

• CSEA stops toxic sludge whitewash—page 3

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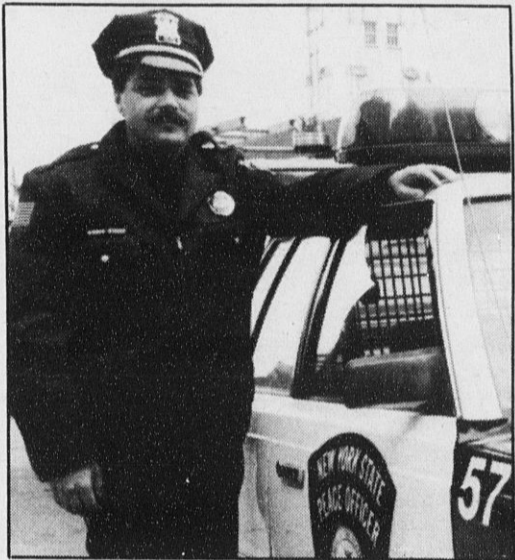
HELL ON WHEELS!



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DON'T CONTRACT OUT!

WASHINGTON — Contracting out of government services is “an abdication of responsibility rather than a commitment to better government.”

That was the main thrust of testimony by AFSCME Director of Research Linda Lampkin in her testimony before the U.S. House Subcommittee on Anti-Trust, Impact of Deregulation and Privatization here this month.

AFSCME's 1.1 million membership includes a quarter of a million CSEA members, and is the nation's largest public employee union.

“Public agencies, when first confronted with their inability to manage their resources or provide services, accepted with little opposition the economics of privatization,” Lampkin said. “AFSCME believes that public officials have greatly exaggerated the value of contracting out as an answer to high costs and inefficiency.”

AFSCME and CSEA have long fought the system of contracting out of public services to private contractors. Both say, and Lampkin testified, that:

- * Contracting out frequently costs more, not less, than services provided by government itself. The real costs to the government jurisdiction are not usually considered and a new layer of bureaucracy may be created to deal with the bidding process.

- * There is also a high price to pay in terms of the credibility of the government. The private contractor's goal is to maximize profits, which leads to cutting corners on quality.

- * The accountability of public officials to their citizens is also reduced, along with the flexibility to respond to unforeseen situations not covered by bid specifications.



- * The use of consultants and contractors to perform public services frequently leads to widespread corruption.

- * The careers of women and minorities in the public sector tend to decline as they move to the private sector under privatization.

“Privatization is not a panacea for the current problems facing government,” said Lampkin. “Rather, the tendency toward increased privatization is a shortsighted solution which is giving rise to a new set of dangerous possibilities.”

“Instead of elected officials or public administrators, private businesses, often located thousands of miles away from the jurisdiction and concerned with profit rather than service, will eventually dictate how much public goods will cost.”

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TOXIC



SLUDGE

Whitewash exposed

CSEA questions put state on defensive

By Stephen Madarasz
CSEA Communications Associate

FORT EDWARD — Calling it a whitewash, CSEA is blasting survey results on state Department of Transportation (DOT) worker exposure to toxic polychlorinated byphenyls (PCBs) and other cancer-causing agents in state dredging projects.

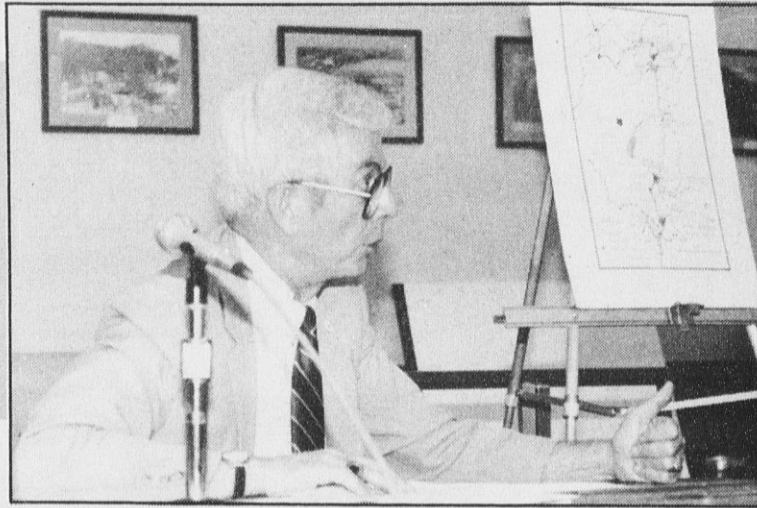
CSEA's charges, backed up by dozens of documents detailing the danger posed by the toxic sludge, is generating extensive media attention and agreement from one state panel that the issue demands a closer look.

The DOT survey, conducted by the state Health Department, was sparked by concerns over apparently high cancer rates among DOT and state Department of Environmental Conservation (ENCON) employees who worked on Hudson River dredging projects.

CSEA has called the survey "inadequate" and designed to avoid the real issues. So it came as no surprise when the health department reported "no cause for concern."

CSEA continues to question how the health department could draw such broad conclusions based on very limited information.

Speaking before the state PCB Settlement Advisory Committee, which recommends policy to ENCON, CSEA Capital Region Director John D. Corcoran Jr. said the survey "isn't worth the one page it's printed on."



"NOT WORTH THE ONE PAGE IT'S PRINTED ON"—CSEA Capital Region Director John Corcoran details CSEA's objections to a survey of DOT worker exposure to toxic sludge at left, while ENCON PCB Advisory Committee Chairman John Sanders, right, listens.



He detailed the employees' work and risks.

"This chemical soup was not being served up in a cup, a portion at a time. Our members were being washed over with the materials every time they were called to dredge the channels," he said.

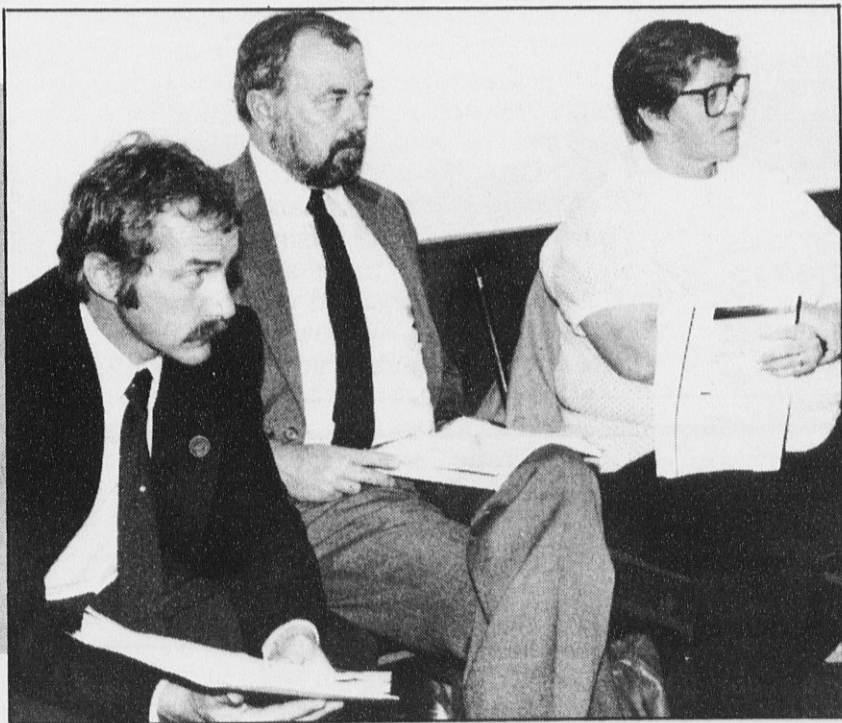
CSEA also questioned how responsive the PCB panel can be, since several members have conflicts of interest as former supervisors for the dredging projects.

The committee at first resisted CSEA's information but eventually agreed that the issues cannot be ignored. It promised to push for a more comprehensive health review.

CSEA made it clear it wants action, not lip service.

Meanwhile, CSEA is acting on a number of fronts:

- * it plans a new survey with input from respected independent experts;
- * it continues to fight for the names and addresses of all present and former DOT employees who worked on dredging and sifting projects;
- * while it will accept the DOT offer of free medical screening for at-risk employees, CSEA demands it have input on the procedure;
- * it plans meetings for DOT members to explain the survey's inadequacies;
- * it plans presentations to area local governments that may have used dried and sifted sludge for road sanding or fill;
- * and CSEA has a campaign to help members file worker compensation claims.



CAN'T BELIEVE WHAT THEY HEAR — DOT Barge Canal Local 500 President Thomas Doin and CSEA DOT Board members Milo Barlow and Joan Tobin, listen to the Health Department's defense of its survey of DOT worker exposures. The three contend that many employees never even saw the survey, which the state is using as proof no serious problems exist.

Why the survey is inadequate

The Health Department's survey of DOT worker exposure focused only on PCBs even though state documents clearly indicate other cancer-causing heavy metals — lead, chromium, cadmium, mercury — in the sludge.

The survey did not test or document any of the workers' health. It only asked a limited number of workers, who mostly worked on projects in the mid 1970s, if they had worked with PCBs or have cancer.

