

THE WORK FORCE

Save the Date



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**Wednesday
January 7, '09**

**The
State Capitol
Albany,
New York**

**MARCH
FOR
MAIN
STREET**

**Our jobs and communities
ARE AT RISK!**

See Page 3

Photo of the Month



Photo by Lynn Miller

Master of Ceremonies Nick Paolini, president of the CSEA Amherst Unit, and Western Region Veterans Committee Chairman Bob Pyjas of the Erie County Unit place a wreath on the dock near the USS Little Rock at Naval and Military Park in Buffalo during the region's annual Veterans Day ceremony.

Long Island activists raise money for state vets home

Members of the Long Island Region Veterans Committee recently delivered an additional \$1,000 to the Long Island State Veterans Home on the grounds of SUNY Stony Brook.

Several months ago, the committee donated \$857 to the vets home. The more recent donation came from AFSCME through its matching funds for veterans program. The money will be used to maintain a mobile computer system.

The Long Island Region committee also conducted a special ceremony to honor the service of United States veterans on the Armed Forces Plaza at the H. Lee Dennison Building in Hauppauge. CSEA members from locals and units all over Long Island turned out to join them for this poignant tribute.

CSEA, Canals have tentative pact

ALBANY — CSEA and the Canal Corporation have reached a tentative four-year contract.

The agreement includes pay raises in each year through July 1, 2011. The first increase is retroactive to July 1, 2008.

In addition, dental, vision and health insurance benefits are maintained.

Ratification ballots will be mailed Dec. 1 and include complete details of the tentative agreement.

Replacement ballots will be available Dec. 8. Call (518) 257-1279. Information is also posted on www.csealocal1000.org.

Westchester OKs contract after three years of talks

WHITE PLAINS — After working without a contract since the end of 2005, members of the Westchester County Unit have a six-year deal in place.

Unit members overwhelmingly ratified the agreement Nov. 3, when mail ballots were tallied at American Arbitration Association headquarters in Manhattan.

In exchange for generous wage increases in each year of the contract, members made a small concession on health insurance, agreeing to a stipulation requiring employees' spouses to take insurance from their employer if available.

"It's taken a long time to get to where we are today, but we are very satisfied," said CSEA Westchester County Unit President Jack McPhillips. "We think this is a

fair deal for us and for the county. A fair and equitable contract is all we have been after these past three years."

The negotiations process was a long, arduous one for the unit, with wages and health insurance being the main sticking points in negotiations. Members staged numerous demonstrations, including one held outside the

home of County Executive Andrew Spano.

"The solidarity of the almost 4,000 members of the Westchester County Unit and the hard work of the negotiating committee made this contract happen," said Southern Region President Billy Riccaldo.

— Jessica Ladlee

Chautauqua County members ratify pact

MAYVILLE — After two years, countless strategy sessions and almost 70 negotiation sessions with management, CSEA members employed by Chautauqua County have overwhelmingly ratified a contract that maintains important wage and health benefits.

The agreement runs through Dec. 31, 2011.

"The members of this unit sent a very clear message to the contract negotiating team," said Chautauqua County Unit President Rose Conti. "The team and (Labor

Relations Specialist) Penny Gleason dug in and fought hard for what the members wanted. I commend them for their dedication, hard work and focus."

The new contract includes wage increases and retroactivity. It also caps some health insurance contributions and improves coverage in some areas. The county legislature was expected to vote on the contract at press time.

— Lynn Miller

Going from bad to worse

State budget fight puts jobs, services at risk

ALBANY — Jobs and services across New York are at serious risk as Gov. David Paterson and state lawmakers grapple with a growing state budget deficit.

CSEA is in the thick of it, fighting Paterson's demand to reopen the state contracts and further lag state employee pay, along with massive mid-year cuts in aid to local governments and school districts. (See *president's column* — page 4)

New York faces some serious economic challenges, but the governor and state lawmakers must find a balanced approach to protect jobs and services. The governor's proposals seek drastic cuts without serious consideration of alternative savings and revenues.

"The governor keeps saying that 'everything is on the table' but his proposals have only been about cutting back essential public services and shifting more burden to working New Yorkers," CSEA President Danny Donohue said.

Worse, a Nov. 18 special



Gov. Paterson

legislative budget session called by the governor broke down without any resolution. Paterson plans to release his state budget on Dec. 16 — more than a month earlier than usual. Even before the events of the special session,



Union members from CSEA and other labor groups demand fairness at a Nov. 18 rally in Albany.

it was expected that next year's budget proposal would include unprecedented cuts and other draconian measures.

"When the governor cuts aid to schools or local governments it means services will have to be cut or property taxes will be raised," Donohue said

"Let's also be clear here: no one should have any doubt about CSEA's commitment to finding real alternatives," Donohue said. (See

recommendations below).

"CSEA is gearing up for one of the greatest challenges in the union's nearly 100-year history," Donohue said. "Every CSEA member needs to be involved in this fight for better choices because it's your job, your community and your future at risk!"

"One of the greatest challenges in the union's nearly 100-year history."

Several billion in better choices

CSEA has offered several meaningful suggestions to Gov. David Paterson on ways the state could save, generate or access several billion dollars to address the budget situation. They have so far been ignored.

- **Tap the state's Tax Stabilization Fund** – There is more than a billion dollars available in this "Rainy Day fund."
- **Enforce the law and collect state cigarette taxes from the Native American reservations** – Nearly \$1 billion annually is at stake.
- **Pursue a prescription drug purchasing agreement through Canada** – Several localities are already using this option that could save \$400 million.
- **Reform Child Health Plus Program for greater fairness** – Set contributions and co-payment levels at what state employees are required to pay.
- **Seek a public/private partnership for the Empire State Plaza Art Collection** – \$1 billion, literally hanging around in Albany.



Join thousands of your CSEA brothers and sisters and other concerned New Yorkers to make your voice heard when Gov. David Paterson delivers his State of the State message **Jan. 7** to the legislature. Working New Yorkers live on Main Street and it's time to stand up for fairness in New York's taxes, budget and services.

Plan now to attend — contact your CSEA local for travel arrangements in your area. Stay up to date on plans for the event at www.csealocal1000.org

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March for Main Street – Jan. 7, 2009

These are challenging times for New York and our nation.

We can take pride in helping to secure Barack Obama's election as president of the United States. It is a great moment in our history. But as Obama noted on election night, the election is not the change we seek but the opportunity to make change.

It will not be easy with what confronts us as a state and a nation.

