member's progress through the concurrent review program.

The goal of concurrent review is to encourage the appropriate use

of inpatient care.

If the BMP determines that inpatient care is no longer medically necessary, the member, member's doctor and facility will be notified in writing no later than the day before the day on which Empire Plan inpatient benefits cease.

### Discharge planning

If a member needs special services after hospitalization, the BMP's discharge planning unit nurses can help in consultation with the hospital discharge planners.

BMP nurses will consult with the member's doctor and coordinate medically necessary services for the member and member's family.

These services will be covered in accordance with Empire Plan provisions.

For home health care and durable medical equipment/supplies, the member must call the Home Care Advocacy Program administered by United HealthCare.

### Inpatient complex medical case management

Medical case management is a voluntary program to help identify and coordinate covered services that the patient needs.

If the BMP determines that the service could help the member and member's family, a nurse coordinator, who is familiar with the benefits under the Empire Plan and local and regional health care resources, will contact the member.

The nurse will talk with the member and member's family to discuss the member's medical situation.

At that time, it is indicated that the member's acceptance of this service is voluntary.

The nurse and member's attending physician will identify treatment options covered under the Empire Plan so that the member and the member's family have the medical information available to make the best medical decisions possible.

The nurse is also able to identify community resources, which may

be available for the member.

### High-risk pregnancy program

Members are asked to call BMP as soon as they are aware that they are pregnant.

BMP helps identify possible problems and works with mother and doctor throughout the pregnancy.

The BMP maternity specialist will ask the member several easy questions to help determine if the baby is at risk.

A member's participation is voluntary. If the maternity specialist identifies any possible problems, the specialist will ask to keep in telephone contact with the member every four to six weeks. A registered nurse that specializes in maternity or newborn care will recontact the member.

During the calls, the nurse will talk to the member about progress and problems the member may be experiencing.

The nurse will also call the member's doctor to discuss progress and possible follow-up.

During these calls, the BMP nurse will be able to answer general questions, and help the member in forming questions to pose to her doctor.

### United Health Care

1-800-942-4640

Effective Jan. 1, 2002 enrollees must contact United HealthCare for prospective procedure review prior to receiving any elective magnetic resonance imaging (MRI).

United HealthCare will also oversee voluntary specialist consultations and outpatient medical case management.

### Prospective procedure review

The benefits management program requires that members call UHC to receive prior authorization for any elective (non-emergency) Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) procedures.

Alternatively, the physician who orders the MRI can contact UHC for authorization.

If authorization is not obtained, a reduced benefit or no benefit will be paid depending on whether the procedure is determined to be

medically necessary.

A call should be made to UHC as soon as the procedure is ordered to assure that the authorization is made prior to the date when the procedure is scheduled.

Once UHC completes its review of the request, written confirmation will be sent to the member and ordering physician.

The member should bring the written confirmation with them to the facility where the MRI will be performed.

### Voluntary specialist consultant evaluation

Voluntary specialist consultant evaluation is available for any scheduled procedure.

BMP will provide a list of up to three specialist similar to your doctor.

Consultation with one of three specialists at no cost to you.

Consultation will not be covered if specialist providing consultation performs the procedure.

### Outpatient medical case management

Medical case management is a voluntary program to help identify and coordinate covered services that the patient needs.

If the BMP determines that this service could help the member and the member's family, a nurse coordinator, who is familiar with the benefits under the Empire Plan and local and regional health care resources, will contact the member.

BMP nurses will conference with the member and the member's family to discuss the member's medical situation.

At that time it is indicated that the member's acceptance of this service is voluntary.

The nurse and member's attending physician will identify treatment options covered under the Empire Plan so the member and the member's family have the medical information available to make the best medical decision possible.

The nurse is also able to identify community resources, which may be available for the member.

## CSEA members: Health insurance option transfer for 2002

Members who are considering changing health insurance options for 2002 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 health 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).

If you wish to change options, you must contact your health benefits administrator and fill out a PS-404 form.

If you do not wish to make a change, no action is required.

NOTE: Enrollees and their families enrolled in United Healthcare HMO must choose a new health carrier because that HMO is no longer offered to state employees in 2002.