Workers exposed to cancer-causing agents in the mid-1970s probably won't show any effects for about 20 years.

The survey also did not examine any possible connection between the dredgings and other related medical problems, such as neurological disorders, birth defects in their families and skin tumors, even though many of the chemicals in the sludge are known to cause these conditions.

An intriguing aspect of the whitewash attempt is that the company responsible for dumping tons of cancer-causing chemical waste into the Hudson has never been held accountable.

CIBA-Geigy, which is now moving from the area, has never been prosecuted for polluting the Hudson.

On the other hand, General Electric was the target of highly publicized lawsuits over PCB dumping, even though the PCBs may not be as harmful as the CIBA-Geigy waste.

CSEA believes the public deserves to know why.



A Congressional diary

EDITOR'S NOTE— As they have done before, CSEA and AFSCME were proud to sponsor the participation of two retiree members in the 1987 Congressional Senior Citizen Internship Program. An account of the week's activities is provided here by Suffolk Retirees Local 920 member Alfred Carlsen, a former Pilgrim Psychiatric Center employee. He participated through Rep. Thomas Downey's office. *The Public Sector* also contacted Rochester Retirees Local 912 member Helen Curtis for some thoughts about her experience with Rep. Frank Horton's office.

By Alfred Carlsen

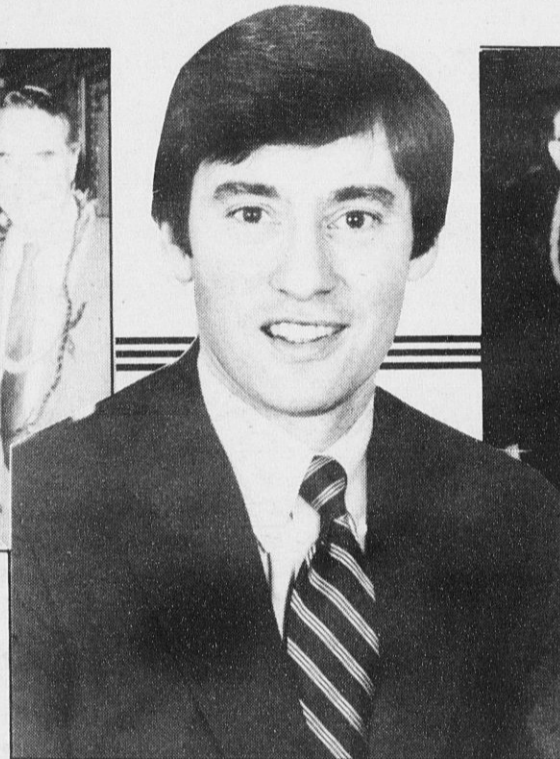
My first impressions at the Congressional Senior Citizen Intern program — I found myself to be part of a once-in-a-lifetime group of over 200 active older Americans from every conceivable part of the United States, including Alaska, the Hawaiian Islands and even far away Guam — all sponsored by their respective U.S. senators and representatives.

Among the many people I met and talked with were retired teachers of every description, leaders of prominent senior groups and the like.

The only people representing union retirees I knew of were myself and Helen Curtis of CSEA Rochester Retirees Local 912.

Years ago, when I had opportunities to visit Congress, I felt I was on the outside looking in. But this time all that changed, thanks to the expertise of AFSCME Retiree Coordinator Steve Regenstrief, CSEA Retiree Coordinator Kathy Cahalan and Suffolk Retirees Local 920 President Robert Specht, who submitted my name for consideration for the intern program.

I am also thankful to congressional aide Bill Bennet from Rep. (Thomas) Downey's office who was extremely helpful guiding me through the program. At various times he was at my side assisting me in and around



Among those Alfred Carlsen rubbed elbows with in Washington were, from left: Senate Minority Leader Robert Dole; Rep. Tom Downey, his host; and Rep. Claude Pepper.

government buildings and making it possible to meet personally with Downey during my stay.

Between the program's various sessions I also had the good fortune to meet and speak with several prominent national figures

including Senate Minority Leader Robert Dole and Rep. Claude Pepper.

The heart of the program involved attending daily seminars on various issues of concern, such as the working legislative process in Congress, the Aging Committee overview, budget exercises, medical catastrophic health care, the workings of the press in Washington, and attending Congressional hearings and White House briefings.

There were also receptions hosted by the Democratic and Republican National Committees.

Those attending the program could not help but witness the vitality, know-how and mental alertness of these 200 interns who exchanged ideas and constructive criticism with expert seminar instructors and speakers.

It was clear that the present administration must do more in the area of social entitlements such as housing and medicare.

These 200 active older Americans strongly demonstrated they are now at the peak of their lives — still young in heart and spirit, realizing they can help change the course of this nation as they constitute a 33 percent voting bloc of all eligible voters in the country.

Interest in issues impresses

Helen Curtis, a former Department of Labor employee and longtime CSEA and community activist, says her time in Washington was reassuring.

"I gained a lot of insight into the fact that the federal government is concerned and interested in senior issues. I think we get the impression from the press that no one cares, but that's not really true."

Curtis says she was especially impressed by a recent report prepared for the House Select Committee on Aging by the Congressional Clearinghouse on the Future, titled "Tomorrow's Elderly: Issues for Congress."

"One of the staffers in Rep. (Frank) Horton's office gave me a copy to look over and I couldn't put it down until I had read the whole thing," she adds.

The report deals in depth with issues such as employment/retirement, allocation of health care resources and long-term care. Curtis says that the report not only makes clear what some of the problems are, but also what the answers are.

She believes that if there is not action this year, it is only a matter of time before the issues are addressed.

"Sometimes we think that Congress only looks at situations academically, but they're much more aware of reality than we might have thought."

Curtis is still gathering all of the material from her participation and is planning to speak to a number of community groups about her experience.

Workers' long wait goes up in smoke

MIDDLETOWN — Thanks to two suspicious fires in one month, City Court employees here are back to square one in their long-time efforts for decent working conditions.

So it's ironic that after seven years of protests, complaints, press coverage and the efforts of city judges to move Office of Court Administration Local 332 members out of a crowded city courthouse into a newly renovated city-owned building, that workers find themselves back to where they started.

There was an audible sigh of relief when city fathers finally provided new office space to court workers who suffered through years of inadequate office and storage space, lack of bathroom facilities, lack of security and inadequate ventilation.

The new building had previously housed other city offices. "The arrangement was working out. The rooms were bigger and we had much more room," says Local 332 Vice President Frank Dendanto.

Then one morning in April, an employee arrived at work at 8 a.m. to discover a fire that was thought to be electrical in origin.

"There was a lot of smoke damage," said Dendanto, "and the judges' office was damaged."

Local President Pat Nealon says the workers were frightened and became extremely cautious about checking doors and storage areas when they went home.

But four weeks later, two of the employees had no sooner left for the day when smoke was spotted coming from the basement area. The fire spread rapidly to the main floor and the interior of the brick building was badly damaged.



"Now they're petrified to go back into the building," adds Nealon about her members. "Those two girls had just left the basement and it only had one door. They could have been trapped in there."

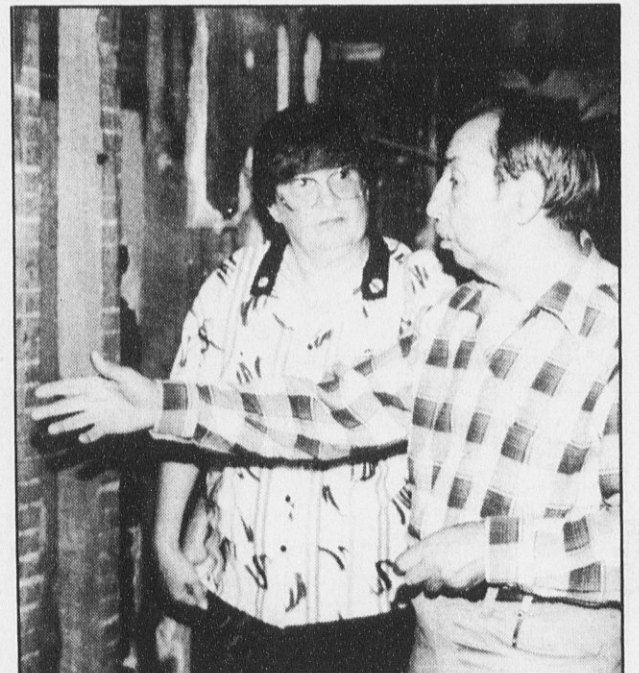
Court sessions were postponed for a day following the second fire while files were

relocated and records re-organized. Employees have been moved to a conference room in City Hall where, city officials say, they will be stationed temporarily. Meanwhile, Nealon says, "We're back to square one, squeezed into city hall. I just hope it doesn't take another seven years to move us again!"



City worker Rossi Rotundo removes a portion of fire-damaged wall in the city court building in Middletown.

After seven years of protests to move out of a crowded city courthouse, workers are back where they started



DESTROYED BY FIRE — Judicial Local 332 President Pat Nealon and Vice President Frank Dendanto look over the fire damage in the newly renovated city court office building in Middletown.