New York faces an enormous budget problem, which CSEA does not question. We also don't question responsible action to address it early. We do object to Gov. David Paterson's approach, however.

The governor keeps saying that 'everything is on the table' but his proposals have only been about cutting back essential public services and shifting more burden to working New Yorkers.

The governor has now tried to publicly pressure CSEA into reopening state contracts and agreeing to other givebacks even though we repeatedly told him "no" in private.

CSEA cannot reopen contracts. To reopen one would mean that every other contract we negotiate across the state would not be worth the paper it is written on. A contract is a contract.

But there's more you should know: it's not simply a matter of making concessions to avoid layoffs. Even with his personal assurance to me last summer that he would not resort to layoffs, we are already seeing the state eliminating positions and moving to consolidate and close facilities. We are alarmed that there is much more of this to come whether we reopen a contract or not.

There is much at stake for local government, schools and private sector CSEA members, too. Unprecedented cuts in state aid are likely to be part of the proposed budget the governor will announce in mid-December. It will bring loss of jobs and services along with property tax hikes very quickly.

It will hurt us all where we live and work.

That's why CSEA has offered a wide range of better choices — alternatives to save and generate billions of dollars for a more balanced approach. So far the governor has ignored them. That's why I'm asking you to join with your CSEA brothers and sisters and come to Albany on Wednesday Jan. 7, 2009, and make sure the governor hears you loud and clear.



Danny

OCFS deceptions outrage CSEA

ALBANY — CSEA has recently ended participation in a labor-management task force designed to help transform New York's juvenile justice system.

The union is outraged at the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) over the agency's dealings with the union.

The final straw was Gov. David Paterson's surprise announcement to close a half-dozen upstate youth detention facilities, a move that violates cooperative labor-management activities, may in fact violate state law and could lead to job losses.

"It is simply impossible for CSEA to continue to work cooperatively with OCFS when they have not been honest with

us," said CSEA President Danny Donohue.

Union officials and CSEA members who work in the state's youth detention facilities had been working with the agency to move from a correction model to a so-called "sanctuary model" which centers on reducing or eliminating restraints and creating a more therapeutic environment focused on staff building relationships with residents.

CSEA was working with OCFS to ensure workers had the resources, including additional staffing levels and proper training, to make the new model work.

But Donohue said OCFS officials violated the union's trust by using the sanctuary model as

an excuse to run down the population counts at several facilities and then move ahead under the governor's proposal to close the so-called "underutilized" facilities.

OCFS did not give CSEA any advance notice of the proposed closures and the union charged OCFS is flaunting a state law that requires one year's notice to affected communities before closing a facility.

The proposal to close the facilities would also eliminate about 250 positions.

The union said reducing staff goes against the recommendations of a consultant working with the task force who believes the agency will need more staffing to successfully move away from a correction model to a more therapeutic model of care.

— Ed Molitor



"It is simply impossible for CSEA to continue to work cooperatively with OCFS when they have not been honest with us."

CSEA Voices



CSEA's fight for adequate staffing at state Office of Children and Family Services youth centers has been well-chronicled in *The Work Force* over the past two years.



State OCFS facilities that would be closed under Gov. David Paterson's proposal:

- Adirondack, near Plattsburgh;
- Great Valley and Cattaraugus in Western New York;
- Rochester;
- Syracuse; and,
- Pyramid in New York City.

Additionally, Allen, in Delaware County, and Tryon, in Johnstown would be downsized.



"I'm hoping once Obama is president, he can make some changes that will help the economy. I think it will take a couple of years to see a difference, but once there is a change in the White House, things will improve."

— Patrizia Perugini, shop steward, Westchester Medical Center Unit, on the economy.



CSEA members to town: save our public safety dispatchers!

“When you endanger their jobs, you endanger emergency response time, which puts people’s lives at risk.”

CSEA Voices



“We need change to help the middle class. Health care is unaffordable for many and many others are uninsured. All CSEA members need to come together and unite to keep the benefits that we and previous CSEA members have worked so hard to negotiate. We must stand together to re-strengthen the economy.”

— Clara Ramadhan, Cattaraugus County probation department, on the economy.

RIVERHEAD — CSEA activists from eastern Long Island recently spoke out against



Hattorff

Town Supervisor Phil Cardinale’s proposed 2009 budget, particularly his plan to eliminate funding for public safety dispatchers in the town’s Police Department.

Public safety at risk

CSEA believes the supervisor is putting public safety at risk by eliminating the public safety dispatchers, and that his proposal is an ill-conceived effort to balance the town’s finances on the backs of its workers.



Suffolk County Local activists Tom Skabry and Jim McDowell support the Riverhead public safety dispatchers at the town board meeting.

“Public safety dispatchers are highly-trained professionals who are skilled at answering and assisting residents during times of crisis, illness and emergencies of all kinds,” said Riverhead Unit President Matt Hattorff. “These people make sure you get the help you need quickly. When you endanger their jobs, you endanger emergency response time, which puts people’s lives at risk.”

Poor judgment

CSEA believes this budget is going to have severe, negative effects on residents’ lives.

“How can the supervisor even think about cutting back on safety sensitive positions when Riverhead is one of the fastest growing towns in Suffolk County?” Suffolk County Local President Bill Walsh said. “It’s not only poor judgment, but also very poor planning.”

“We are going to fight to get the funding restored, both for our workers and for the town’s residents, who don’t deserve to be scapegoats for the town’s lack of planning and common sense,” said Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte.



Riverhead Public Safety Dispatcher Melissa Breitenback, with her daughter, addresses the town board in opposition to the supervisor’s plan to eliminate her position.

“CSEA will leave no stone unturned in this matter. We will fight on behalf of our dispatchers and for Riverhead residents who don’t deserve to

have their safety compromised to save a few bucks.”

— Richard Impagliazzo

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<p>CSE-143 Micro Poplin Jacket</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 65% polyester / 35% soft cotton • full zip jacket with drawstring & cordlock • lightly lined with nylon • self elastic cuffs and waistband • features an embroidered logo <p>COST/SIZE: \$42.05 \$44.00 (M-XL) \$44.55 \$46.00 (2X) \$45.95 \$48.00 (3X) COLOR: black</p>	<p>CSE-209 Snow Brush</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • heavy duty snowbrush with blade • features a white imprint <p>COST: \$2.30 \$2.45 COLOR: blue</p>
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IT'S HERE!! The 2008-09 Polar Plunge

Join us in supporting this unique, wacky experience as we continue a CSEA tradition in community action. Raise money from friends and family to support your jump — or slow crawl — into the freezing waters at any of the below listed sites!