### Check the Rates

Rates influence the choices we make when choosing a health insurance plan.

At press time, the health insurance rates for 2002 were not yet approved.

When the rates are approved, a rates and deadline publication will be printed and mailed to enrollees' homes.

When enrollees review this information, please keep in mind that whether you are enrolled in the Empire Plan or an HMO, New York State pays most of the cost of your premium.

New York State pays 90 percent of the cost of individual and 75 percent of the cost of dependent coverage toward the hospital/medical/mental health and substance abuse components provided under the Empire Plan.

The state's maximum contribution toward

HMO premiums in 2002 will continue to be 90 percent of the cost of individual, 75 percent of the cost of dependent coverage toward the hospital/medical/mental health and substance abuse components provided under the HMO, not to exceed its dollar contribution for these components of the Empire Plan premium.

In accordance with the 1999-2003 collective bargaining agreement, New York State is contractually obligated to pay the entire cost of the individual and dependent prescription drug premiums under the Empire Plan and Health Maintenance Organizations until Jan. 1, 2003.

Members who are thinking of changing health insurance options should review the *Choices* brochure (which provides a summary of plan benefits) as well as the rates and deadlines publication, when available.



## Delegates act on constitution, bylaws

BUFFALO — CSEA delegates to the union's 91st annual meeting approved the following changes to the CSEA bylaws:

- Expanded by two weeks in each direction (from Sept. 15 to Sept. 1 and from Nov. 15 to Nov. 30) the time frame during which the annual meeting must be held. (Article II, Section 1a).
- Specified that being eligible for bonding coverage is a qualification for CSEA office. (Article III, Section 2a)
- Reduced refunds to Locals by an amount equal to the net per capita paid to the appropriate AFL-CIO federations and labor councils in the state of New York. (Article IV, Section 3a)

### First Reading

Delegates approved the following amendments to the CSEA Constitution which require a second reading to the delegate body before they go into effect:

- Expands definition of "associate members" to include persons who are employed in the state of New York in or connected with a place of work for which CSEA is the bargaining agent. (Article 3, Section 2)
- Extends terms of retiree executive committee members from three to four years. (Article IX, Section 1a)

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**"We feel like we're homeless."**

## Displaced by terrorism, the stress of returning to work

After the first plane struck the World Trade Center, Frank Cosentino thought he was watching debris falling from the windows near the huge, burning hole on the north face of the building.

"I realized it was people jumping," said Cosentino.

With those images burned into his mind, Cosentino, a CSEA member who works for the State Liquor Authority (SLA), recently returned to his office, three blocks from ground zero.

He is among hundreds of CSEA members who were displaced from their offices after the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center.

For many, merging into a daily New York City routine after the attack has been stressful.

"The first day was really eerie," said Cosentino. "We were the only building open on the block, you needed to show ID to the police. There was nothing open."

"There were Army trucks on the block and it reminded me of a war zone or a jail-like atmosphere."

About 60 members from the SLA were displaced for nearly a month until the area around their office could be cleaned and the authorities allowed workers to return to their desks.

### Health fears follow attack

But in addition to the emotional impact of the tragedy, Cosentino and other CSEA members said they now fear for their health.

"The smell is distinct," said Cosentino about the constant stench downtown.

"Some people feel it in their throats, others feel it in their eyes. People are getting headaches and there are a lot of complaints," he added.

Despite news reports warning about dangerous levels of toxic substances like benzene, asbestos and sulfur in the air in and around ground zero, government and environmental agencies insist the air quality in lower Manhattan is safe.

CSEA Metropolitan Region Vice President Leonita Wilson disagrees.

"About half of the employees here are feeling sick, nauseous and dizzy," said Wilson who returned to her job at the state attorney general's office two weeks after the attack.

"Your nose burns, your throat gets dry and you can't open your eyes," she said.



**CSEA member Leonita Wilson can see ground zero every day from the 25th floor of the state attorney general's office.**

A mere block and a half away from the cranes and trucks that are hauling away tons of debris daily, Wilson said she has seen rescue crews removing bodies from the wreckage.

"People feel like they want to leave (the office)," said Wilson. "It's terrible down here."