Making the grade

OSU members graduate to new jobs through apprenticeship training

By Lilly Gioia

CSEA Communications Associate

BRONX — A murky gray mist engulfing SUNY Maritime College's harborside campus didn't bother the CSEA Operational Services Unit (OSU) members who gathered recently in the science and engineering building.

After all, they had struggled through three years of rigorous course work in the CSEA/State Joint Apprenticeship Training Program. It would take more than dismal weather to dampen their spirits as they became the program's newest graduates.

Celebrating the completion of their apprenticeships in the stationary engineer and electrician programs, the first dozen OSU members from Region II to complete the program congratulated one another on their forthcoming salary increases. As graduates of the education program specifically for operational employees, they'll be going from salary grades 6 or 7 to grade 12.

CSEA graduates came from correctional facilities, parks, mental hygiene and mental retardation facilities in all five boroughs to study electronics, boiler operation, instrumentation and controls and electricity. Maritime College apprentices have the additional advantage of going aboard the Empire State training ship to observe the operations of the floating power plant.

For each graduate, the program held a special challenge.

"On May 8th, I had 20 years in state service, and even though I had years of experience working with other engineers who taught me things before I came here, I found this schooling very worthwhile," said graduate Larry Tillman.

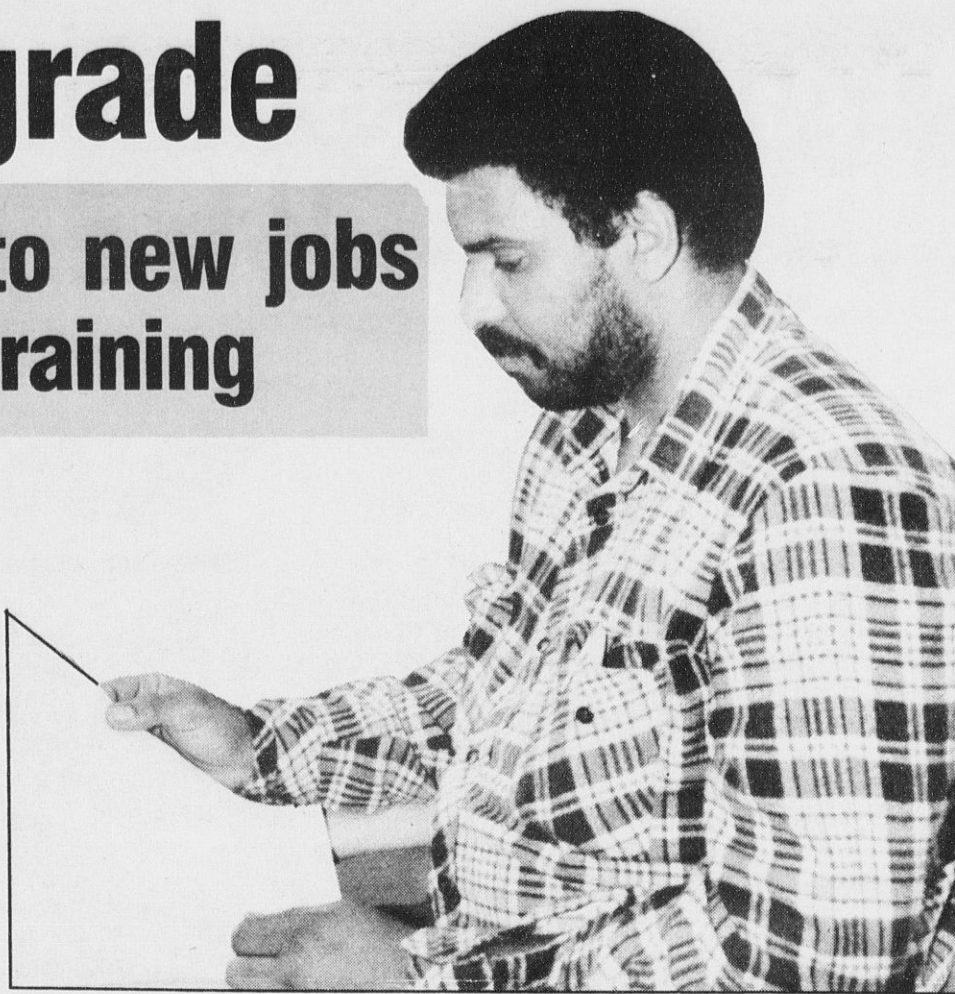
A grade 8 assistant stationary engineer at Edgecomb Correctional Facility in Manhattan, Tillman joined the apprenticeship program "as a stepping stone to get more advancement on the career ladder."

The small class size enabled Tillman to get to know the other students very well.

"We got to be like family because we were all striving for the same goal, to become stationary engineers," he said.

Getting study habits going again and using the library after being out of school for 20 years was "a great experience," he said.

Graduating Manhattan Developmental Center electrician Marva



HITTING THE BOOKS — Anthony Domacase, a new stationary engineer apprentice from Brooklyn Developmental Center Local 447 studies before class at SUNY Maritime College.

Jones couldn't praise her teachers highly enough. The dedication of the faculty was a major factor in creating a "family-like" atmosphere, Jones said, where she was able to improve her grades from average to above average by graduation.

"I've had excellent teachers who, I must say, are humanitarians first. They're not just interested in pushing out a product. In the beginning, academically, I thought I would defeat myself. I just panicked over the math," she remembered. "But I came in early some afternoons and stayed a little later with some professors, and I bugged them until they began to understand how serious I was."

Jones had full support on the homefront from all four of her children while she trekked from her downtown Manhattan worksite to the Bronx twice weekly, six hours per week, for three years.

While happy about the prospect of her coming salary increase to electrician grade 12, Jones emphasized with justifiable pride, "the knowledge means more to me than the raise."

Perseverance is the key to succeeding in the apprenticeship program, according to Professor Aaron Kramer, SUNY Maritime Apprenticeship Program coordinator.

"Tutoring is always available here because many of the apprentices had difficulty in their previous school experiences," he noted.

He commended the graduates for their dedication in making

“You people deserve tremendous recognition for the determination to succeed that you have shown here.”

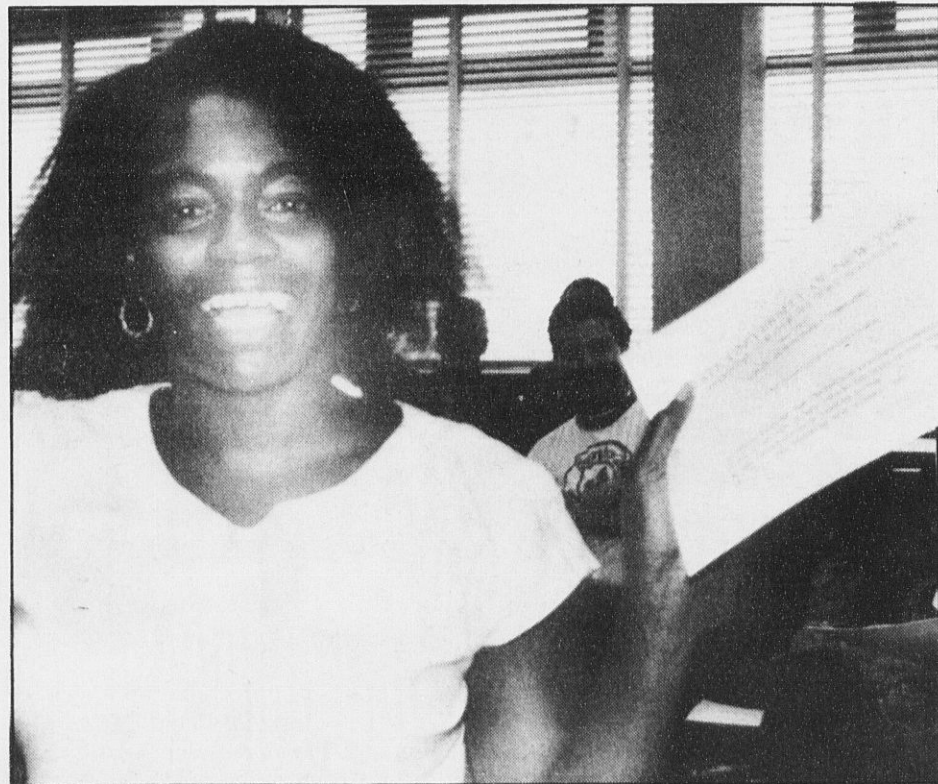
their classes despite public transportation problems, bad weather and the long distances some had to travel to complete the strenuous course work.

"You people deserve tremendous recognition for the determination to succeed that you have shown here," Kramer reiterated as he awarded certificates of completion.

The newest class of OSU apprentices looked on approvingly during the informal ceremony.

Already possessing six years of state service as an electrician at Manhattan Psychiatric Center, graduate Mark Griffith was enthusiastic.

"I am in the trade already, but this fills the gaps," he said. "I applied just because I wanted the education."



I DID IT! — Marva Jones, an electrician from Manhattan Developmental Center CSEA Local 443, shows off her certificate of completion from the joint apprenticeship training program.