VERONA — In less than three weeks, CSEA Central Region activists were able to raise more than \$3,300 for the Special Olympics to sponsor the region's team for the state's first "Polar Plunge" of the season.

On a somewhat warm but rainy Saturday, a dozen members of the CSEA Central Region "Polar Peeps" Team walked into the 42-degree waters of Oneida Lake at Verona Beach State Park to show that CSEA members care about their community and are not afraid to get a little wet to prove it.

Led by Team Captain Jeffrey Colburn, the region's 1st vice president, the team hit the water wearing their CSEA shirts and walked into the shallow water, some knee-deep, some waist-deep, and a even a brave few up to their necks.

Cheering the plungers on were Central Region President Colleen Wheaton and other union activists and supporters. After it was all done, the plungers all said the experience was a lot of fun.

"Once your legs went numb, the cold water didn't really bother you that much," said team participant Betty Jo Johnson. Colburn said that for the region's first effort, the team did very well for a great cause.

"I think it went beautifully. We raised more than \$3,000 in three weeks. For our first time out getting involved in the plunge, we did a real credible job," he said. "We had great support from our members and the region, and we're already looking forward to next year's event."

— Mark M. Kotzin

2008 Plunges

- **Dec. 6:** Rye Playland Polar Plunge – Rye Playland, Rye – No team yet reported.
- **Dec. 7:** New York City Polar Plunge – Great Kills Beach, Staten Island – No team yet reported
- **Dec. 13:** Lake George Polar Plunge – Shepard Park, Lake George

We are proud to report two teams this season in the Capital Region! *The Capital Region "Adirondack Polar Bears" Team:* CSEA Captain Ed Burkhart, plant utilities engineer from Great Meadows Correctional Facility. Burkhart is pumped up with a healthy dose of competition and is bringing even more friends this year! *Watch out SEALS!*

The Capital Region "Seals" Team CSEA Captain Brenda Facin, Washington County Local president, is set to lead her team to give the Polar Bears a challenge!

2009 Plunges

- **Feb. 8:** Rochester Polar Plunge – Ontario Beach Park (Charlotte Beach), Rochester *Play it again, FLO!* *Team CSEA Region 6:* Captain Western Region President Flo Tripi and her team are determined to make an even bigger splash this year!

- **Feb. 28:** Long Island Polar Plunge – North Hempstead Beach Park (formerly Bar Beach), Port Washington *The Port Washington "Bathing Beauties" are looking good and doing it again this year!* *Team CSEA:* Co-Captains Rich Acevedo and Jerry D'Agostino (Port Washington School District Unit) will be leading the group to success but they know they will need to keep their team working hard to stay on top with so much more competition this year!

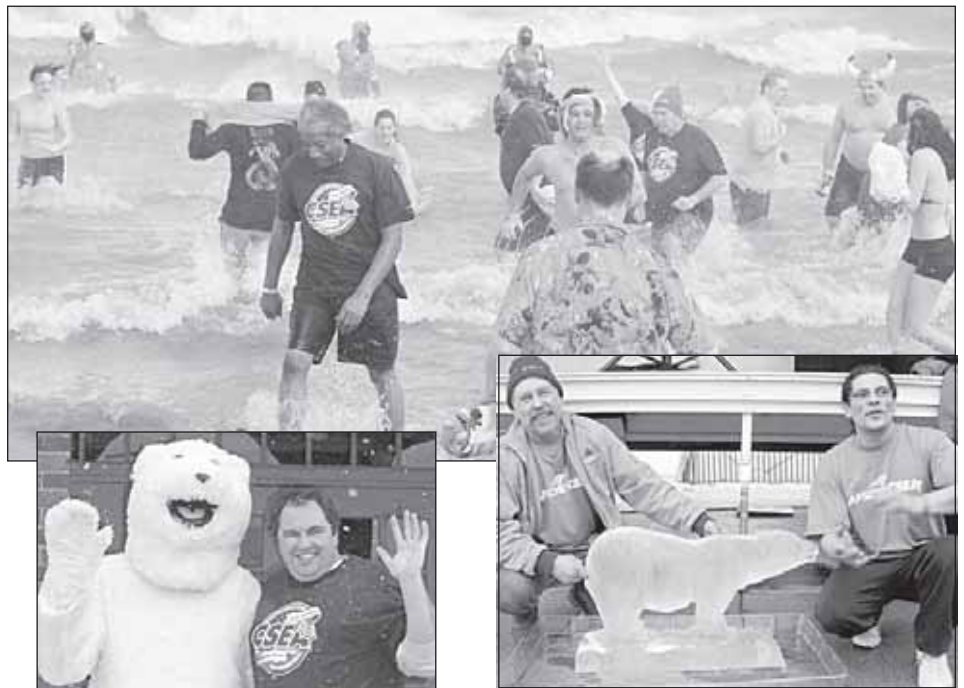
NEW PLUNGE LOCATION: Fishkill – Date and beach to be announced. No team yet reported.



The "Central Region Polar Peeps" Team, from left to right: Barb Carnrike, Karen Bright, Betty Jo Johnson, Jeffrey Colburn, Sarah Wilkinson, Tammy Witteman, Ellen Englert, Casey Walpole, Janice Danaher, Nick Kadick and Jeannette Engle. Missing from the team photo is Bob Pryor.

Below, Polar Plungers in Rochester last season.

Bottom right, Co-Captains Jerry D'Agostino, left, and Rich Acevedo, Port Washington "Bathing Beauties" from last season.



Go to:

http://www.csealocal1000.org/polar_plunge.php to learn how to set up a plunge team, join a team or contribute.



CSEA blasts Dutchess exec's proposed pay freeze, layoffs

“He is thumbing his nose at the men and women who make the county run.”

POUGHKEEPSIE — In a brazen move that has already drawn harsh criticism from CSEA, Dutchess County Executive William Steinhaus has released a proposed 2009 budget that includes layoffs and excludes contractual pay increases for CSEA members.



Piraino

“This is outrageous,” said Southern Region President Billy Riccaldo. “I find it hard to believe Mr. Steinhaus would disregard any other business contract he signed on behalf of the county, yet here he is thumbing his nose at the men and women who make the county run. Should the county not honor the contract, we will take legal action.”

smaller work force than do several neighboring, comparable-sized counties. CSEA represents 1,500 county workers there.

