

THE WORK FORCE

United to fight back

See Page 3



Photo by Rachel Langert

CSEA Elections Info, Pages 16-17

The Proposed amendments to CSEA's Constitution and By-Laws supplement is enclosed

Photo of the Month



CSEA marked the two-year anniversary of the 9/11 attacks by taking part in a memorial on the East Capitol Steps in Albany. Lt. Gov. Mary Donahue acknowledged the losses of state workers in the World Trade Center attacks and also noted the contributions made by state and local government workers in the recovery. Above, CSEA President Danny Donohue placed the names of five CSEA members killed in the attacks on a memorial wreath. They are: Yvette Anderson, Florence Cohen, Harry Goody, Marian Hrycak, and Dorothy Temple, all of whom worked in the state Department of Taxation and Finance.

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

October 2003 Worker Solidarity

CSEA is committed to educating members on the importance of being union, buying union and supporting union goods and services.

- **Sweat Shop Goods**
We will work to expose the misuse and abuse of "made in U.S.A" by large chain stores.
- **Union Service Providers**
We will promote and publicize unionized hotel chains and any other motels or resorts by area of availability.
- **Union Boycotts**
We stand for the increase in union density. We know that an increase in union goods sold is good for American workers.

W'chester, Orange counties heat up

CSEA members in Westchester and Orange counties continue to fight for fair contracts, taking their battles to the streets and building momentum.

In Orange County, more than 600 CSEA members recently took their contract battle to the streets outside the Orange County Government Center to demand county officials give them a break in their ongoing contract battle.

In one of the largest demonstration turnouts ever in Orange County, CSEA county employees were joined by supporters from other CSEA locals and units as well as members of other labor unions in the area.

More than 2,200 CSEA members employed by Orange County have been working without a contract since Jan. 1, and at press time, no resolution was in sight.

"We're united!" CSEA Orange County Unit President Ron Greene said during his address to the county Legislature. "We're CSEA! We're mad as hell, and we're not going to take it anymore!"

County Executive Edward Diana has been projecting a county fiscal crisis stemming from increased Medicare costs, other mandates and a \$30 million budget gap, yet

the county has a \$122 million surplus — with about \$38 million of that total unallocated.

Westchester County

In Westchester County, while CSEA members demonstrated outside the county's Michaelian Building to demand a fair contract, county legislators delayed a resolution vote that would have given more than 3,800 workers a retroactive pay raise for 2002.

Instead, the Westchester County Legislature Labor Committee voted to seek legal advice on the matter after Deputy County Executive Larry Schwartz noted that county officials would take legal action to stop the raises.

CSEA members employed by Westchester County have been working without a contract since Jan. 1, 2002, and although the union and the county were back at the bargaining table at press time, no resolution acceptable to CSEA is yet in sight.

"We're asking (the Legislature) to settle for 2002," CSEA Westchester County Unit First Vice President Karen Pecora said. "Then, we're going back to settle the rest of the contract."

— Janice Marra



CONTRACT UPDATE — At press time, CSEA's negotiating teams had just gone back to the table with New York State over contracts that expired April 1. The state had dragged its feet in scheduling the sessions. CSEA laid out proposals for fair salary increases and reiterated its opposition to Gov. George Pataki's proposal to have employees pay more for their health insurance coverage. CSEA provides regular updates on the negotiations in the members-only section of its website, www.csealocal1000.net or www.ContractsNow.org. Above, team members Sharon Connor and Barbara DeSimone confer before talks with the state.

CSEA members united to fight back

CSEA members across the state used Labor Day as a platform to bring attention to their push for fair and decent contracts.

In New York City, workers from Westchester and Orange counties traveled to make their point on the city's stage that they won't rest until their counties come to the table with fair agreements. (See story, Page 2).

Elsewhere, marchers in Rochester and Syracuse and other locations showed their solidarity to CSEA members across the state.

(The Capital Region parade was scheduled to occur as this edition went to press. Coverage will be included in the November edition.)



Above, CSEA members from the Metropolitan Region, along with friends and family, show their union pride in the New York City Labor Day Parade.

At right, CSEA member Betty Ellis from the Fingerlakes DDSO Local, marches with her dog Pepe in Rochester.

Below right, CSEA President Danny Donohue and Western Region President Flo Tripi march in the Rochester Parade.



CSEA Statewide Treasurer Maureen Malone, center, leads a CSEA contingent in the Syracuse Labor Parade.



Too many turkeys, not enough promotions

SOUTH BEACH — Wild turkeys are plentiful on the expansive grounds of the South Beach Psychiatric Center in Staten Island. Job promotions aren't.

Which is why morale among CSEA members who have worked in the center's maintenance department, several for more than 25 years, dropped to an all-time low when a rare supervisory position was offered to someone outside the center.

"We've been in a job freeze forever," said Joel Schwartz, the CSEA local president at South Beach. "Once in a million years there's a chance for a promotion in the maintenance department and then management turns around and overlooks our members."

At least two members applied and took examinations for the maintenance supervisor position earlier this summer. In early July the local discovered that an individual from the state's "revitalization team," or what some have commonly

referred to as the state's seemingly permanent yet officially temporary work force, was offered the position. What's more, the new hire did not even take the Civil Service exam required for the position.

"We have nothing personal against this guy (who was offered the position) but our guys are veterans and we feel that they at least deserve the first chance," said the local's First Vice

'This is a classic example of how the union came to management with a legitimate concern and even offered advice on how to correct it and yet they didn't.'

President Chris O'Day.

"These members are here around the clock, they are there for every emergency and they do it for our consumers and their fellow workers," Day continued. "So when management turns around and does something like this it's a real slap in the face."

The local initially fired off a letter to the acting OMH



South Beach 1st Vice President Chris O'Day and President Joel Schwartz discuss promotion in the Maintenance Department of South Beach Psychiatric Center.

Commissioner demanding to know whether all eligible candidates for the

position had been sufficiently canvassed from the Civil Service list.

Soon after, OMH notified management that in fact the local was correct in that all Civil Service lists were not canvassed. Management is now in the process of re-canvassing the list.

"This is a classic example of how the union came to

management with a legitimate concern and even offered advice on how to correct it and yet they didn't," said Metropolitan Region President George Boncoraglio.

Maintenance workers reached for this story were reluctant to share their views.

"We don't want to see anybody out of a job, but if our members are qualified for these positions they should be the first in line," said Schwartz.

— David Galarza



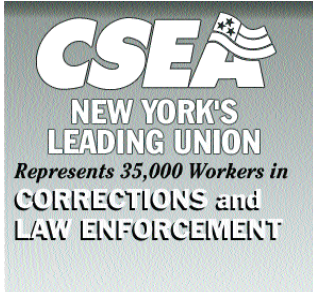
Once in a million years there's a chance for a promotion in the maintenance department and then management turns around and overlooks our members. ♣

CSEA Voices



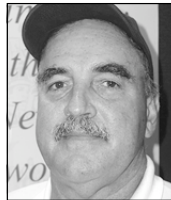
"The cutbacks have affected me. The affirmative action officer and I used to share a secretary. Because of the budget cuts they moved her out, so we're without. It makes it more difficult, and it makes a big difference when you call EAP for help and you get a voicemail instead of a person. I worry about that. I do the best I can under the circumstances. It means less human contact."