Tragedy: when systems falter

The following article was compiled by CSEA Consultant Marty Langer for the *Public Sector*.

The tale of a psychiatric patient who left an institution and fell through the system's cracks long enough to kill himself is more than a tragic story in Utica. It is fact.

- Mohawk Valley Psychiatric Center CSEA Local 434 President Bud Mulchy recently wrote in a local newspaper about a long-term, chronic patient from the center who, because of his voluntary status, was able to discharge himself. Despite his obvious need for hospitalization, he was not readmitted or given appropriate treatment in the community-based mental health network.

Since this patient ultimately put a gun to his head and killed himself, it is all too clear he needed intensive care. Why he didn't get it is a serious question.

Mohawk Valley Psychiatric Center and all others in the state face Office of Mental Health (OMH) plans to reduce their chronic patient population by 7,000 statewide. Ideally, the patients would move to intermediate care or residential care facilities or community residences.

- If every discharged patient gets into a residence with proper treatment and rehabilitation services, there would be fewer concerns.

The tragedy in Utica may predict the reality. The patient was chronically mentally ill. His status should have been changed from voluntary by court order and he should have been retained at the center for more care. But the pressing need to reduce the patient population may have overcome clinical considerations.

It is possible that the clinical concerns may have been addressed and the patient simply faltered. If that were true, and proper safety net existed in the community, the tragedy could have been avoided. A patient acting as bizarrely as this person should



have been taken to a facility offering proper care.

Realistically, that means Mohawk Valley, where the staff knew the patient. Census management should not have prevented his readmission, or he should have been admitted as an emergency.

But the center isn't designated an emergency admitting facility, so that could not have happened. Despite repeated requests from CSEA, the Board of Visitors and the Oneida County executive, OMH has not granted the center that status.

If the OMH plan is to work, a tragedy like the one in Utica cannot occur again. The current OMH population demands either institutionalization or placement in a genuinely supervised setting.

While community-based care is appropriate for some, it should be clear that a dangerously ill person needs specialized care and should not be kept from that care.

That means the doors are never closed to former patients; it may mean emergency admission status for all state psychiatric centers. Giving the status to community facilities unable to handle very volatile patients can lead to terrible consequences, as shown by the Utica tragedy.

Denying state centers emergency admission status because of an OMH commitment to reduce its census is an injustice to the patients who need intense treatment and attention.

If the gun had been turned in any other direction, the disservice in this case would have been to the community as well.

St. Lawrence Psych Center Local 423 gives first scholarship to member's son

OGDENSBURG — Brent Knight, son of Bonnie and Edward Knight of Lisbon, has added another award to his growing list of honors. The recent graduate and star athlete at Lisbon Central School has earned the first annual scholarship from the St. Lawrence Psychiatric Center CSEA Local 423.

The award ceremony took place at Knight's June 19 graduation, but Local 423 President Don Calkins and Local 423 Education Committee Chairperson Margaret Akins had another idea. They conducted an informal ceremony on the grounds of the psychiatric center, where Knight's father has worked as a lab technician and mental hygiene therapy aide for more than 32 years.

"We are extremely pleased to award the first Local 423 scholarship to the son of a long-time CSEA activist," Calkins said. "Ed Knight and his wife, Bonnie, have been very active in CSEA for years, and it seems fitting that the scholarship be awarded to their deserving son."

The Local 423 Education Committee spent hours organizing the scholarship program and screening applicants. The committee is now working to increase the scholarship from \$200 to \$500 or more in the future.

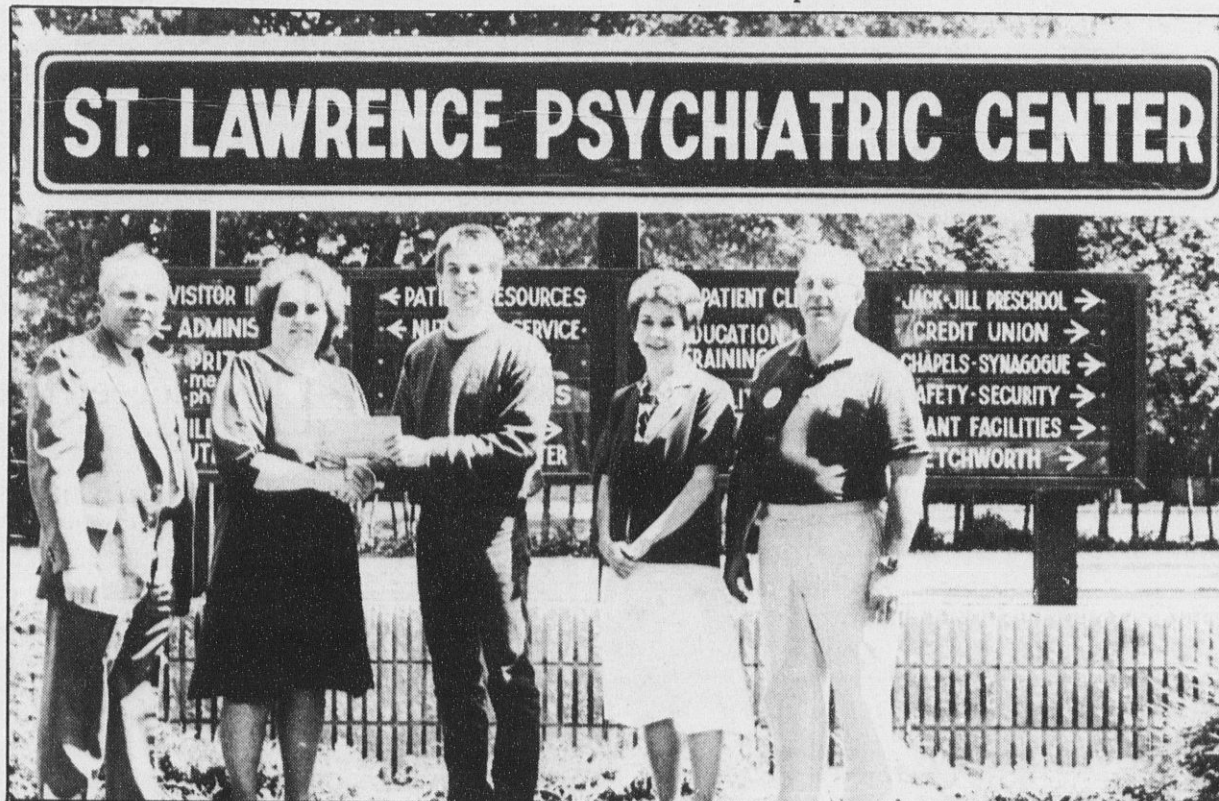
Brent Knight has earned many other honors. He is a member of the National Honor Society and winner of the U.S. Army Scholar/Athlete award and other athletic honors.

He plans to attend the State University of

New York at Cobleskill to study animal husbandry. After four years there, he hopes to attend Cornell University to become a doctor of veterinary medicine.

"We, the members of CSEA Local 423, wish Brent Knight every success in his

chosen field," Calkins said. "We also hope this first scholarship award will serve as an incentive to the children of the other members here at the facility. We want the scholarship to grow and help as many students as possible."



LOCAL 423 SCHOLARSHIP WINNER — Brent Knight, center, receives the first annual scholarship awarded by CSEA Local 423 at the St. Lawrence Psychiatric Center. On hand for the presentation are, from left, Local President Don Calkins, Education Committee Chairperson Margaret Akins, Knight and his parents, Bonnie and Ed Knight.

CSEA fights diabetic discrimination

Laborer overcomes disease, management holds him back

SMITHTOWN — Peter Brust Jr., a laborer in the Smithtown Highway Department, depends on three to four insulin shots a day to control his diabetes.

As a brittle juvenile diabetic, Brust must carefully monitor himself to stay healthy. But his diabetes hasn't held him back. He has had an unconditional driver's license for 16 years and he has worked since he was 14.

What is holding him back is his employers. CSEA recently filed a discrimination grievance and a human rights complaint when Brust was denied a

promotion from laborer to auto equipment operator (AEO) because of his "physical condition."

Shortly after the charge was filed, Brust's hours were changed from a 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. shift to a 6 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. shift. The change in schedule has disrupted his meticulous schedule for monitoring and maintaining his blood sugar level.

"I have to take my insulin and eat to keep my blood sugar up. Now I have to get up at about 4:30 a.m. to test my blood and have my injection," he explained. "Then I don't

get lunch until 12 noon and that's too long for me. It's throwing my whole system off."

At management's request, Brust brought in a doctor's note which explains why the new hours are detrimental to his health, but management has not put him back to his old shift.

"When I returned from a medical leave of absence, I found out they were giving out promotions from laborer to AEO. I didn't get one, but I knew there were more coming up," he explained. "I made an appointment to see Deputy Superintendent of Highways Anthony DiPerna, who told me I was denied due to my physical condition. I contacted Steve Bolgar (unit third vice president) and Steve spoke to DiPerna."

According to Bolgar, DiPerna also told him the denial was due to Brust's physical condition, but DiPerna later denied that charge, saying the problem was Brust's attendance problems.