“Nobody denies that we are facing tough economic challenges right now, but Mr. Steinhaus seems intent on diminishing the level of services Dutchess County provides at a time when county residents need us most,” said Dutchess County Unit President Lizabeth Piraino.

“Outrageous”

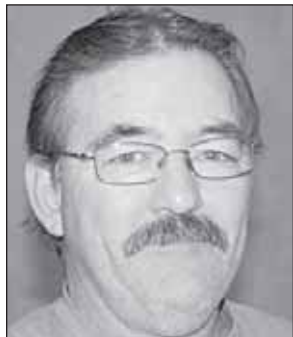
While he did not budget the negotiated 2009 pay increase for CSEA members in his budget, Steinhaus did include raises for management.

Slashing services

The proposed layoffs would affect five CSEA members from the Health Department, Computer Services Department and Human Rights Commission. Dutchess County already has a

— Jessica Ladlee

CSEA Voices



“We are in a very bad spot; the economy is terrible. Over the last 18 years that I have been with the state I’ve seen things go downhill. We really need a change. We need to help poor people, not rich people. We need to bring back the CETA program that helped put people back to work in the 1970s.”

— Gary Thomann
University at Buffalo
grounds department, on the economy.

ATTENTION: Public Sector Local and Unit Presidents:

Did you send your Election Committee Data Form to CSEA Headquarters?

Beginning early January 2009, registered election committee and election meeting chairs will receive an election package to help them carry out their election duties. As long as we receive your election committee data forms (known as ECDF), packages will be mailed.

CSEA Headquarters cannot send material and information to any appointed election committee or meeting chair, without first receiving the completed ECDF from the local or unit president.

Inquiries regarding election committees may be directed to the CSEA Statewide Election Committee at 1-800-342-4146, ext. 1447 or sec@cseainc.org.

Library work group writing a new chapter



Members of CSEA Capital Region’s newly formed library work group take a break from their first meeting to pose for a photo. The group is comprised of CSEA members employed at six area libraries. It will meet regularly to discuss issues of relevance to library workers. Discussion at the November meeting included topics such as negotiations, political action, workplace safety and proposed continuing education requirements. Joining the work group members are Capital Region President Kathy Garrison, back row, far left, and Capital Region Director Kate Luscombe, back row, far right.

Warwick Valley school unit fighting contracting out proposal

WARWICK — A plan to contract out part of the busing operation in the Warwick Valley Central School District and consolidate bus runs is facing fierce opposition from members of the district's CSEA unit.

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Frank Greenhall has proposed contracting out bus runs for private school students, in addition to proposing the consolidation of middle and high school bus runs for the district's public schools.

The move would mean that 21 of the district's 71 school bus drivers would lose their eligibility for district benefits due to the reduction in work hours.

"The proposed cuts would be a huge loss because our members are such a

strong part of the community," said Unit President Bernardine Codella.

"Their personalized care of our students goes beyond their actual job responsibilities."

Public support

The proposal has drawn an outcry from



CSEA activists, from left, Martha Langlitz, Wendy Vandercliff and Barbara Watch say proposed cuts to the Warwick Valley Central School District's transportation department must be stopped.

district parents, who have told Greenhall and Board of Education members at public

meetings that they object to the contracting out proposal because the district's bus drivers

are part of the community and care about the safety of the school children.

Parents strongly object to placing middle and high school students on the same

bus, due to the vast age difference.

"In the long run, contracting out will be devastating," said Barbara Watch, a CSEA activist and a bus driver with the district for 19 years. "Private companies do not adhere to the same safety standards as we do, and the safety of our kids is the most important thing. The two-tiered busing also raises a lot of concerns, because you're mixing high school students with kids who are much younger."

Educating the public

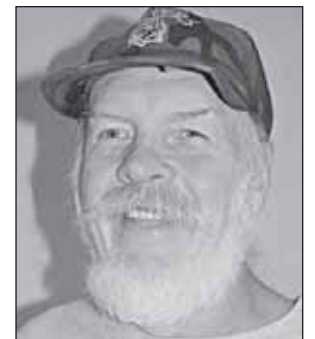
CSEA members are undertaking a campaign aimed at educating Warwick residents about the problems with contracting out and with switching to a two-tiered busing system. Members of Warwick's Board of Education are expected to take action in January.

— Jessica Ladlee



"In the long run, contracting out will be devastating."

CSEA Voices



"I think we're going to see the economy flounder and waffle a bit in the next year. It has to bounce back and it will. We're America. We're not going to let things fall apart. "

— John "Trapper" Saveskie, vice president, Eastern Correctional Facility Local, on the economy.

INSIDE THE WORK FORCE

Building a better future at CSEA Women's Conference

HAUPPAUGE — More than 500 CSEA members, officers and activists recently blended the union's past, present and future at CSEA's statewide Women's Conference on Long Island.

The conference, themed "Union Women Building a Better Future" and organized by the union's standing Women's Committee, addressed issues concerning working women and their families on and off the job, including coping with the troubled state and national economy, women's health, union leadership skills and domestic violence.

CSEA President Danny Donohue, in an address to conference attendees, spoke about the recent presidential election. "We should be proud of the role we played in electing our president, Barack Obama," he said. "This union will fight to work with him, but we have a tough road ahead of us."

Irene Carr tribute

Statewide Women's Committee Chair Jackie Stanford, Western Region President Flo Tripi and standing Women's Committee member Cathy Barretta gave a poignant tribute to former statewide Secretary Irene Carr, whose work in advancing women's roles in the union and workplace paved the way for future generations of union members. Carr died in 2004.

"Irene has done a great job bringing women's issues to our union," Tripi said. "But she didn't just see it as women's issues, but workers' issues. She was very tough, but the quintessential lady."

Economic struggles

Several programs focused on how working families can cope with the troubled state and national economy, including sessions on investing and personal budgeting. In a plenary session, AFSCME Director of Collective Bargaining Kerry Korpi outlined how years of failed national economic policies have led to the fiscal crisis.

"We have a chance to change the economy; change our country," Korpi said. "We are going to work with the new administration to turn this country around and rebuild the middle class."

The conference closed with a presentation about the non-profit organization Girls Inc. and its programs for girls ages 6 to 18 (See story, Page 12).

— Janice Marra



Above, CSEA President Danny Donohue with Women's Committee members and first-time conference attendees.