— Laurie Loomis, Developmental Aide and Full-time EAP Coordinator, Central New York Developmental Services Office, Walsh Complex in Rome Local, interviewed at the New York State Fair



“They’ve got cops facing criminal charges, federal charges and using racist language against residents of this city and they want to come down on CSEA members who are doing a good job.”

CSEA Voices



“(Budget cuts are) a burden, with the cutbacks. You have to wear many hats, and you have to rely on more teamwork. The good thing is that it draws your co-workers together, because we’re all in the same boat. It’s a challenge, but if we stick together, we’ll have a satisfactory outcome.”

— Joe Ransford, Fraud Investigator, Workers’ Compensation Board, working out of the Inspector General’s Office

Overworked by overtime

SCHENECTADY — When Paul Ruller realized that members of his CSEA unit were being forced to work obscene amounts of overtime and then being disciplined if they didn’t comply, he knew something had to be done.

The issue is likely headed to arbitration because the city administration has tried to ignore it. But CSEA’s grievances are getting attention in the court of public opinion and have been covered by the area’s media.

Ruller attributes the problems to poor management from the Police Department and poor direction from the mayor. He also points to favoritism within the Police Department where officers get preferential treatment and everyone else comes second, he claimed.

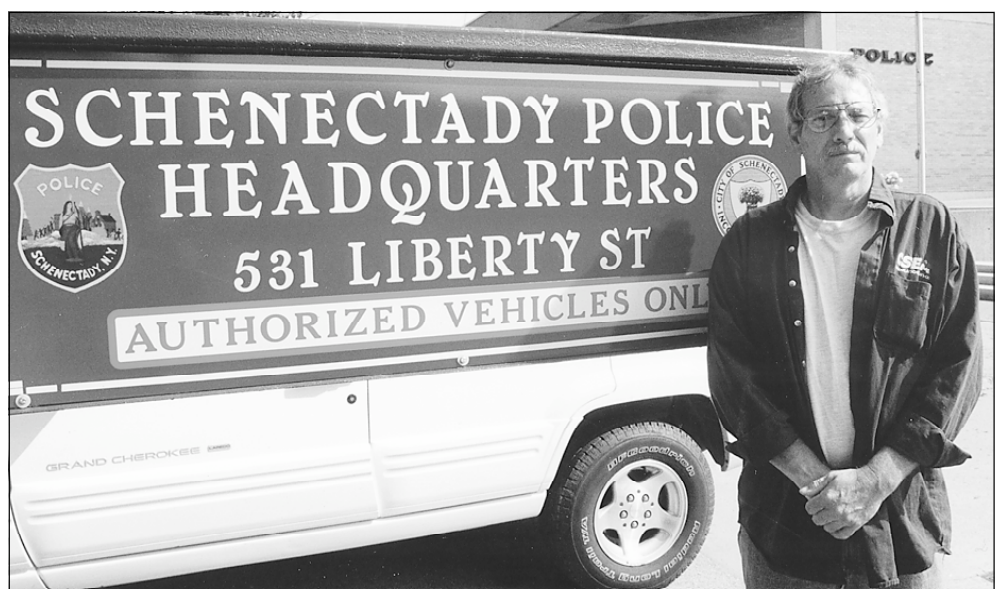
“They’ve got cops facing criminal charges, federal charges and using racist language against residents of this city and they want to come down on CSEA members who are doing a good job.”

Ruller is exasperated by the lack of vision in the department and what he perceives as ineptitude of higher ups who seem unable or unwilling to fix the problem with any brevity or deference to the dispatchers, who are exhausted. “None of them (department officials) have ever done the job,” said Ruller, who worked as a dispatcher before taking another position in the city.

This confuses many people, including supporters like city Councilwoman Denise Brucker who recognizes the important work that dispatchers perform as well as the need to get the department fully staffed.

A department study in the 1990s stated that at least 21 dispatchers were needed. Currently there are 16 employees in the dispatch unit and three of them are out on disability. Four people are needed for each of the three shifts. Ruller estimates that the staff shortage means that 70-plus hours a week are the result of forced overtime.

One member was called at home on her day off to come in for mandatory overtime. She was



CSEA Schenectady Unit President Paul Ruller stands outside the city’s Police Department where forced overtime has left city dispatchers exhausted.

sick and replied that she couldn’t come in. Attempts by the city to discipline her were unsuccessful. “They knew they didn’t have a case,” Ruller said.

Other dispatchers haven’t fared as well. One dispatcher, who had already worked a string of overtime shifts, was asked to do another shift. He said he was unable. When asked to detail in writing his reasons for denying the overtime, he said he was too tired and would provide the documentation at a later time. He did provide that documentation but was charged with insubordination.

“Their only answer is to discipline,” Ruller said.

Solutions offered by Ruller have not been responded to. “For years I have proposed a county-wide central dispatch center. I’ve also asked that the residency requirement be waived to increase the pool of applicants,” he said.

The Schenectady County Civil Service office is offering another exam on Oct. 25, but it will take three to six months to get the results of the exam. Ruller said there may be a few more people starting training soon. He hopes things improve sooner than later so dispatchers can spend time with their families again. As for Ruller, he plans to keep the heat on. “I will not rest until these people get a break.”

— Therese Assalian

Pssst! Didja hear? The Thruway's paved with moon rocks!

Exploding toilets. Mysterious deaths from a disease caused by a spider that bites your butt. Cellphones that ignite car fires in gas filling stations. Infected hypodermic needles in theater seats.

These are just some of the safety and health urban legends that increasingly make the rounds of e-mail lists, passed on like a virus with urgent intensity from sender to sender.

"Urban Legends are great stories that beg to be retold," said Lorraine Davison of the Canadian Center for Occupational Health and Safety. "They're funny, sad or horrifying and while there's sometimes a shred of truth in them, most of the stories never happened."

Davison, who has spoken widely about safety and health urban legends, presented her program during CSEA's recent statewide conference on Occupational Safety and Health in Buffalo.

Davison told CSEA activists that many urban legends sound believable and often are presented with the premise that people should share this information with as many other people as possible so that the same terrible things don't happen to them. Very often the stories happened to a "friend of a friend" or begin with the phrase "this really happened."

"Many of the familiar urban legends like the exploding toilet



Acrobatic sharks, reptilian denizens of the sewer world and giant cats are some of the more goofy hoaxes passed around on the Internet. Often, such hoaxes can perpetuate bad information or cause unnecessary concern about safety and health risks in the work place.

have been around for a long time — there is evidence of exploding outhouse stories dating back more than 100 years," Davison said.

"These used to be passed by word of mouth. As more and more people use the Internet, it becomes easy to pass these stories along and surprisingly, many stories also are making it into newspapers, radio and TV whether they've been verified or not."

While many urban legends may be harmless, Davison pointed out that some stories promote misinformation, create misunderstandings and scare people unnecessarily. She urged people to seek the truth rather than passing on misinformation.

Davison suggested a Google search online with urban legends and key words of the story in the search as a good starting place for getting at the truth. A powerpoint version of Davison's presentation can be accessed on line at www.ccohs.ca/education.