When asked if Brust's absences were justified, DiPerna answered that the laborer had brought in a doctor's note.

"How is being out legitimately ill considered time abuse anyway?" asked CSEA Smithtown Unit President William Maccaro. Bolgar agreed that management wasn't consistent.

"If management didn't deny Pete's promotion for medical reasons," he said, "why did they answer our grievance by asking Pete to submit to a physical?"

Maccaro said that DiPerna has made it obvious that the promotion was denied because management doesn't trust Brust to drive on the job, regardless of his unconditional license.

"I have an unconditional license because I'm one of the lucky diabetics who gets a warning before I pass out. I have done the AEO job in the past and I know I can handle it now," Brust said. "I think this discrimination is disgusting. I think it's a shame."



LABORER PETER BRUST JR., left, reviews a doctor's note supporting his absences for illness with CSEA Smithtown Unit President William Maccaro, center, and Third Vice President Steve Bolgar.

Serving hometown, union, country

By Charles McGeary
CSEA Communications Associate

MALONE — As police officer, National Guard Company captain and president of his CSEA unit, James E. Phillips has it all. Not only are his jobs compatible, but they give him the chance to serve his union, his community and his country.

Phillips, a Malone native, is president of the Malone Police Unit of Franklin County CSEA Local 817 and is a full-time senior patrolman in the northern New York village, where he's worked since 1976. Recently, he assumed command of Company B, Third Battalion, 108th Infantry, New York National Guard, stationed in Malone.

"It's not often that a local man takes command of a unit," Phillips said. "This is a light infantry outfit with a lot of community spirit and I am proud to be a part of it."

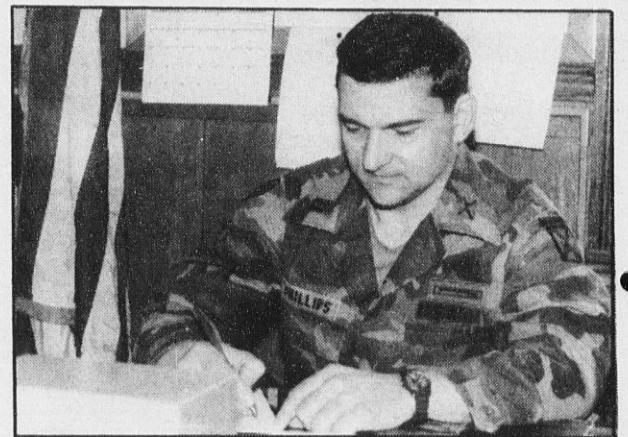
The National Guard company is part of the 10th Mountain Division stationed at Fort Drum near

Watertown and is presently participating in courses and schools designed to improve battalion readiness at Fort Drum and Syracuse.

Phillips began his army career in 1967 when he enlisted in the Combat Engineers and served 18 months in Korea. In 1970 he spent a year in Vietnam. Discharged from active duty in 1973, he joined the National Guard that November. He received his commission in 1975 after attending Officer Candidate School.

Phillips and his wife, Chu Hui, and their three daughters live in the Malone area.

"I consider myself very fortunate," Phillips said. "I'm performing valuable services as a full-time police officer, as president of the CSEA unit representing my fellow police officers in Malone and I can utilize my military background while serving my country in the National Guard. It's a three-hat career, and I'm proud to be a part of each job."



NEW COMMANDER — Capt. James E. Phillips catches up on paperwork after taking command of a National Guard company in Malone, where he is also a police officer and president of his CSEA unit.

— Photograph courtesy of the Malone Evening Telegram.

Drug threat

Drug users make life difficult for maintenance staff, residents

PEEKSKILL — Bob Blaich was shot with an air rifle once. John Love had a TV set thrown at him. Another man was the target of tomatoes being tossed from an eighth floor window — and from that height, even tomatoes are dangerous.

Lately drug dealers are a concern. Cocaine and its potent cousin, crack, have infested their worksite and it's general knowledge that the illegal and dangerous drugs are available to anyone who is willing to pay the price.

Blaich and Love aren't police officers or security guards hired to offer protection and trained to confront criminals. They're maintenance workers in a city of Peekskill low-income housing project. The risks they face are serious, and they want protection.

"A person is not safe in this building alone," said Region III Field Representative Delores Tocci.

Peekskill Housing Authority Unit President Blaich said even local police can't help.

"Their hands are tied by the laws," he said. "They're doing everything they can. I've seen them chase these people into the building and they disappear. When they do arrest someone, they're back out on the

street the same day and back in business in no time."

What is needed is better security in the building, Blaich said. Presently, security guards are on duty from 8 p.m. to 2 a.m. But each morning, empty crack vials can be found on the grounds and in the play area.

Blaich said he also discovered that some

"I'm worried about the kids here."

residents are getting into locked areas at night.

"I've gone into one room where I found evidence that people were free-basing cocaine during the night," he said.

He often comes to work in the morning to find people "climbing the walls for a fix," he added.

Another concern is emergency maintenance calls during the night, sometimes at 2 or 3 a.m.

"There's no security after 2 a.m.," Blaich said. "There's no question I don't feel safe in the building."

Lately, Blaich and Love have taken on a new project — collecting crack vials each



UNIT PRESIDENT BOB BLAICH, right, shows Region III Field Representative Delores Tocci thousands of crack vials that have been found on the grounds of the low-income housing project where he works.

morning. So far, they have more than 1,000 that they will turn over to the police.

"I'm worried about the kids here," said Love, who noted that he grew up in the housing project. "The drug thing is here and it's flourishing."

Perils for Housing Authority workers

Officers struggle to keep peace

BUFFALO — They may be peace officers, but two Buffalo Municipal Housing Authority (BMHA) security guards recently tackled an incident that was anything but peaceful.

Security guards Dennis Kessler and Earl Stewart have earned accolades and commendations for stopping an assault while on patrol.

Kessler and Stewart "took quick, professional action that quite possibly saved lives and prevented further personal injury when they came across a violent crime in progress," according to Patrick McCarthy,

BMHA security chief.

While on routine patrol, the two officers found one man hitting another with a baseball bat. The assailant also had a shotgun. The officers stopped the attack, disarmed the assailant, arrested him and held him for the Buffalo City Police.

"This could have been a real disaster," McCarthy noted, "without the cool, courageous action of these officers."

Their alertness, determination and dedication were also cited by Lawrence Grisanti, BMHA executive director, who placed letter of commendation in Kessler's and Stewart's personnel files. The two are members of the BMHA Unit of Erie County CSEA Local 815.

Kessler also was commended for leading two people to safety when their home was ablaze in an early morning fire. After spotting the blaze, he notified the fire department, then entered the burning, smoke-filled building, roused the sleeping occupants, and led them to safety.

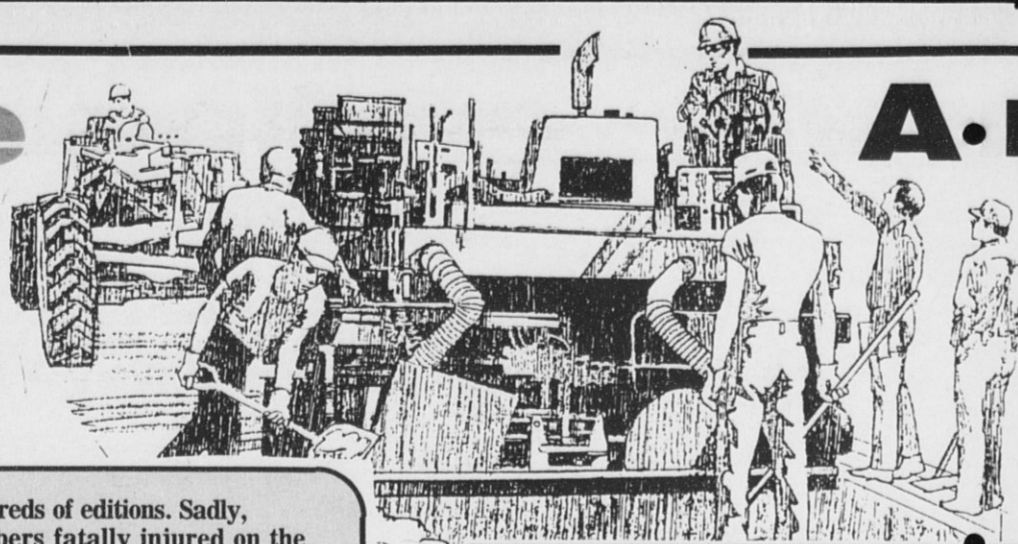
Grisanti called Stewart and Kessler examples of "the type of officers that enhance the reputation of the BMHA force and bring the respect of local law enforcement agencies."



SECURITY OFFICERS Dennis Kessler, left, and Earl Stewart recently stopped an assault in progress, relieved the assailant of a baseball bat and shotgun and arrested him, all while on duty as employees of the Buffalo Municipal Housing Authority. They are members of the CSEA BMHA Unit.

'This could have been a real disaster without the cool, courageous action of these officers.'