"It had a lot to do with women being able to stand up and stick up for themselves. I really liked the workshop 'What's Love Got to Do with It?' It was an eye-opener and it showed me that you don't have to be beaten to be abused."

Jenny Camisa, first-time Women's Conference attendee

"I didn't know that CSEA offered so many programs that help women not just on the job, but outside the job, such as the domestic violence awareness workshop and also the self-defense workshop they had. I thought those were very useful."

Tamika M. Washington, first-time Women's Conference attendee

"I always learn something from the workshops I attend, but it's the other members I meet from around the state that I also learn from. Networking is one of our biggest assets as union leaders."

Brenda Facin, first-time Women's Conference attendee

"At the Women's Conference I learned the real meaning of solidarity. But that's not all. I also found a great resource of ideas and strategies for women in today's world."

Roxanne Savage, first-time Women's Conference attendee

"We wear many hats as women, including that of caregiver. In our daily lives, we are always providing for others in some capacity. My weekend at the Women's Conference made me slow down and take time for me. It is tremendously important that we, as women, learn to make and take time for ourselves."

Veronica Diver, first-time Women's Conference attendee



Top right, CSEA Women's Committee Chair Jackie Stanford, right, speaks. At left is CSEA Executive Vice President Mary Sullivan, officer liaison to the Women's Committee. Above, Women's Conference attendees do the conga to Lynn Marie Smith's labor version of the hit song "YMCA."

CSEA members: teach girls to be strong, smart and bold

HAUPPAUGE — Shirley Singletary has a challenge for CSEA members — help at least one girl become the best woman she can be.

Singletary, a business owner and vice president of the board of directors for Girls Inc.'s Long Island chapter, urged more than 500 CSEA Women's Conference attendees to get involved in the nonprofit organization by volunteering or mentoring a girl.

"I challenge you to ask how you can help even one girl," she said. "It's time to step up to the plate and get involved. It's my personal mission to ensure girls have all the opportunities they can."



Singletary

Girls Inc., which serves more than 800,000 girls from ages 6 to 18 across the United States each year, conducts numerous, research-based educational programs in areas including economic literacy, leadership and community action, media literacy and peer education to allow girls to make positive choices.

About 49 percent of the girls

served by Girls Inc. come from single parent homes, 66 percent come from homes with incomes of \$25,000 or less and 70 percent are girls of color.

In addition to Long Island, Girls Inc. has sites in New York City, the Capital District, Syracuse and Westchester County, with Hoffman related licensee programs in Kingston and Buffalo.



CSEA General Counsel Nancy Hoffman, immediate past chair of Girls Inc.'s Capital Region chapter's board of directors, said Girls Inc. gives girls an opportunity to learn about public service. "If we could introduce these girls to the wonderful opportunities of public service, we are investing in our own future," she said.

Hoffman recently worked with the Capital Region Women's Committee and state Office of General Services staff on a "bring girls to work" day that allowed 20 girls to shadow OGS workers in various jobs. She is now working to expand the program through summer internships.

Old phones offer new help to domestic violence victims



CSEA Chemung County Unit 4th Vice President Joe Coletta and his Department of Social Services co-workers have been spearheading a collection of used cellular phones to be donated to the Salvation Army Safehouse Program, a domestic violence shelter program for Chemung and Schuyler counties.

Thanks to Coletta and his generous co-workers, the program has already collected more than 100 phones that have been given to victims of domestic violence so they can always call 911 in an emergency.

If you have a working used cell phone that you no longer need and would like to donate it to this program, please send it attn: CSEA Donations, c/o the Elmira Salvation Army, 414 Lake St., Elmira, N.Y. 14901 or if you're in the area, drop it off at the Chemung County DSS Offices at 435 Pennsylvania Ave. in Elmira.

— Mark Kotzin

Singletary said she sees helping young girls through Girls Inc. as a pathway to change to the country's future.

"Before we can change anything, we have to change our way of thinking," she said. "No matter how small or large they are, girls have a voice."

To learn more or to volunteer

at your local Girls Inc. chapter, visit the Girls Inc. website at www.girlsinc.org.

— Janice Marra

"Before we can change anything, we have to change our way of thinking. No matter how small or large they are, girls have a voice."

CSEA making strides against breast cancer

CSEA members across the state recently took steps to fight breast cancer by participating in the American Cancer Society's "Making Strides Against Breast Cancer" walks in their communities.

The American Cancer Society organizes 20 Making Strides walks across New York state alone. Money raised through the walks help advance breast cancer research, fund educational programs and promote patient care and support for their families.

About 178,480 women in the United States were diagnosed with breast cancer in 2007. The disease also affects men.



Help protect yourself against cancer

CSEA is partnering with the American Cancer Society in an initiative to help members protect their health by getting screened for cancer and other preventative health measures.

Visit www.fightcancer.org and enter "CSEA" at the login prompt to learn more.

Fighting the battle in Central New York

Central Region President Colleen Wheaton, right, presents a check for \$1,757 to Jolie Bonaparte from the American Cancer Society for its "Making Strides Against Breast Cancer" fundraiser. The region raised the money



at its fall conference by raffling gift baskets. The donations will be used toward fighting breast cancer, including research, education and patient care programs.

Learn more about fighting cancer

Learn more about the American Cancer Society's efforts to fight breast and other forms of cancer by visiting the society's website: www.cancer.org.

Members make strides on Long Island



Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte and region Women's Committee members and activists recruited nearly 400 walkers for the recent Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk at Jones Beach. The region again served as a flagship sponsor for the walk, and union members raised nearly \$10,000 to fight breast cancer, including research, education and patient care. "While we are happy with what we accomplished this year, there is still more to be done," said Women's Committee Chair Catherine Custance. "Our goal is to further increase CSEA participation next year and contribute further to the ultimate objective; which is the final eradication of this insidious disease."

Honored for solidarity



Pat Whalen, secretary of the state Education Department Local and a 23-year CSEA member, was recently honored by the Capital District Gay and Lesbian Community Council with its 'Straight But Not Narrow' award. Whalen, a visitor assistant at the New York State Museum in Albany, works closely with the council on projects year round and recently coordinated events at the state museum for Gay Pride Month. The council honored him for his commitment to the labor and LGBT communities, calling it "solidarity." "I was stunned by this," Whalen said of receiving the award. "I couldn't believe it."