Signs it's an e-mail hoax:

Dire advice and warning: "Send this to everyone you know"

Story is plausible

Source is an expert and should know

Message always has recognizable parts: A hook – a threat, a request

CSEA Voices



"Our members should support the union in working with management to come up with better contracts. The point is, the more people there are supporting us, the bigger voice we have. Whether it's our unit or any other unit, they should all help each other out, because it could be you the next time."

— Diana Breed, Unit President, Cortland County Unit, and Case Aide, Daycare Unit, Cortland County DSS Local, interviewed at the New York State Fair



“I’ve seen these guys when they were sick, and they had problems, and they still had to go to work. They’re dedicated, they care, and they work from their hearts, taking care of these seniors. It’s just not fair.”

CSEA Voices



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— Keith Webb, Unit Vice President and Maintenance Mechanic for Onondaga County Water Environment Protection Department, interviewed at the New York State Fair

Hempstead part-timers wage full-time fight

TOWN OF HEMPSTEAD — What if you had to make a choice between standing by your family in a crisis, or getting eight days pay?

Jim Tosner chose his family without hesitation. But his eyes still fill with tears recalling that time. “My sister-in-law was murdered. She was shot and killed, and I couldn’t get paid time off. That was tough,” he said.

A bus driver for the town’s Senior Enrichment Program, Tosner said he never thought twice about what he had to do, but the price was high.

Another time, he landed in the hospital for two days, costing him \$7,000. That was five years ago, and he just finished paying the bill.

“My wife had to go to work full time just so we’d have health insurance,” said Tosner. “I have zero benefits and make half the salary that the other drivers do, and I’m doing the same work,” he said, shaking his head.

Even though Tosner works full time, he has no vacation time; no sick time; no bereavement leave; no personal days; and he isn’t entitled



to health insurance with his job, because he is classified as part-time by management.

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Tosner isn’t alone. There are about 300 town employees in a similar situation. They are full-time workers in part-time limbo. Tosner had enough when another bus driver with less seniority was promoted over him to full time, a move he said came because of her political connections.

In December 2001, Tosner, through CSEA, sued the town, seeking the full-time pay and benefits he has rightfully earned.

In May 2003, a judge granted CSEA’s request to make this a class action lawsuit, including all part-

timers working full-time hours since 1995. “It was a big victory for us, and it really set the town back on its heels,” said Town of Hempstead Local President Bill Flanagan. “And we’re absolutely serious. The bottom line is CSEA will protect the rights of our members,” said Flanagan.

Five-year wait

From 1982 to 1986, Maureen Coxe was a full-time bus driver for the town. A few years later, after she had her children, she could only return to work as a part-timer. She was told that status would only be for a few months. But five years



CSEA members Joe Aragona, left, and Gerald Weintraub, above, address the Hempstead Town Board during a recent meeting. Both men and several other CSEA supporters and members spoke against town practices that unfairly treat part-time workers.

later, she’s still waiting.

“It’s been very hard. I’m a single mother with two small children to support and I can’t get help. I really hope this is resolved soon, because I need the medical for my kids,” said Coxe.

Flanagan said there are almost 100 part-timers working full time in the Sanitation Department alone.

“How can you have two guys working on the back of a truck: One guy makes \$6 an hour, the other makes far more than that, and you’ve got a situation where they have to work together,” said Flanagan.

The town has appealed the class action ruling, and settlement talks are ongoing. Flanagan has

been working to reach a settlement with the town for months. “We’re close, but we’re just not there yet. I keep hoping that we can find a resolution that’s good for everyone. This situation just can’t go on,” he said.

Hempstead workers demand their due

Hundreds of fired up CSEA members turned out at a recent town meeting to demand the part-time work issue be resolved.

One by one, they took to the floor of Town Hall to demand that part-time employees be accorded the respect they have earned.

“I have had MS since 1985. I don’t even make enough to pay for my medication, it costs \$1,200 a month,” said four-year part-timer Joe Aragona. “I’m a hard worker. I’m always there. I would do anything for the town. I just want to be able to support my family,” he said.

Full-time workers showed solidarity as well.

“I’ve seen these guys when they were sick, and they had problems, and they still had to go to work. They’re dedicated, they care, and they work from their hearts, taking care of these seniors. It’s just not fair,” said Dan Robinson, who has worked for the town more than 20 years.

Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte also came to support the CSEA members and urge the town to do the right thing. “Look around you. These are the town employees who work every day to provide essential services to your residents, so they make all of you look good. And this is the way you treat them? It’s about time you do the right thing. I call on this town board to settle this issue in a just, fair and expeditious manner,” said LaMorte.

Town Supervisor Kate Murray responded by agreeing that the town had the best employees in the country. She also made a public commitment to fixing the situation she inherited when she took office less than a year ago. “I want this to be resolved as quickly as possible, really. I want all of you to know that,” said Murray.

— Rachel Langert

Peru rallies over stalled talks

PERU — CSEA members working in the Peru Central School District had plenty to say to School Board members arriving for a meeting recently.

Among the phrases were:
 “No contract, no vote!”
 “What do we want!? Contract!”
 “When do we want it!? Now.”

The strong show of support for CSEA members working in Peru schools drew 100 demonstrators, who marched, carried signs and chanted.

CSEA represents the cafeteria employees, teacher aides, school monitors, custodians, bus drivers and mechanics whose contract expired June 30.

“This is to show the rest of the School Board that we are not progressing in negotiations,” Ken Lushia, head CSEA negotiator, told the *Plattsburgh Press-Republican*.

Negotiations began in late March, though CSEA members agreed to a delay so school officials could concentrate on the 2003-04 school-budget vote.

CSEA declared impasse after talks resumed. Local President George Everleth blamed the impasse on the low wages being offered at the table and

the loss of the vision benefit.

School administrators agree the dispute arose when the vision benefit expired June 30, 2003, saying other benefits for CSEA employees continued and that the vision section “contained a specific end date, generally referred to in negotiated contract language as a sunset provision” that would expire on June 30.

But CSEA negotiators say that’s not true.

“We brought that vision benefit up at the first meeting,” Lushia told the *Press-Republican*. “Part of the initial negotiation was to keep it going and to extend it through negotiations.”

The administration was notified that the group administering the benefit would continue it unless the district requested it be discontinued, Lushia said.

Lushia added that communication from the district regarding the vision benefit’s expiration was not received, and while the district’s attorney told Lushia the benefit would be reinstated, that never happened.

Most district administrators

are unionized, and the vision benefit continued for them and others through separate negotiations.

The Peru workers at the picket had support from other unions.

Cheryl Dodds said she understands what CSEA is going through.

“We just signed our contract this summer and were two years without one,” said Cheryl Dodds, Peru Central School teacher and president of the teachers’ union there. “They deserve fair benefits and fair and equitable salary and respect.”

“We feel sorry for the people in Peru,” said Judy Rose, president of the CSEA unit at Plattsburgh City Schools. “In Plattsburgh, we have open dialogue between the superintendent, board and support staff and work together for the good of the kids. It doesn’t seem they are shown any respect at all here.”