Maintenance to mayhem in a moment



EDITOR'S NOTE: *The Public Sector* has published thousands of stories in hundreds of editions. Sadly, some of those stories — too many — have involved reports of CSEA members fatally injured on the job.

Fatal accidents have occurred in many areas of CSEA's membership. In the June 1 issue of *The Public Sector*, we reported on the death of 39-year-old William Gieb, a village of East Aurora sanitation worker. The Erie County Local 815 member died of injuries he received when pinned beneath the wheels of a garbage truck.

But the majority of fatal accidents over the years have involved highway workers, both state employees and employees of counties, cities, towns or villages. Some of those accidents involved workers struck by cars or trucks; some involved weather-related accidents. Faulty and unsafe equipment or working conditions were blamed for more than one death.

This type of work is inherently dangerous. A number of precautions are routinely taken in an effort to reduce the dangers of working on and around highways, but is enough being done to keep our highways from becoming "hell on wheels" for the men and women who maintain them? CSEA doesn't think so.

Highway maintenance very dangerous

Understaffing and weak regulations among the culprits

By Roger A. Cole
Editor, *The Public Sector*

Last week an Albany newspaper published a photograph of a state trooper operating a radar device from behind a barrier at the site of a major construction project on one of the busiest highways in the state's capital district.

According to the photo caption, vehicles were clocked speeding through the construction zone at speeds in excess of 70 miles per hour.

At about that same time, a few miles away, a group of CSEA activists were meeting with several state legislators to discuss the dangerous conditions confronting highway maintenance people and lobby for changes that would reduce the risks they face.

CSEA statewide President William L. McGowan said the effort is part of a major campaign to make the roads and highways of New York safe for state and local road workers.

"There seems to be a law for most everything, litter, hitchhiking, parking, seat belts. They're all designed to save lives. But what about those who work on those roads? What legislation do we have to save their lives?" McGowan asked.

"This campaign will hopefully bring to the attention of all drivers that there's more than just asphalt or concrete on those roadways," he emphasized. "There are people working to make their trip safer. Certainly they deserve the same from the motorist."

Joan Tobin, Milo Barlow and C. Allen Mead told legislators that thousands of state, county, city, town and village highway maintenance personnel face danger and death daily on the state's highways.

Tobin and Barlow are state Department of Transportation (DOT) representatives on CSEA's statewide Board of Directors and Mead is president of the union's 14-county Capital Region headquartered in Albany. Tobin, a member of Local 687, works out of DOT's main office in Albany and Barlow, from Bolton Landing, is also president of DOT Region I CSEA Local 676.

Speed kills and maims

CSEA is urging legislators to adopt a mandatory speed limit reduction in and around highway maintenance and construction work zones on every highway in the state. Speed too fast for conditions in such areas is a leading contributor to accidents that injure or kill workers, the union said.

CSEA wants to change the provision in the state's vehicle traffic law that says warning signs, flag persons, channeling devices and advisory speed limit signs usually make speed reductions unnecessary in such work areas.

"They all help, but a mandatory reduced speed limit, enforced without exception, would be the best deterrent of all," says Tobin. "Ask the people who put their lives on the line out there. From state workers on busy interstates to town highway people on winding country roads, they all say speed too fast for conditions is their biggest worry."

There are fewer people trying to maintain more miles of roads than ever before, and understaffing contributes to safety problems.

In meeting with legislators last week, the union representatives renewed a long-standing CSEA demand to hire additional highway maintenance employees.

At one point about 9,000 state DOT people were assigned to highway maintenance work. By 1972 that number had dwindled to 6,700 maintenance people servicing 36,300 lane miles of state highways. Today there are only 5,000 people while the number of lane miles has increased to 42,000.

The union says decreases are the rule rather than the exception in local governments as well. Expanding highway departments are rare even though most communities are growing and adding more miles of highway to handle increased traffic volume.

All of which results in more overtime, especially during winter months and heavy construction or maintenance periods, leading to fatigue factors that contribute to accidents. And, of course, the workers are exposed to dangerous highway conditions for longer period of time, compounding the already high risks.

Another indicator of understaffing is the fact that rest areas along major highways are either being closed or are poorly maintained because of understaffing. Tobin said DOT told her recently some rest areas are being closed along I-87, the state's award-winning Northway from Albany to the Canadian border, because there is not

A never ending nightmare

By Anita Manley
CSEA Communications Associate
June 5, 1979.

It's been eight years, but Bob Harris can't get it out of his mind.

He still has nightmares about that day when three of his co-workers were mowed down by a speeding tractor trailer as the crew of Orange County State Transportation CSEA Local 515 members were resurfacing

part of Interstate 84 near the Town of Newburgh.

George Ficarra, Garrett Marsh and Ernest Mimms were spreading blacktop when the tractor-trailer loaded with lumber careened into their work area, fatally injuring all three.

Harris, a labor supervisor and member of Local 515, says his crew had taken all the usual precautions for working on a busy highway.

"We had a crew of 13; three buffer trucks, six road work signs, flagmen. There was no flaw in our set-up."

Despite those precautions, two truck drivers from the same company were "playing games" on the highway that day — speeding, catching up with each other, passing. When one driver realized suddenly that there was a work crew ahead, he slammed on his brakes, which didn't work, and plowed into the three men.

The accident nearly claimed a fourth man who was pushing a wheelbarrow. Immediately following the accident, he found himself holding two handles; the wheelbarrow had been sheared off.

"There was no remorse," says Harris of the truck driver. "The driver even admitted to the police that it was a choice between hitting his friend's truck or running into our work area!"

The driver, who was from Pennsylvania,

was cited by police for inadequate brakes and having an overweight vehicle. He is still driving.

After years of working on the highways, Harris says truck drivers "couldn't care less" about highway work crews. "Their attitude is that we're in the way. But if they hit a pothole and damage their trucks, they'll complain."

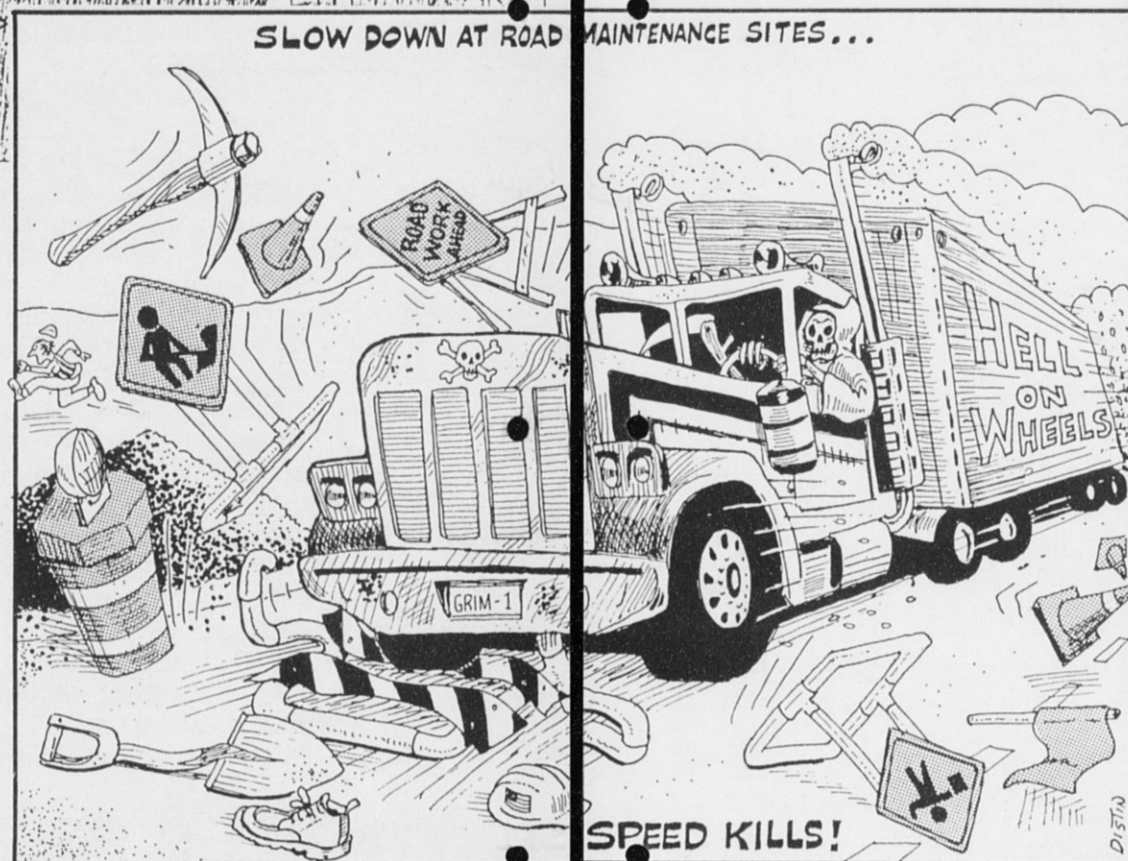
Just a year ago, a flagger from a private contracting company was killed not far from the site of the triple fatality.

"I had a woman pull a gun on me when we were paving the road near her house," Harris recalls. He said his crew puts up with all kinds of harassment.