### Haunting deja vu

Across the river in Brooklyn Heights, Helen Galloway, a data entry operator for the state Office of Temporary Disabilities, has not been able to return to her office since the tragedy. Her office was across the street from the World Trade Center.

"I wish I could have a whole night's sleep," said Galloway. "I haven't been able to sleep since September 11."

Galloway was on a break and standing just a few yards from Tower 1 when the first plane hit.

"The impact was so hard it lifted you at least six inches off the floor."

"We knew what it was because we were there in '93 (the first World Trade Center bombing)," said Galloway.

With her co-workers split up among agency sites throughout the city, Galloway said she was trying to adjust to her temporary office but admits "we feel like we're homeless."

"I know they are trying to accommodate us but it's really stressful," said Galloway.

— David Galarza

## Tens of thousands of CSEA members pick their bosses on Election Day

The union's massive political action machinery slid into high gear for this year's bumper crop of local elections.

CSEA-endorsed candidates won in Nassau, Westchester, Suffolk and Rensselaer counties, Syracuse, Troy, Hempstead and Poughkeepsie, according to unofficial results.

The last several months, union members staffed phone banks, distributed literature and hosted candidates at union meetings in a concerted plan to elect candidates who understand the needs of working families.

"Our political action efforts are unparalleled in New York state, and political action is the backbone of this union," said CSEA President Danny Donohue.

"We take pride in our involvement in election campaigns at every level of government, from the town council right up to governor. This year was no exception — CSEA members truly made the difference in many races," Donohue said.

### Important local races

In CSEA's Central Region, union members strongly supported Matt Driscoll's successful race for mayor of Syracuse.

Dozens of CSEA members worked the phones every night for weeks before Election Day to help push Driscoll to victory.

"It's important to do this to be able to have a say and to be able to make your voice heard," said Paula Randall, a clerk in the Syracuse school district's maintenance office who helped on the campaign.

"I feel that it's important as a city school district employee to have a mayor who we can work with so that we can work side-by-side to benefit each other," added Randall about her first involvement with a campaign.

CSEA member Ken Crosson worked the street — literally — in New York City for union-endorsed city council candidates.

For more than two decades, Crosson has distributed campaign literature and asked people to sign nominating petitions.

"When I knock on doors and tell them I'm from CSEA and I'm collecting signatures for a candidate, they're happy to see me," Crosson said.

"It gives me a sense of pride to help out" the union and endorsed candidates, he added.

### Grassroots experience

Immersed in New York City politics for the first time also made CSEA member Barbara Felder, a keyboard specialist at the state

**CONTRACT FIGHT** — About 60 CSEA members and supporters recently demonstrated in front of the Lloyd Town Hall (Ulster County) in support of settling a union contract dispute that has kept about 30 CSEA town employees working without a contract since January. Union members, who picketed with a 20-foot-high inflatable rat in front of the building, are urging Lloyd town officials to settle the CSEA contract. Contract negotiations, which have reached an impasse and are headed toward mediation, have been stalled because of differences between the town and the union on several issues, including pay raises. Employee health insurance, retirement benefits, compensation insurance and employee givebacks are also sticking points. "I cannot understand why the Town Board has taken such a hard-nosed position on this issue," CSEA Town of Lloyd Unit President Andrew Paccione said. "The board gave themselves 33 percent raises, yet they don't want to pay us cost-of-living raises. This town is not in economic distress." ... **GOLDEN MILESTONES** — Six CSEA Locals reached a milestone in the history of the union — they celebrate their 50th anniversary this year. CSEA President Danny Donohue and the union's statewide officers recognized these Locals at a ceremony held during the 91st annual delegate meeting in Buffalo. Those reaching the half-century mark are: Saratoga Spa Local; the Genesee, Orleans and Wyoming Local for the state Department of Transportation; the state Department of Transportation Local in Otsego County, and the Local representing Dutchess County workers. Also on the honor roll are two Locals representing CSEA members in Oswego and Tompkins counties ... **SUPPORTING WORKER JUSTICE** — The New York State Labor-Religion Coalition, which CSEA is a member of, is offering a holiday gift of courage and hope with a new book that supports worker justice programs. *Border Witness: Youth Confront NAFTA* was born out

Division of Parole, feel "wonderful and proud to be a CSEA member."