— Material from the *a Plattsburgh Press-Republican* story was used for this report.



‘This is to show the rest of the School Board that we are not progressing in negotiations.’

CSEA Voices



Back to school

West Canada Valley Schools Library Assistant Laura Waterbury, who has 38 years of service, reads to children in the elementary school library.

All across the state, CSEA members welcomed students back to school this fall. Bus drivers, nurses, administrators, clerical staff, classroom assistants, maintenance workers and cafeteria staff are some of the titles CSEA members hold in school districts.

“I think the cutbacks we’ve faced have been difficult. We’ve lost a lot of experience. That knowledge is gone. We seem to lose more people than we gain. Everybody is doing more with less — it’s not just us. With the budget cuts, the retirements, everything is cut back. I worry that it could mean less safety on the job.”

— Sandy Gibbs, Transportation Office Assistant 2, State Barge Canal, Section 4, Utica Local, interviewed at the New York State Fair.



CSEA's new Health Benefits D

PPOs, HMOs, POSs, co-pays and deductibles. The language of health care can be very confusing.

Costs are spiraling skyward, coverage is changing and sometimes we feel like we are fighting a losing battle. All that is about to change.

CSEA's newly formed Health Benefits Department is already having a beneficial impact.

The Health Benefits Department was formed to coordinate the oversight of all negotiated health benefits and to enhance and expand the health benefits provided to CSEA members.

Formerly, the Joint Committee on Health Benefits (JCHB) assisted with state contract benefits and CSEA's Research Department fielded inquiries from members in local government.

CSEA President Danny Donohue initiated the formation of the new department, which was proposed to the CSEA Board of Directors and approved in fall 2002.

Now the department is fully operational and state and local government members are receiving direction from one office. The wide scope of services offered by the Health Benefits Department varies



CSEA Schenectady County Local President Joanne DeSarbo, center left, and Health Benefits Director Laura Balogh, center right, discuss the local's benefits package as it relates to contract negotiations.

from help clearing up billing errors to changing health care plans.

The department's mission is to become a prominent resource internally and externally, directly affecting negotiated benefits.

"What this means for CSEA members is that you have people on your side who understand the industry and who will advocate for your interests," Donohue said.

"The department is being well received in all areas" said Director Laura Balogh, from the labor relations specialists to members, activists and

management.

The Health Benefits Department is staffed by people who know the language because they are health benefits experts. They understand trends. They know benefits. Health Benefit Department members will work with your negotiating team in advance of negotiations to assess your current health benefits. They will assist you at the table, working along side your LRS and the rest of the negotiating team.

According to Balogh, other departmental goals include providing leadership, training and direction and developing an

effective and reliable benefit tracking system

Help at the table

The Health Benefits Department has been assisting Schenectady County CSEA members with their current contract negotiations. Their involvement includes being at the table and being present during CSEA caucuses.

Management has proposed eliminating the current Blue Cross Matrix benefit package while the employees want to keep it. The Health Benefits Department has been able to argue that a change will increase enrollee out-of-pocket



From left, Health Benefits Sp Communications Associate Ja Associate Scott Futia discuss

Safety and health conference equips activists

BUFFALO — With tools from more than 21 workshops and information sessions under their belts, delegates to the CSEA statewide Conference on Occupational Safety and Health returned home well-equipped to fight for safe and healthy work places.

“There is no issue more important on the job than our members’ safety and health,” said CSEA President Danny Donohue. “And no CSEA department is more important than our Occupational Safety and Health Department. We can’t, and won’t leave it up to any employer alone, to guard our members’ safety.”

A conference highlight was presentation of the first William L. McGowan Occupational Safety and Health Award to Westchester County Unit President John “Jack” McPhillips and Westchester County Unit member Peter Costa for their activism.

The award will be presented annually.

The conference honored

the memories of members who lost their lives while working, or who were seriously injured on the job in the past year.

“I look forward to the day when we can say, at our annual safety and health conference, that no public employee lost their life or was seriously injured in the past year,” said CSEA President Danny Donohue.



CSEA members attend one of several workshops during the union’s Occupational Safety and Health Conference.

“This is one reason why you should absorb all the helpful knowledge available here over these four days.”

CSEA members from across the state, from all divisions, attended the conferences and took in workshops such as Effective Safety and Health Committees, Workers Compensation, Occupational Stress, Know Your Legal Rights for a Safe and Healthy Workplace, Violence In Schools, Violence Intervention and Reduction and Communicable Workplace Diseases.

Other workshops included Permit Required Confined Spaces, Diesel Exposure and Other Vehicle Garage Issues, Protecting Building Occupants During Construction or Renovation, Working Long Hours and Shift Work, Behavior Safety, Zero Back Injuries Zero Lift Policies, Successful Office Ergonomics, Work Zone Safety and Avoiding the Focus on Aggression.

— Ron Wofford

See President’s column page 4 and related story page 7.



BUFFALO — CSEA chose to give the first William L. McGowan Occupational Safety and Health Award jointly to Peter D. Costa Jr. and Jack McPhillips for the two union members’ tireless work in challenging Westchester County on issues affecting the county’s work force.



CSEA President Danny Donohue awards Peter Costa, left, and Jack McPhillips, right, CSEA’s first William L. McGowan Occupational Safety and Health Award.

In particular, the two have successfully fought the

county’s practice of solely determining whether occupational safety and health issues were in violation of public safety laws — in itself a violation of state PESH (Public Employee Safety and Health Act) standards.

“Jack and Peter’s advocacy has helped the county become a more accountable employer. But it doesn’t end there. They have also gotten PESH to do its job, going right to Albany to get better staffing for the White Plains office and to bring more attention to their complaints,” said CSEA President Danny Donohue.

At last count, Costa and McPhillips have filed 89 complaints with PESH resulting in citations against the county. The citations are the result of negligence on the county’s part in providing basic safety and health measures, be they

providing respirators, safety boots, emergency action plans or proper training.

McPhillips, president of CSEA’s Westchester County Unit, appointed Costa the unit’s safety and health chair two years ago, when McPhillips assumed office.

The award is named for William L. McGowan, the union’s 21st president, who ushered in a new era for CSEA.

The Buffalo native’s tenure — 1977 to 1988 — oversaw the development of an aggressive political action program, creating a network of lobbyists and activists across the state. The union’s political clout was best revealed in 1980 when the state Legislature approved the Public Employee Safety and Health Act which won public employees the same right to a safe workplace enjoyed by private sector workers.

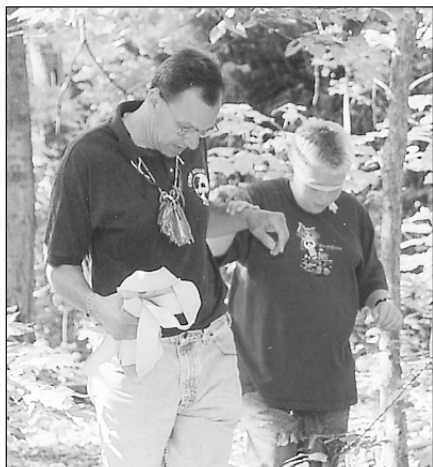
Helping kids' dreams come true at camp

OSWEGO — If summer camp is the stuff dreams are made of, then several CSEA members in Oswego County should be considered the dream makers.