Once he called the police, who arrested a teenager who had thrown garbage at a worker. And then there was the time two of the workers were mowing grass along a highway and were assaulted by a drunk driver and two of his friends, Harris says.

Are there any solutions? Harris suggests following up each incident and arresting the people involved. And, he notes, drivers tend to slow down at a work site if a state or local police officer remains at the worksite. "But they're short-handed also," he says.

While safety training is very important, Local 515 President Howard Jennings replies, "You can spend seven days a week on safety training, but if the public isn't educated, it's not going to help!"



SPEED KILLS!

enough personnel available to maintain them.

Do as I say, not as I do

CSEA says that while it is necessary primarily due to understaffing, requiring people to work up to 16 hours in a 24-hour period, usually during storm emergencies, and accepting voluntary overtime beyond 16 hours can be a dangerous practice due to fatigue factors. Tobin and Barlow both said some DOT employees have worked up to 21 hours in a 24-hour period.

The union pointed out state regulations limit other truck drivers on duty to driving a maximum of 10 hours in any 14 consecutive-hour period with eight consecutive hours off duty required. That is basically a safety requirement to reduce fatigue factors.

The memorial service

An indication of how dangerous highway maintenance work can be is the fact that the state Department of Transportation sponsors a memorial service honoring DOT workers who were killed during the previous year. Four DOT employees were killed one year and five another in the worst years most recently.

"What we're trying to do with our latest demands of the legislators is reduce the odds of having to hold another service. It must be made safer for those several thousand state and local government maintenance people working on the highways and byways of this state," says Tobin, who has presented wreaths from CSEA at the memorial services in memory of those killed.



Watch out for US

We're working for YOU!

★ CSEA MEMBERS MAINTAINING YOUR ROADS ★
CIVIL SERVICE EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION, Local 1000 AFSCME, AFL-CIO

Full-size "Watch out for US, We're working for YOU!" bumper stickers similar to the one shown above are now available from CSEA.

CSEA encourages all its members to proudly display these bumper stickers on your cars. In addition to educating the general public about the dangers of working in highway maintenance and construction areas, these stickers also illustrate that CSEA members in general provide vital public services.

These new bumper stickers are available through your CSEA local president.

CSEA LOCAL PRESIDENTS SHOULD USE THE FOLLOWING FORM TO ORDER A SUPPLY OF THE "WATCH OUT FOR US" BUMPER STICKERS.

To: Aaron Shepard
Director of Communications
Civil Service Employees Association, Inc.
143 Washington Avenue
Albany, New York 12210

Please send me a supply of the "Watch out for US" bumper stickers. I understand I am limited to a maximum of 100 bumper stickers per order.
Number of stickers ordered: _____

Send to: _____ President of
CSEA Local _____
(Name)

(Address) _____ (City) (State) (ZIP)

(signature)



CSEA retiree returns to work for a rest

WHITE PLAINS — Retiree Carmine LaMagna says he went back to work so he could get some rest.

An active CSEA member for more than 18 years, LaMagna retired seven and a half years ago, but he became so involved in community service and helping his neighbors that he decided he was better off working. So two days a week, LaMagna is an all around laborer at Westchester County's Saxon Woods Park in White Plains where he helps maintain the grounds.

A senior storekeeper at Rye Playland until his retirement, LaMagna was in charge of storeroom supplies for the huge amusement park located on Long Island Sound.

"I miss working there," he remarked. "I miss the people I worked for and the people I represented."

A past president of the Westchester County Unit for two years, LaMagna also served as a vice president for many years

and as chief shop steward at Playland. He also has the distinction of having served on the first committee to negotiate a contract for the county under the Taylor Law.

An active member of the community, LaMagna is a member of a veterans club which visits veterans hospitals in the area and a senior citizens group. He also plays the bass drums and cymbals for a local symphony orchestra that entertains at Italian festivals.

LaMagna is married and has two children and six grandchildren, some of whom he babysits for during his busy week.

Asked if he has seen any major changes in county government, LaMagna replied, "Management's hands are tied. They have to maintain the parks while the county says they don't have any money." The equipment could be of better quality, he added.

Another concern is a lack of consideration for retirees in contract negotiations.



Carmine LaMagna

"People who negotiate don't look at the future. They have to think of the retirees," he said. But he admitted, "I didn't until I retired."

Worker dies after mishap on the job in Depew

DEPEW — Alfreda Syzmanski, a custodian and 17-year employee of Depew Central Schools, has died after an accident that occurred while she was working.

The 60-year-old mother of four was kneeling by the side of the empty school swimming pool cleaning with a chemical compound when she fell into the deep end of the pool.

She never regained consciousness and died three days later, according to CSEA Unit President Larry David.

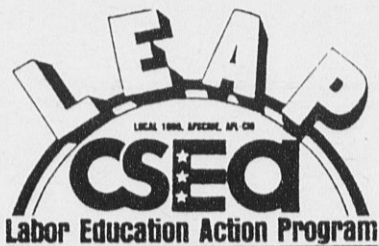
David and CSEA Occupational Safety and Health Specialist John Bieger said

there is an investigation to determine whether the combination of the cleaning compound and residual pool chlorine could have created hazardous vapors that may have played a part in the accident.

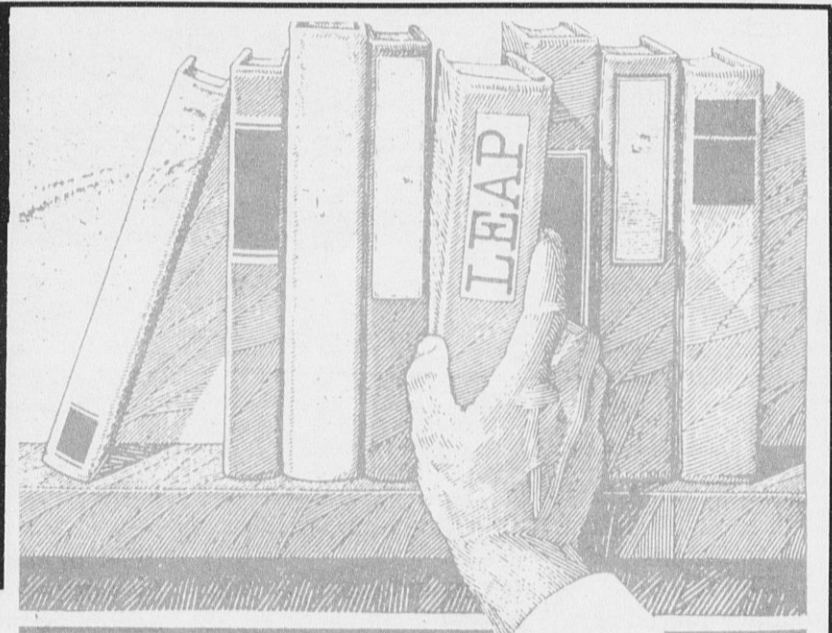
They are also waiting for the results of an autopsy, which could rule out natural causes of death.

David called Syzmanski "a dedicated, hard worker who could out-perform everyone. She was a perfectionist who really cared about her work. All of her co-workers are very upset and will miss her."

A great way to quench a thirst for knowledge



LEAP is the Labor Education Action Program of CSEA. It offers tuition-free courses at two- and four-year public and private colleges, BOCES and various state facilities across New York. LEAP is available only to CSEA-represented state employees in the Operational Services, Administrative Services and Institutional Services units, Health Research Inc., SUNY Construction Fund and Division of Military and Naval Affairs. CSEA/LEAP courses are designed to increase upward career mobility in state service and improve the quality of life on and off the job.



CSEA/LEAP Fall Semester Deadline nears

CSEA/LEAP is now accepting applications for the 1987 fall semester. The deadline for applications is July 22.

The program offers more than 150 course titles and more than 1,400 course offerings at 86 colleges and BOCES throughout the state.

Eligible state employees who were hired prior to May 1, 1987, can get LEAP 108 application forms and the Fall 1987 Course Announcement from their personnel/training officer or from their CSEA local president.

Be sure to read section 1 of the course announcement for information on LEAP's Certificates of Career Development. Also, be sure the application is filled out completely and accurately. LEAP can only process one application from each eligible employee.

Remember, the application deadline is July 22. Don't risk missing it because of slow mail delivery.



MORE THAN 150 CSEA Otsego County Local 839 members recently "walked the line" in informational pickets in Cooperstown and Oneonta to protest stalled contract talks. Below, Local President Mable Wannamker, left, and Region V President Jim Moore, right, join with nursing assistant Kim Lindberg and son Justin to send a clear message to county officials.

OTSEGO OUTRAGE

COOPERSTOWN — Otsego County may abound in beautiful sights for the tourists, but don't expect county employees to say anything good about county management. More than 500 employees continue to provide daily service county-wide while working without a contract since Dec. 31.

To protest the lack of an agreement, more than 150 members of Otsego County CSEA Local 839 recently conducted an informational picket at county office buildings in Cooperstown and Oneonta.

Mabel Wannamaker, president of the local, joined by Central Region V President Jim Moore, Regional Director Roger Kane and other regional staff members, led the noon-time protest.