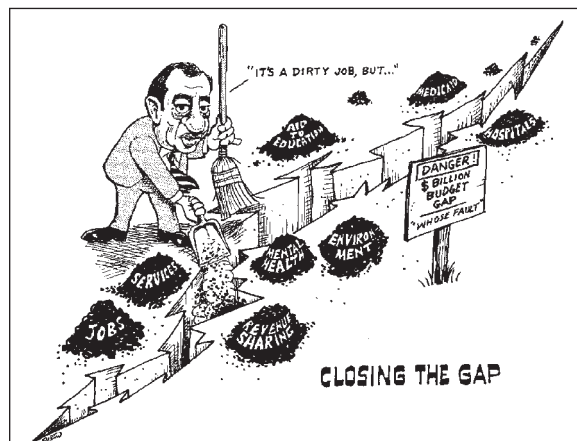


18 years ago ...

Gov. David Paterson isn't the first governor to propose mid-year budget cuts to address a deficit. Soon after being re-elected to a third term as New York's governor in November 1990, Gov. Mario Cuomo proposed massive mid-year budget cuts that included thousands of layoffs, deep cuts in state services and sharp slashes in aid for local governments and school districts. Cuomo also called for mandatory, five-day furloughs in pay for all state employees that would cut workers' salaries by 2 percent.

Hardest hit by Cuomo's devastating plan were CSEA members who kept the state running. In what was the beginning of a difficult period for the union, CSEA immediately launched a large-scale campaign to fight the cuts.

The union's fight for fairness culminated in the February 1991 "Hot Day in February," when more than 20,000 CSEA and other union members demonstrated at the State Capitol in Albany to fight the state's flawed budget priorities.



The above cartoon by CSEA cartoonist Ralph Distin originally ran in the Nov. 26, 1990, issue of *The Public Sector*, then CSEA's official newspaper. The cartoon depicts Gov. Mario Cuomo filling a crack with piles of dirt representing state services.

Also in 1990 ...

- * Iraqi troops invade Kuwait, leading to U.S. intervention in the Persian Gulf and eventual Gulf War.
- * South Africa frees Nelson Mandela after imprisoning him for 27 years for leading opposition to apartheid.
- * The Cold War ends and East and West Germany are reunited, leading to the collapse of Communism in the Soviet Union and eastern Europe.
- * *The Simpsons* debuts on television.
- * The NC-17 movie rating is introduced.
- * President George H.W. Bush signs the Clean Air Act to cut pollution in the automobile and fuel industries.

CSEA gets out the vote

"Barack Obama's election as president marks a new day for America," said CSEA President Danny Donohue. "CSEA is proud to have played a part, but as President-elect Obama stated in his victory speech, the election was not the the change we are seeking but the chance to make the change. We all have much work ahead of us."



Above, center, Joe Kevlin of the state Education Department Local, his son Patrick Kevlin, a College of St. Rose student, and Jim Dunden, also of the state Education Department Local, work to get out the vote in the Capital Region. At left, Nick Paolini, president of the CSEA Amherst Unit, affixes address labels on postcards supporting Barack Obama for president. Members of the Western Region conducted the postcard campaign during the annual autumn region meeting. The cards were sent to union members in swing states.

What is the Employee Free Choice Act?

The Employee Free Choice Act (H.R. 800, S. 1041), supported by a bipartisan coalition in Congress, would enable working people to bargain for better wages, benefits and working conditions by restoring workers' freedom to choose for themselves whether to join a union.

President-elect Barack Obama has said he would sign the bill if it comes before him.

The act would:

- Establish stronger penalties for violation of employee rights when workers seek to form a union and during first-contract negotiations.
- Provide mediation and arbitration for first-contract disputes.
- Allow employees to form unions by signing cards authorizing union representation.

The Employee Free Choice Act would benefit CSEA's efforts to organize direct care workers at private, not-



for-profit agencies that receive state funding. CSEA has had success organizing these workers, but the job has been made difficult by the National Labor Relations Board. The NLRB's rules have long been stacked in favor of the employer in private-sector organizing.



CSEA Capital Region President Kathy Garrison, right, and CSEA Organizing Department staff person Lisa Horton pose with Obama signs in front of infamous McCain supporter 'Joe The Plumber's' house in Toledo, Ohio, Nov. 3. Garrison and Horton were part of the large AFSCME contingent that successfully got out the vote, delivering Ohio's electoral votes to Obama.

Prescription co-payment reimbursement deadline is March 31



The CSEA Employee Benefit Fund offers different prescription drug and physician co-payment reimbursements depending upon which benefit(s) has been negotiated into your collective bargaining agreement.

These benefits reimburse for co-payments spent once annually per calendar year. The deadline for claims in the 2008 calendar year is March 31, 2009.

On this page is a quick overview of some items that may pertain to you.

Do you qualify? Contact EBF

To find out if you qualify for any of these benefits, please first contact our Member Services Department at (800) 323-2732. If you are eligible, forms and supporting documentation must be completed and submitted by March 31.

You can get all forms by visiting our website at www.cseaebf.com and are under the downloadable forms link. No username or password is required to enter the site.

State employees

• **Prescription Co-Payment Reimbursement Form for state employees:** If you are a New York state employee with a CSEA-represented position and you or your family spent more than \$400 a year on prescription drug co-payments in 2008, you could get **up to \$100** back.

This benefit was enhanced in 2008 to include the cost of prescription drugs that are less than the co-payment.

Local government employees

• **Prescription Co-Payment Reimbursement Form for Local Government employees:** If your bargaining unit has negotiated this benefit into your collective bargaining agreement, you could receive **up to \$200** back for co-payments spent on prescription drugs for 2008.

• **Physician Co-Payment Reimbursement Form for Local Government employees:** If your bargaining unit has negotiated this benefit into your collective bargaining agreement, you could receive **up to \$120** back for co-payments spent on doctor visits for 2008.

Unified Court System employees

• **Prescription and Health Insurance Co-Payment Reimbursement Form for Unified Court System employees:** If you are a Unified Court System employee with a CSEA represented position, you are eligible for two reimbursements. The Prescription Co-Payment Benefit reimburses prescription drug co-payment once annually **up to a maximum of \$100 per family** per calendar year. The Health Insurance Co-Payment benefit reimburses co-pay expenses of physician office visits once annually **up to a maximum of \$125 per family** per calendar year.

Please note: To receive any reimbursements for these benefits, you must include either original receipts OR pharmacy/physician printouts with the appropriate claim form.

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.

Health insurance option transfer for 2009

2009 plan rates coming soon

Members who are considering changing health insurance options for 2009 should weigh many factors before making a decision.