Jim Farfaglia, a senior youth services specialist with the Oswego County Youth Bureau, is the person who, armed with a team of volunteer workers, operates Oswego County's Camp Hollis, a summer residential camp for the county's youths.

During the camp's season from April to October, Farfaglia estimates they serve about 3,000 children and more than 500 families.

The camp has additional CSEA support from workers in the county's Buildings and



CSEA member Jim Farfaglia leads a blindfolded child into the woods in a trust exercise.

Grounds, Highway and Employment and Training departments, who help maintain the facilities and coordinate volunteer crews as well.

And with the assistance of CSEA member Donna Hopkins, a bereavement coordinator for the Oswego County Hospice, for the third year in a row they've transformed Camp Hollis into an award-winning program for helping bereaved kids, called "Camp Rainbow of Hope."

Each year for three days, the camp opens its cabins and facilities to a group of about 30 children, ages 7 to 12, who have recently experienced the loss of



Donna Hopkins gets a group hug from some of the campers and their "big buddies"

a close relative or loved one.

The program helps the children acknowledge their loss, develop coping skills, accept the stages of grief, become aware that they are not alone and can reach out to others, and celebrate their lives and the lives of those they've lost.

Big buddies

Along with their "big buddies," volunteer counselors ages 13 and above, the campers swim, create crafts, hike and sing around the campfire. They also hold "healing circles" led by trained professionals to facilitate the healing process. Last year, the program won an "Acts of Caring" award from the National Association of Counties, winning the overall youth category's Legacy Award. Farfaglia and Hopkins traveled to Washington, D.C., to accept the award on the county's behalf.

"It was wonderful to be recognized on a national level for our program. We realized the benefits of the camp immediately. From the first day we knew we had a winner. It's just nice to be recognized for that," Farfaglia said.

For him, it's the high point of a

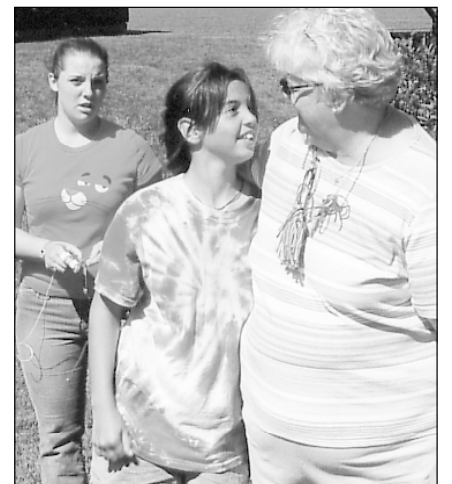
career of involvement with the

camp, having worked for 20 years at the camp in differing capacities. He loves to work with kids, and it shows.

"I always knew camp for kids was meaningful, and when we added the bereavement piece,

it broadened my sense of just what residential camping does for kids."

"It's wonderful to see how it's helping the children right here in



Hopkins gets a hug from one of her campers.

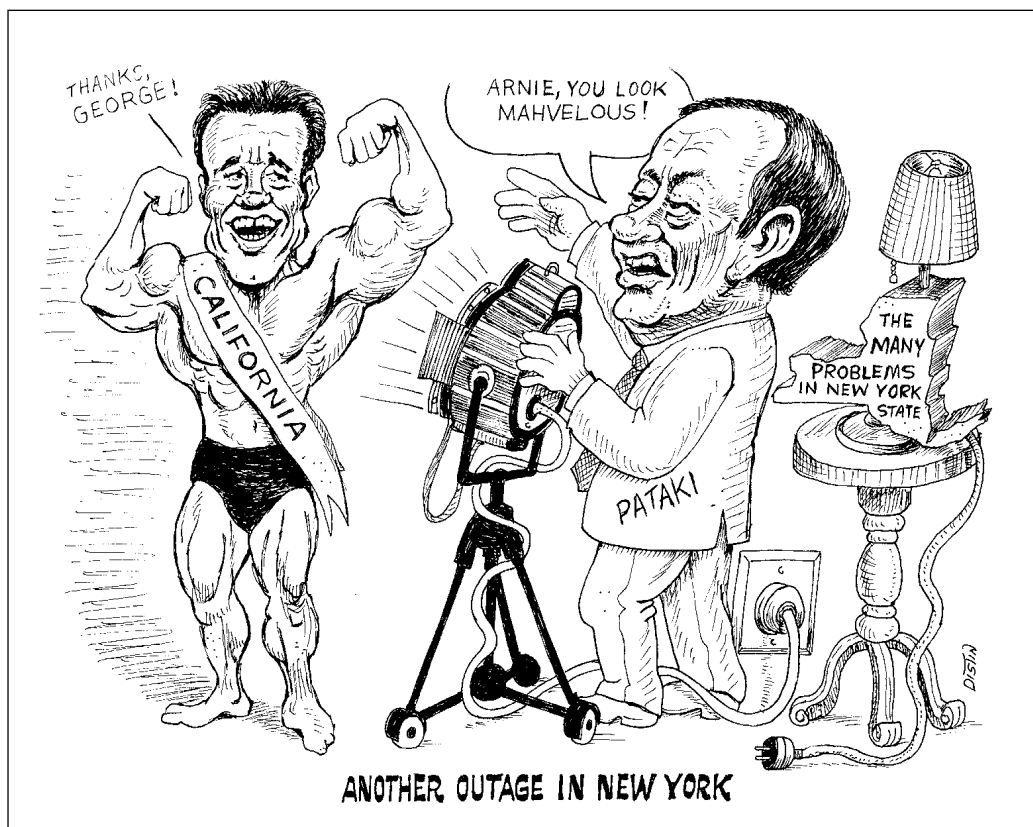
our community," Hopkins added. "To see the growth and the fact that the camp has made a positive change for them and their lives."

Unfortunately, Camp Hollis has suffered cutbacks in funding and there has been discussion of possible closure to save the county money. Farfaglia said the county would lose a valuable resource if the camp were to close, and is urging those who wish to support the camp to send donations to: Friends of Camp Hollis, 70 Bunner St., Oswego, NY 13126.

— Mark M. Kotzin



CSEA member Jim Farfaglia prepares to lead campers on a trust-building exercise.



25 years ago ...

In 1978, CSEA affiliated with the American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME). It was one of the most significant events in the history of both CSEA and AFSCME.

At the stroke of signing the affiliation agreement, AFSCME at once gained nearly 250,000 new members. CSEA became the largest affiliate of one of the largest unions in the AFL-CIO and gained access to the wide range of resources, benefits and support that affiliation with an International union provides.

Prior to the affiliation, CSEA had been an independent union with no ties to the AFL-CIO. While CSEA was large and powerful throughout New York state, the union had no voice on the federal level and was subject to frequent and costly raids on its membership by AFL-CIO unions. Those circumstances changed with the affiliation.

The affiliation agreement was engineered by then-CSEA President William McGowan and then-AFSCME President Jerry Wurf.



Then-AFSCME President Jerry Wurf, left, and then-CSEA President William McGowan.