"The whole political experience with CSEA was a good learning experience and very exciting," she said.

North of New York City, politics also ran hot. In Westchester County, CSEA members held phone banks and distributed campaign literature on behalf of candidates endorsed by the union.

"We tried to be even more active this year for

of the experience of a New York State Labor-Religion Coalition delegation of young people from across the state who traveled to Mexico to witness working conditions. Written in English and Spanish, with more than 50 revealing and powerful photos, *Border Witness* chronicles the stories of many of the workers the young people met and befriended during their stay in February 2001. It also clearly expresses the outrage of the youth at the mistreatment of workers in the maquiladoras (factories making goods for export). *Border Witness* is available from the NYS Labor-Religion Coalition, 159 Wolf Road, Albany, NY 12205-1198 or e-mail [info@labor-religion.org](mailto:info@labor-religion.org) or call 518-459-5400 x 6294. A \$30 donation per book is requested. Proceeds will fund the coalition's ongoing projects which seek justice for all workers in the U.S. and beyond ... **INSIDE ALBANY STUDENTS** — Each year high school students from around the state discover the importance of taking an active role in public policy and government at the Students Inside Albany Conference. CSEA is a partner in the program and CSEA school Unit presidents will receive information about sponsoring students from their districts in the mail soon ... **BALANCING JUSTICE MEETINGS IN NYC** — CSEA members who are interested in criminal justice issues may attend meetings in the New York City area to discuss priorities for the state's criminal justice system. The Balancing Justice program, a project of the League of Women Voters which CSEA supports, has involved thousands of citizens, including law enforcement professionals, in small group discussions on the priorities and goals of the criminal justice system the last two years. Meetings will be held in all five city boroughs through January. For more information, or to sign up for a group, call the league toll free at 1-866-598-6971 or e-mail [justice@lwvny.org](mailto:justice@lwvny.org).

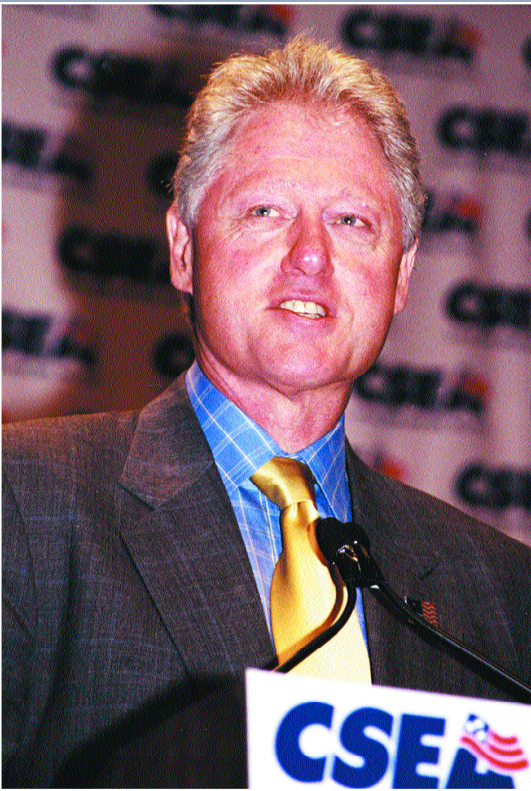
our candidates," CSEA Westchester Local President Gary Conley said.

"We have a lot of races that affected our members this year, and there are a lot of challenges," Conley said.

— Janice Marra and Mark Kotzin







## Clinton gives rousing speech to convention delegates

*“You’ve done a lot to make America and New York a better place. What we have in common is more important than your differences and that is what your union is about.”*

CSEA was the first major union in the country to endorse Bill Clinton’s fledgling presidential bid in December 1991.

The former president wanted to speak to CSEA delegates and thank them for their support.

During the CSEA annual convention in Buffalo, with the tragedy of Sept. 11 as the backdrop, Clinton spoke vigorously about America and the strength of unions.

See coverage on pages 3, 10 and 11.

For more photos and information, visit CSEA’s Web site at [www.csealocal1000.net](http://www.csealocal1000.net).



*“We all need to fight for what we believe in, but you have to think about what you say and how you say it.”*