A good source of specific health insurance information is the *2009 Choices Guide* available from your agency's 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).

To change your option, see your agency's health benefits administrator as soon as possible. Ask for a health insurance transaction form PS-404. Also, if you are enrolling in an HMO or changing to another HMO, ask for an HMO enrollment form.

Health Benefits



Return the completed form(s) to your agency's health benefits administrator. If you do not wish to make a change, there is no action required.

Check the rates

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

At the time this article went to press, the health insurance rates for 2009 were not yet approved. When the rates are approved, a rates and deadline publication will be printed and mailed to enrollees' homes.

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.

For more information, visit the American Cancer Society website at www.cancer.org.



**Coffee break?
Want a cigarette?**

For free help quitting,
call the New York State Smokers' Quitline at
1-866-NY-QUITS
(1-866-697-8487)



MEMBERS ONLY INFORMATION

LOCAL 1000 **CSEA** AFSCME, AFL-CIO

Legal Services Program

Workers' Compensation and Social Security Disability	Personal Legal Matters	Personal Injury Matters	Taking Care of Business & Elder Law
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This members only benefit program provides attorney representation for Workers' Compensation, Social Security Disability, Personal

Know Your Rights!

Injury and Personal Legal matters including Taking Care of Business for members and their dependents. Quality legal representation at little or no out-of-pocket cost for injury/illness related matters; quality legal representation at pre-negotiated/discounted fees for other personal matters.

Finding a CSEA Legal Services Program attorney is as simple as calling the CSEA toll-free number: **1-800-342-4146** and following the prompts for the Legal Services Program. Listen to the directions for accessing the Injury-Related Plans, or the Non-Injury Related Plans, which includes the Taking Care of Business Plan. Information is also available on the CSEA website at www.csealocal1000.org.



LOCAL 1000, AFSCME, AFL-CIO

1-800-342-4146

This holiday season, give a gift to working men and women like you!

Visit www.shopunionmade.org to find all sorts of quality products that are made by union members like you. Not only will you give your loved ones a quality gift, but you will help keep good jobs in the United States.

www.shopunionmade.org

(For more great holiday gift ideas, see page 20.)

Meet your leaders



Boncoraglio: helping CSEA grow for 35 years

Editor's Note: Throughout the year, The Work Force is devoting the *Leading Edge* to interviews with CSEA's 10 statewide officers and region presidents. This month, we feature Metropolitan Region President George Boncoraglio, who also serves as a New York City Central Labor Council vice president and an AFSCME International vice president. Boncoraglio began public service as a psychiatric center worker in 1973 and remains a strong advocate for quality mental health care and health care reform.

WF: How did you get involved in CSEA?

Boncoraglio: I first got hired at South Beach Psychiatric, a state hospital being built in Staten Island back in the early 1970s. I got a job in transportation for the hospital and worked in the wards. There were poor and unsafe working conditions. I was injured during a confrontation with one of the patients and was suspended from the job. I met with a labor relations specialist, known as a "field rep" at the time, named Adelle West, who represented me. After seeing how she was able to help me, I wanted to become involved in the union. We didn't even have a



local at the time so I went to CSEA, held an election, created a local and became vice-president, and eventually local president for about 10 years.

WF: Have you seen significant improvement in the working conditions in these types of facilities over the years?

Boncoraglio: From the time I got involved, and as CSEA became more prominent, more involved, and more sophisticated as an organization, it became better to work at the center. Safety was a big thing; they started proper training for people in order to restrain a patient if needed. As the union got more involved, security increased, which made it safer to work at certain places, especially places with high risk.

WF: How do we get more members to understand that a union is something that benefits everybody when they get involved?

Boncoraglio: You have to talk to people about what the union is all about and why it's there. It's easier to get people to respond when something has gone wrong, but it's the hands-on, person-to-person, in order to really reach out and touch somebody by sharing experiences that's needed.

WF: What are your thoughts about the challenge of getting younger people involved in CSEA?

Boncoraglio: Word of mouth – talking to people about what a union means and how it's developed and getting young people to understand how they get their education and protection from someone before them.

WF: You became an AFSCME International vice president in 1994. What have you seen over the years in terms of the value for CSEA being a part of AFSCME?

Boncoraglio: By being part of a national union, it gives us prestige, power. We do joint affairs to take on different issues, get involved in national politics, and get CSEA's name out to the people who are not aware of what we do.

WF: What influence does CSEA have in AFSCME?

Boncoraglio: Based on our size, a lot of other affiliates look to us for guidance, the reason being that we have a lot of history and experience.

WF: There are a lot of resources in AFSCME that a lot of the members don't necessarily appreciate but actually also come into play; for example, research, and safety and health.

Boncoraglio: Obviously the more employees you have, the more you can do. I feel we have a very competent staff, and AFSCME has great resources they make accessible, which complements what we are already doing and makes help more available and makes us more knowledgeable.

WF: What are some of the interesting or unusual things that you have seen, or some areas that you're proud of some achievement in?

Boncoraglio: I've watched CSEA grow from an association into a powerful labor union. We're reaching our 100th anniversary; I've been there for 35 years; that's a big chunk of our history. Like any organization, there are good times and rough times, there's political stuff that goes on, some of it has been good for change and some of it caused issues years ago. I think that even though there have been conflicts over the years, that's how a union grows and keeps on the ball and fresh, because things change.

WF: Why don't you tell us something about yourself that the general members might not know about you?

Boncoraglio: I have 13 grandchildren. I have twin daughters, who each had a set of twins, a set of boys and a set of girls, everyone else having their own kids, which eventually led to 13 grandchildren, the youngest being 2 months old. People also don't know that I went to an aviation high school in New York City. I was an aviation mechanic before I got involved in CSEA.