Also in 1978:

i More than 900 followers of cult leader Jim Jones commit mass suicide at their commune in South America.

i Louise Brown, the world's first test tube baby, is born in England.

i Israel's Menachem Begin and Egypt's Anwar Sadat are awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for their peace efforts in reaching the Camp David accords with the involvement of President Jimmy Carter.

i Top songs of the year include Steely Dan's "Deacon Blues," Gerry Rafferty's "Baker Street," Jimmy Buffet's "Cheeseburger in Paradise" and the Bruce Springsteen/Patti Smith classic, "Because the Night."

i Top films include "The Deer Hunter," "Grease" and National Lampoon's "Animal House."

i In sports, the New York Yankees win their second straight World Series after securing the pennant on Bucky Dent's dramatic homerun in a one game playoff victory over the Boston Red Sox in Fenway Park.

CSEA to welcome Freedom Riders across N.Y.

Half a century ago, the labor movement joined thousands in the Civil Rights struggle against the oppressive and deadly reign of Jim Crow laws in the South.

This October, labor is once again playing a historic role in organizing the first ever "Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride."

Eight million or more "undocumented" immigrants live and work in the United States, most living in poverty, exploited by unscrupulous employers, separated from their families, and fearful of organizing to improve their conditions.

"Immigrants want a fair chance at achieving the American dream," said CSEA President Danny Donohue. "They work hard, pay taxes and make many sacrifices for their families. We need to fight for just and fair immigration laws and policies that not only strengthen America but also force it to live up to its ideals."

"The road to citizenship needs a new map," said Metro Region President George Boncoraglio. "The goal of the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride is to help draw that map."

Political momentum for immigrant reform was swept aside by the tragic events of 9/11. Now, immigrants have been made the target of some of the most repressive legislation and executive policy in recent memory.

Government raids on workplaces and homes, punitive detention for protracted periods of time, the constant threat of deportation, and often abrupt loss of employment or closing of a thriving business now characterize immigrant life in this country.

"The fight for the civil rights of workers who come here from all over the world is the same as the Freedom Rides of 1961 and the continuing struggle for civil and human rights for all Americans," said the Rev. James Lawson, one of the architects of the civil rights movement and sponsor of the Immigrant Worker Freedom Rides.

At press time, buses filled with immigrant workers and their allies from the community had set out from 10 major U.S. cities. They were scheduled make stops throughout their way in order to highlight the struggle of immigrant workers to gain respect and fair treatment. Specifically, freedom riders will focus on four key elements:

- 1.) Rewarding work by granting legal status to hard-working, tax-paying, law-abiding immigrant workers already in this country;
- 2.) the right of immigrant workers to reunite



Roger Clayman of the AFL-CIO, right, and CSEA Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte, left, joined many other labor and community activists recently at a rally to draw attention to the upcoming Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride, which will culminate Oct. 4 at Flushing Meadows Park in Queens.

with their families; 3.) protecting the rights of immigrants in the workplace; and 4.) protecting the civil rights and civil liberties of all.

With the 2004 election season now under way, it's important to show presidential and congressional candidates from both parties that millions of working men and women in this country, who are also registered voters, care about the rights of immigrants in this country.

Already several events and activities have been planned for the three Freedom Ride buses

that will head out from Chicago. About 140 Freedom Riders will be greeted by union activists and supporters in Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, and Albany.

On Saturday Oct. 4, the new freedom riders will end their journey in New York City, where an expected 250,000 people will demand new immigration policy.

To volunteer or get more information contact Metropolitan Region Communications Associate David Galarza at 212-406-2156 or e-mail at galarza@cseainc.org

— David Galarza

For more information about Freedom Ride events in your area, contact your CSEA region Communications Associate or visit www.iwfr.org

Upstate schedule

**Monday, Sept. 29
Buffalo**

11 a.m.

Arrive for lunch at Buffalo Convention Center

Welcoming remarks by Dan Boody, President of ALF and Kevin Cartel, curator of Underground Railroad AA church
Freedom riders to speak on 4-point
Concerned Ecumenical Ministries clergy to speak on moral significance of immigrant rights – Local immigrant worker to speak on Adam's Mark Hotel organizing campaign
March to downtown (five blocks) for picket/rally at hotel

Rochester

4:30 p.m.

Arrive for Public Rally at Brockport Migrant farm workers labor camp;

Tuesday, Sept. 30

Syracuse

11 a.m.

Arrive at St. Vincent's DePaul Roman Catholic Church for Interfaith Service – Speakers include Central NY labor/religion coalition, clergy, farm workers and freedom riders

1:30 p.m.

Rally — Head of Sheetmetalworkers Union will speak in support of immigrant rights – Freedom rider to speak on globalization issues and support of Carrier workers fight to defend threatened jobs

Albany

5 p.m.

Arrive for Public Rally at Washington Park Rally. Will begin at 4:30 p.m.

6:30 p.m.

March to United Methodist Church

Wednesday Oct. 1

Newburgh

9:30 a.m. Arrive at Underground Railroad for breakfast, then to St. Patrick's Church for press conference and Interfaith Coalition service.

Saturday Oct. 4

New York City

11 a.m. to 3 p.m. rally in Flushing Meadows Park, Queens



Health Benefits Department



Protecting Your Benefits

Fletcher Allen Health Care Joins Empire Plan Network

After lengthy negotiations, United HealthCare, the insurer for the medical/surgical-basic medical portion of the Empire Plan, recently announced that Fletcher Allen Health Care (FAHC) agreed to join the NYS-Empire Plan as a participating provider effective Aug. 1, 2003.

This agreement provides Empire Plan enrollees access to 450 physicians in more than 30 different patient care sites in the Burlington, Vt. area.

Also included in the agreement are laboratory services, hemodialysis, and cardiac rehabilitation.

If you have any questions regarding your Empire Plan medical/surgical coverage, you can contact United Healthcare by dialing 1-877-7NYSHIP (1-877-769-7447).

Promoting Good Health

Important information regarding CSEA elections

Break in membership affects eligibility for union office, voting privileges

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

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

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

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

Note, however, you **must** continue to pay dues to run for office. Dues-free or

gratuitous membership allows members to continue their insurance coverage while out of work. It does not protect your right to run for or hold office. This does not apply to members who are on leave due to being called up for military duty. Members on active military duty, upon return, are considered to have had continuous membership status for all CSEA election purposes.

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

Any CSEA member who is considering the possibility of running for office may obtain information about the election process by calling the Election Committee at CSEA headquarters 1-800-342-4146 ext. 1477

What's In It For You?

Unlock Your Savings Potential:



EBF's Prescription Drug Co-Pay Reimbursement & Flex Spending

Prescription Drug Co-Pay Reimbursement Benefit: State members who are enrolled in the New York State Health Insurance Program (either the Empire Plan or an HMO) are entitled to annual reimbursement for NYSHIP prescription drug co-pays for themselves and their dependents. Once prescription drug co-pay charges reach \$300, the next \$100 in incurred charges is reimbursable.

For example, if your drug co-pays total \$325 for the year, the EBF will reimburse \$25 of that cost. Yet, if your co-pays total \$450 for the year, the full \$100 is reimbursable. The general exclusions from this benefit are: the cost differential between brand name and generic drugs, the cost of non-covered medications, and medications that cost less than the required co-pay.

Only ONE claim is processed per calendar year (January to December). To obtain the maximum benefit, wait until your co-pay expenses reach at least \$400 before filing your claim. The EBF permits you to send in your claim before March 31 of the following year. Submit your completed claim form with original receipts or a pharmacy printout, and a photocopy of your Empire Plan or HMO insurance card. Mail completed claims to:

CSEA Employee Benefit Fund
P.O. Box 516
Latham, NY 12110-0516

Health Care Spending Account (HCSAccount):

The Health Care Spending Account helps state employees save money on their taxes by providing a means of paying for certain health care expenses with pre-tax dollars. In other words, medical expenses that are not covered and/or

reimbursable under your health insurance are paid for by you with after-tax dollars. By enrolling in the program you will pay those same expenses with contributions that you make through

automatic payroll deductions BEFORE your salary is taxed — resulting in a gross salary reduction, thus lowering your taxable income.

Another bonus feature is that it allows you to pay a claim in full at any time during the calendar year — even if your account balance is less than what you have contributed at that point!

The program operates on a calendar year basis and the annual contribution amount can range from \$150 to \$3,000 in pre-tax dollars to pay for eligible health-related expenses. One drawback, though, is that the IRS's "use-it-or-lose-it" rule applies to your year-end account balance. Any unused money in your account will be lost at the end of the Plan Year.

The open enrollment period for Plan Year 2004 is Sept. 29, 2003 to Nov. 12, 2003. For more information please visit the Flex Spending web site at www.flexspend.state.ny.us or call toll-free: 1-800-358-7202.

Utilizing Flex Spending AND the Prescription Drug Co-Pay Reimbursement:

Prescription drug co-payments are qualified medical expenses for flex spending. By including your prescription drug co-payments in your HCSAccount, you have a double savings advantage. You will have a tax savings at the end of the year because you will have already set aside the money for your drug co-pays in the total pre-tax contribution made to your HCSAccount. Also, depending on how much you spend you may get the full \$100 back from the EBF as well.

An Ever Better Future is waiting for you at the CSEA Employee Benefit Fund! For more information on this article or any of our benefits please contact us toll free at 1-800-323-2732.

An Ever Better Future



Local 1000, AFSCME, AFL-CIO

Visit the new
CSEA Store at
www.csealocal1000.net

powered by
**SHIP
PRINTMATES**
on-demand media solutions
518.370.1158 x12

The CSEA WORKERS' COMPENSATION LEGAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

covering Workers' Compensation and Social Security Disability

If you are injured on the job or sustain a job-related illness, CSEA's 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.

The Program Services Are Absolutely Free, And So Is The Call

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 options. Your call will be answered by the firm of Fine, Olin and Anderman, P.C., through its statewide network of offices staffed by attorneys who specialize in Workers' Compensation and Social Security Disability Law.

Brochures describing the program in detail and intake forms to assist you in compiling correct and complete information

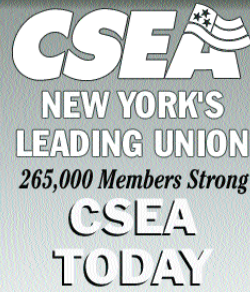
before making the initial call will be available from CSEA Region Offices, CSEA Local and Unit Presidents and CSEA Labor Relations Specialists.

All calls will be accepted, no cases will be turned down and there is no out-of-pocket cost to CSEA members and their dependents for the program services.

The CSEA
WORKERS' COMPENSATION
LEGAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

1-800-342-4146

PEOPLE PEOPLE — The PEOPLE recruiter of the month for August 2003 is Michael Flaherty of the CSEA Western Region Finger Lakes DDSO Local. He recruited 40 new PEOPLE members to the program. The PEOPLE recruiter for the month of July was Mark Davis of the Brookwood Center Local. He recruited 30 new PEOPLE members. The PEOPLE recruiter for the month of June was Rutha Bush of the Nassau County Local. She recruited 28 new PEOPLE members. PEOPLE is CSEA's and AFSCME's political action program. It is responsible for raising money and collecting voluntary contributions from the membership so that CSEA can effectively promote our interests at the state and federal level ... **NASSAU COUNTY NO-LAYOFF CLAUSE** — An agreement reached by Nassau County Executive Thomas Suozzi and state lawmakers on an economic recovery plan includes creating a Nassau sewer authority. That, in turn, will guarantee a no-layoff clause in the recently enacted five-year CSEA contract for county workers. The financial agreement is projected to raise an additional \$25 million for the county ... **DON'T BE LEFT BEHIND** — The No Child Left Behind Act, signed into law in January 2002,



makes significant changes to job requirements of some school workers. Among these changes are increased standards for employees engaged in "instructional duties." For more information, visit

www.csealocal1000.net ... **A MORE THAN FAIR TURNOUT** — With the help of 72 member activists who volunteered to staff CSEA's booth at the New York State Fair, we were able to say hi to just over 3,000 members who stopped by, and we registered 236 people to vote. We also gave out thousands of shopping bags and book covers, as well as featuring our rescue dog sculpture, Union Pride. CSEA President Danny Donohue greeted CSEA members and other fairgoers at the CSEA booth during CSEA Weekend ... **ALFRED WIN** — Fifty-five workers at the New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University won their election to form a union with CSEA. The janitorial, clerical, technical and maintenance workers withstood a barrage of anti-union letters, meetings and speeches to win the campaign. CSEA had sought recognition from the College under the public sector Taylor Law. Alfred University filed a petition seeking the election at the NLRB claiming

the employees were private sector employees. Ultimately, the employees fought through the nasty management campaign and diversionary tactics to prevail in this election ... **SPECIAL RADIO CITY OFFER** — CSEA members and their family and friends receive a special discounted price on tickets to the Radio City Christmas Spectacular starring Radio City's famous Rockettes. CSEA members can save up to 50 percent on each non-peak, non-prime ticket purchased for select performances. For more information, visit the member benefits area of www.csealocal1000.net, or call 1-800-342-4146, ext. 1359.

Update

Civil Service Test Preparation Booklets

As of September 1st, 2003, these booklets and videos are available through the CSEA's WORK Institute.

- CSEA's test preparation booklets contain sample questions in a variety of areas which have been the subject of previous exams. We also offer videos that help aid in test taking.
- These booklets and videos are designed for practice purposes and help improve performance and confidence when taking the tests.

Contact the WORK Institute
for new order forms at
1-866-478-5548
E-mail: workinst@cseainc.org



Booklets are also available free to CSEA members at www.csealocal1000.net in the Members Only Area.

PEOPLE Gives Us the Clout to Protect What We Have and Fight for the Rights We Have Earned!

As Public Employees Organized to Promote Legislative Equality, PEOPLE is CSEA's and AFSCME's political action program. It is responsible for raising money and collecting voluntary contributions from the membership so that CSEA can effectively promote our interests at the state and federal level.

PEOPLE gives us a chance to make our families more secure and our communities healthier. It's about the difference between having things happen to you, and making things happen for you.