December CSEA calendar of events

Long Island Region:

- Dec. 3-4: **Defensive Driving**, 5:30 - 8:30 p.m., Long Island Region Office, Commack
- Dec. 10-11: **Contract Negotiations I: Maximizing Our Leverage Training**, Sign-in: 5:30 - 6 p.m., Workshop: 6 - 9 p.m., Nassau County Local Office, Mineola
- Dec. 16-17: **Steward Workshop**, Sign-in: 5:30 - 6 p.m., Workshop: 6 - 9 p.m., Southside Firehouse, Hempstead
- Dec. 20: **Defensive Driving**, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., Long Island Region Office, Commack

Metropolitan Region:

- Dec. 9: **An Overview of the Family and Medical Leave Act Workshop**, Sign-in: 5:30 - 6 p.m., Workshop: 6 - 9 p.m., Metropolitan Region Office, Manhattan

Southern Region:

- Dec. 8-9: **Steward Workshop**, Sign-in: 5:30 - 6 p.m., Workshop: 6 - 9 p.m., Westchester Local Office, White Plains
- Dec. 9-10: **Steward Workshop**, Sign-in: 5:30 - 6 p.m., Workshop: 6 - 9 p.m., Southern Region Office, Beacon

Capital Region:

- Dec. 2-3: **Local Government Discipline & Interrogation Workshop**, Sign-in: 5:30 - 6 p.m., Workshop: 6 - 9 p.m., Shenendehowa High School West, Clifton Park
- Dec. 9-10: **State Government Grievance Representation Workshop**, Sign-in: 5:30 - 6 p.m., Workshop: 6 - 9 p.m., Best Western - Albany Airport Inn, Colonie

- Dec. 16-17: **Local Government Discipline & Interrogation Workshop**, Sign-in: 5:30 - 6 p.m., Workshop: 6 - 9 p.m., CSEA Plattsburgh Satellite Office, Plattsburgh. Call the satellite office at (518) 563-0761 to register.

Central Region:

- Dec. 2-3: **Steward Workshop**, Sign-in: 5:30 - 6 p.m., Workshop: 6 - 9 p.m., CSEA Central Region Office, East Syracuse. *PLEASE NOTE: This workshop is open only to New York State Unified Court System locals.*
- Dec. 2-3: **State Government Grievance Representation Workshop**, Sign-in: 5:30 - 6 p.m., Workshop: 6 - 9 p.m., Howard Johnson's, Norwich
- Dec. 16-17: **Local Government Discipline & Interrogation Workshop**, Sign-in: 5:30 - 6 p.m., Workshop: 6 - 9 p.m., CSEA Binghamton Satellite Office, Binghamton

Western Region:

- Dec. 9-10: **State Government Grievance Representation Workshop**, Sign-in: 5:30 - 6 p.m., Workshop: 6 - 9 p.m., Western Region Office, Amherst

For more information on the listed events or to participate, contact your region office (phone numbers are listed on Page 4) or visit your region page at CSEA's website at www.csealocal1000.org. Please note that additional events may be scheduled in your region, so check your region calendar page on the website.

Rustin is PEOPLE Recruiter of the Month



Rustin

Barbara Rustin, president of the CSEA Metropolitan Region Retirees Local, is the PEOPLE Recruiter of the Month for October.

She recruited 17 new PEOPLE members at the MVP level. Rustin is dedicated to fighting for working families.

CSEA's PEOPLE program protects and improves our jobs, benefits and pensions in Washington, Albany and in your community. Your support and participation in PEOPLE strengthens CSEA's clout in the workplace, in the legislature, in your community and in the labor movement.

VICTORY — Former CSEA Groton School District Unit President Sheldon Clark had his good name restored after CSEA struck a settlement deal with district officials that rescinded his termination and allowed him to retire as he desired. An April 2008 *Work Force* article reported CSEA's efforts to reinstate Clark after the district fired him for scraping the side of his bus against a guardrail, causing a minor scratch and no injuries. Parents, students and other union members turned out in force to object to his firing and the union was prepared to bring the case to arbitration ... **NEW CONTRACT** — Queensbury Unit members recently ratified a new three-year contract, retroactive to Jan. 1, 2008. The pact includes annual raises and runs through Dec. 31, 2010 ... **STEUBEN PACT** — Steuben County General Unit members recently reached a tentative, three-year agreement that includes annual raises, other financial enhancements and minor changes to health insurance contributions. A ratification vote was planned as this edition was



going to press ... **THREE-YEAR AGREEMENT** — The Town of Patterson Unit has a new three-year contract in place. The deal, which runs Jan. 1, 2009 through Dec. 31, 2011, includes wage increases in each year of the contract, increased longevity

payments, and an increased tool stipend. CSEA represents nearly two dozen town workers ...

LACKAWANNA PACT — Lackawanna City School District Unit workers recently overwhelmingly ratified a new, seven-year agreement, retroactive to July 1, 2005, that runs through June 30, 2012. The pact calls for salary and longevity increases and improvements to dental coverage for all employees ... **LUCKY LOCAL NUMBER** — Mike Fiorello, a driver for the Guild for Exceptional Children and a new CSEA member, feels lucky to have a union and even luckier to have a local that is numbered 766. On a hunch, Fiorello recently played that number on two New York State Lottery Pick 3 games worth \$3 each. Fiorello won \$1,000 — talk about an early raise!

CSEA member honored at Syracuse football game



CSEA member Rick Schenosky, an Onondaga County probation officer who was honored as statewide Adult Probation Officer of the Year earlier this year, was recognized by CSEA Treasurer Joe McMullen and Syracuse University officials for his achievements at a Syracuse football game Nov. 1, which was also CSEA Game Day at the campus' Carrier Dome. Above, from left, are Syracuse University Athletic Director Dr. Darryl Gross, Schenosky, McMullen and Joe Baldini, vice president and general manager, Syracuse ISP Sports Network. CSEA was also recognized at the game by Onondaga-Oswego American Red Cross Chapter Board Chair John King for the union's recent \$50,000 donation to the American Red Cross' Campaign for Disaster Relief, which was made possible through our International union, AFSCME. Visit www.redcross.org to learn more or donate.

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How you help.

Enjoy top quality products, while supporting 100 percent Fair Trade retailers and the Labor-Religion Coalition Fair Trade Project – helping farmers at home and around the world to receive a fair price for their produce, and combating child labor, forced labor and slave labor.

Shop for everyone on your holiday gift list.

You can also shop with a conscience this holiday season. Visit <http://www.sweatfree.org/shoppingguide> for a complete list of sweat-free, labor-friendly products, from men's and women's clothing to sporting goods.

Do you know beans about Fair Trade?

Important facts to remember:

- Farmers and workers who grow coffee beans are slipping into dire poverty while U.S. coffee giants grow rich off their labor.
- The average American drinks 400 cups of coffee every year. Fill every cup with Fair Trade coffee and make a real difference.
- In one year, Fair Trade benefits 1 million workers and farmers in 58 developing countries.
- Shop Fair Trade and you support livable wages, community development, health care and education.



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Danny Donohue, President
www.csealocal1000.org

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<http://www.labor-religion.org/fairtrade-SF-holiday-promo.htm>