PEOPLE doesn't just hand out money to politicians. The dollars we raise help fuel CSEA's legislative and political programs and are used wisely to get the best results for you.

It Takes Hard-Earned PEOPLE Dollars to Get the Job Done!

PEOPLE'S political involvement is more than important – it's vital! The laws that politicians make shape nearly every aspect of our work lives: wages, benefits, our health and safety and even our ability to negotiate good contracts. As a CSEA member your participation in the process helps ensure that your needs and wants are being represented. If you're not involved, decisions will be made about your future for you, not by you.

By contributing to PEOPLE you have a say on legislation that will have an impact on federal, state and local government budgets and programs that affect your life.

When you contribute to PEOPLE you become a vital part of the 265,000 proud members who play a key role in helping to...

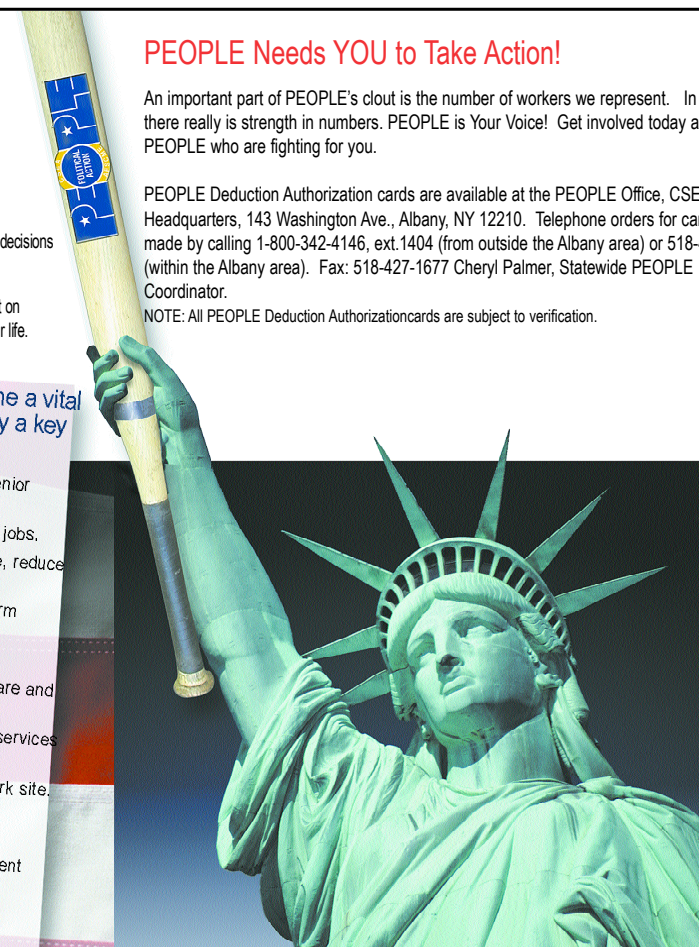
- **KEEP** Medicare and Social Security funding for our senior citizens, children and disabled.
- **FIGHT** legislation that would allow contracting-out our jobs.
- **OPPOSE** legislation that would raise the eligibility age, reduce benefits or privatize Social Security.
- **FIGHT** for a real Patients Bill of Rights that would reform HMOs.
- **MAINTAIN** union protections and jobs.
- **FIGHT** federal and state attacks on education, health care and workers' rights.
- **SECURE** funding to protect our members jobs and the services they provide.
- **STRENGTHEN** safety and health conditions at your work site.
- **PROTECT** and preserve pension funds from raids by employers.
- **SEEK** laws that prohibit companies from using "replacement workers" to bust unions.

PEOPLE Needs YOU to Take Action!

An important part of PEOPLE's clout is the number of workers we represent. In politics there really is strength in numbers. PEOPLE is Your Voice! Get involved today and join the PEOPLE who are fighting for you.

PEOPLE Deduction Authorization cards are available at the PEOPLE Office, CSEA Headquarters, 143 Washington Ave., Albany, NY 12210. Telephone orders for cards may be made by calling 1-800-342-4146, ext.1404 (from outside the Albany area) or 518-436-8622 (within the Albany area). Fax: 518-427-1677 Cheryl Palmer, Statewide PEOPLE Coordinator.

NOTE: All PEOPLE Deduction Authorization cards are subject to verification.



Your contribution to PEOPLE is used to help...

- **ENDORSE** candidates who support working people.
- **COMMUNICATE** our position to candidates on issues that affect you.
- **LOBBY** legislators to secure necessary funding for federal and state jobs and protect your rights in the workplace.
- **EDUCATE** CSEA members and organize letter writing and phone campaigns to elected officials on important issues.
- **MONITOR** proposed legislation to ensure appropriate action is taken to have our voices heard on matters affecting our members.



For more information about the PEOPLE program contact the CSEA Political Action Department at 1-800-342-4146 ext.1404.

PEOPLE Helps Level the Playing Field Against Big Business and Secures Legislation that Benefits Our Members.

The PEOPLE agenda works toward fair and progressive legislation for all working families. Through the political process, PEOPLE has a voice in setting important public policy.

What PEOPLE has already accomplished for you...

- **PASSED** the Family and Medical Leave Act allowing up to twelve weeks unpaid leave.
- **DEFEATED** legislation that would have forced local governments to consider privatizing public water systems, highways and public transit systems.
- **PASSED** legislation that provides automatic cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) for retirees' pensions.
- **PREVENTED** law from passing that would have eliminated overtime pay.
- **PREVENTED** contracting-out thousands of social service jobs.
- **PRESERVED** funding for Medicare and Social Security.
- **SECURED** \$20 billion in federal state aid - \$2.1 billion to NY - to help preserve essential services, lower taxes and avoid layoffs during the current economic crisis.
- **SECURED** an additional \$1 billion in federal funds for our schools districts, state and local governments.

Clout.
Got it?
GET IT!



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Many hands make for light work.

Most of us have heard that statement and know its meaning: It's easier on all of us when each of us does our share.

This too is the principle behind PEOPLE – Public Employees Organized to Promote Legislative Equality: Alone we are powerless, together we are powerful.

Incredible amounts of money can be harvested by elected officials when they put their hands out to Big Business. At the same time, it's our pockets that get picked.

Just look at the recent "tax cuts" signed into law by the president. These "cuts" primarily benefit the wealthiest 1 percent. Those same cuts when compounded will cost at least \$1 trillion. They also guarantee record federal deficits that hurt the economy, threaten low interest rates and jeopardize the future of Social Security and Medicare.

It's time to fight back.

PEOPLE is about the power we gain by pooling our dollars to elect candidates who share our goals. While we can't compete one-on-one with Big Business, we can level the playing field. And if we all pitch in – we can make a difference for working families.

No matter what you give – it will be an important investment in your future. Your contribution can make a difference. It's also desperately needed to save us from extremist politicians who are anti-union and anti-worker.

Join PEOPLE today.

In solidarity,
Danny Donohue

Danny Donohue,
President CSEA



You can't vote unless you're registered!
In order to vote, you must be registered. The last day to postmark a voter registration application this year is Friday, Oct. 10. It must be received by the Board of Elections no later than Oct. 15.