"Our members are angry and frustrated by the 'second class citizen' treatment they are receiving from the county. We perform

valuable services, and we deserve a fair increase in wages. We also deserve equal treatment when it comes to payment of health insurance. Management and management/confidential employees enjoy full payment of health insurance. We deserve the same," Wannamaker said.

Moore underscored Wannamaker's remarks.

"It appears Otsego County just doesn't give a damn about its employees. County representatives expect quality service to be maintained, but they don't want to pay for it. We can deal with that attitude by stepping up our political action now through election time. We've shown CSEA political clout in Delaware County and we can do the same in Otsego," Moore said. "We are not making unreasonable demands; we simply want a fair and equitable contract. And we want it now!"

Smithtown solidarity gets positive results

SMITHTOWN — The Town of Smithtown Unit of CSEA Local 852 recently ratified a three-year contract after nine months of negotiations.

The two-year contract includes a 6 percent salary increase retroactive to Jan. 1, 1987, as well as a 6 percent increase effective Jan. 1, 1988, for all employees, plus steps and longevity for those eligible.

The contract also calls for improved medical plan benefits such as the increase in maternity care from \$1,600 to \$2,700.

The town has also agreed to contribute an additional \$100 per employee, to the CSEA Benefit Fund.

Employees may now accumulate up to 180 sick leave days and employees who quit with less than 10 years of service receive 65 percent of their total accumulated sick leave days.

All guards and environmental control officers will receive new work shoes.

"It's done and everybody got paid," said William Maccaro, president of the unit and

Local 852. "I'm glad it's over. The members got increases that they certainly deserve."

Region I President Danny Donohue said, "It's an excellent contract which shows that by working with a professional staff and dedicated negotiations team, results can be delivered."

CSEA Collective Bargaining Specialist Irwin M. Scharfeld was chief spokesperson for the unit and praised the negotiating team for "hanging in when the going got difficult." Scharfeld said the town tried to undermine negotiations from the start by leaking false rumors and misinformation to our membership.

"However, we remained calm and did not play into the town's hands and ended up with a good, solid and respectable contract," he said.

Members of the negotiating committee were: Maccaro, Danny Warne, Barbara Cogswell, Jan Mennona, Steve Bolgar, Jim Carthy, Judy Scrobe, Bill Coplan, Bobby Kuebler, Dick Stepanek and John Gleason.

Healthy gains in Harrison

HARRISON — Town of Harrison CSEA employees recently ratified a two-year contract that increases salaries 7 percent retroactive to January 1, 1986, and 6½ percent effective January 1, 1987. The agreement also increases longevity payments, adds a holiday in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, increases personal days and continues an optical plan.

The negotiating team included Unit President Grace Ann Aloisi, Sue Colaneri, Joan Rosa and Judy D'Agostinis. CSEA Collective Bargaining Specialist Larry Sparber handled the process.

The employees are members of Westchester County Local 860.

A real lifesaver

By Anita Manley

CSEA Communications Associate

PORT CHESTER — A motorcyclist involved in a serious accident can thank a Port Chester High School nurse for saving his life.

When the accident occurred in front of the school last month, Westchester County CSEA Local member Cindy Poletsky was called out of a meeting to help.

"I had no idea how serious it was," said Poletsky, a five-year employee of the district. "There was a group of people around this man who was lying on his side. He was unconscious and lying in a massive pool of blood. A few feet down the street, I could see a helmet and a motorcycle."

She said the motorcyclist had hit his head on the pavement after losing his helmet. The right side of his face was "pushed in" and his leg was badly broken, she said.

Poletsky's first concern was to stop the bleeding.

"I literally took shirts off the kids' backs and put them under the man's head," she recalled. She knew immediately that the man was badly hurt. "It was the first time in my nursing career that I actually said to a patient, 'Don't die on me!'"

The police arrived and helped Poletsky until the ambulance crew came and transported the accident victim to a hospital.

"We all worked together," she said. "It was a team effort."

High School Principal Joan Beutler praised Poletsky for her quick response to the emergency.

"I think it was heroic," Beutler said. "Cindy performed at a high level of competence. Judging by the severity of the man's injuries, Cindy saved his life. My confidence in her is complete."

Assistant Principal Jerrold Federici agreed that, had it not been for Poletsky, "it would have been a whole lot worse!"

"We were told there had been an accident, but we didn't know the magnitude," he said. "Cindy addressed the situation and knew which injuries took priority."

Assistant Principal Andrew Summa added his praise.



A HEROINE — Port Chester High School Nurse Cindy Poletsky, center, is congratulated by Principal Joan Beutler, right, and CSEA Field Representative Wendy Hord for her quick response to a serious accident that occurred in front of the school.

"Cindy's swift and professional action prevented the situation from getting out of hand," he said. "To have a nurse right there on the scene was lucky."

Port Chester students are lucky also. Poletsky is a positive force for the nearly 1,000 students who attend the school that is also her alma mater.

After earning a degree in nursing, Poletsky worked for four years in a psychiatric hospital, and that experience has undoubtedly helped her deal with some of the emotional upsets that teen-agers encounter.

"I think my background has helped a lot," she remarked. "The kids feel they can relate to me. I can be a friend and a nurse."

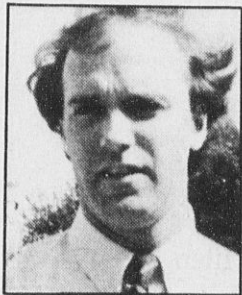
But she doesn't stop her involvement at her office. Poletsky is also adviser to the high school cheerleaders and often chaperones school dances and other events.

"I'm flattered that they ask me!" she said.

Nursing home workers vote to join CSEA

CATSKILL — The workers at Eden Park Nursing Home here voted by more than a 2 to 1 margin to be represented by CSEA.

In a National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) election, 75 nursing home employees voted in favor of CSEA representation, compared to 37 who voted against it.



Michael Sheldon

CSEA Organizer Michael Sheldon noted that the Eden Park victory in the private sector only adds to the recent series of successes experienced by CSEA.

"CSEA has the versatility and the experience to serve the needs of its members in

either the public or private sector," he said. "This win and the recent victory at Greene County Memorial Hospital and Nursing Home only proves that claim."

The new CSEA bargaining unit will be busy during the coming weeks electing officers and developing proposals for their first contract negotiations with Eden Park management.

It's an honor

CI school yearbook salutes CSEA member



DEDICATION — Carolyn Skaalerud shows off the Central Islip High School Yearbook that the students dedicated to her. She has been a secretary in the school for 26 years.

CENTRAL ISLIP — For 26 years, Carolyn Skaalerud has been a secretary at Central Islip High School, but she's been much more than that. Always ready with a smile and the time to listen, she's been called a blessing by co-workers.

They aren't the only ones who appreciate her. The students at Central Islip High School dedicated their 1987 yearbook to Skaalerud. She is the first CSEA member to be honored this way. In the past, the yearbook has been dedicated to a teacher or an administrator.

According to the dedication in the yearbook, Skaalerud earned the honor through her willingness to listen and help students out, even though she has little direct responsibility for them as secretary to the principal.

"It overwhelmed me," she said with a warm smile.

Skaalerud's copy of the book has been filled with signatures and warm wishes. Co-worker Maureen Saboda wrote: "Congratulations! You are the heart and warmth of this office ... I think you're the greatest blessing C.I. High has ..."

Fighting from the trenches

Fired HVCC unit leader fights for job, survival

Compiled by Daniel X. Campbell
CSEA Communications Associate

TROY — Mark Lansing is tough, tougher than he looks. He has to be — his battle against anti-unionism is getting more difficult with each passing, payless day.

Last January, Lansing was a senior account clerk at Hudson Valley Community College, earning a reasonable wage and enjoying the benefits and protection of a union contract. He was also president of CSEA's Hudson Valley Community College's Faculty Student Association (HVCC FSA), a small unit of private sector workers at the campus.

Today he finds himself out of work, as he has been for the past six months. He was fired, CSEA says, for his union activities. He is awaiting a hearing on binding arbitration under a grievance filed on his behalf by CSEA.



Linda and Mark Lansing

Meanwhile, his savings account has long since gone bone dry, and without a paycheck, times are difficult for him and his wife, Linda.

But he hasn't given up his fight. If anything, it is more intense than ever.

For one thing, he's still president of CSEA's HVCC FSA Unit and is at the bargaining table hammering out a new contract for his former co-workers. In an unusual move, CSEA statewide President William L. McGowan kept Lansing on as unit president after he was fired from his job at the request of Region IV President C. Allen Mead. In that way, Lansing has continued his presence on campus and as a constant thorn in the side of the management which tried to eliminate him.

And he certainly hasn't given up hope. "When I come back, this place will be a good place to work," he says with conviction. "Management was quite shocked that CSEA continued me as unit president. A lot of minor changes have resulted in some positive gains for the employees because of that strong move."

Lansing says he expects to consolidate those gains in the new contract he and CSEA Field Representative Pat Domaratz are currently negotiating with the FSA management.

But he has taken some devastating financial blows as a result of his situation, and CSEA's Capital Region is trying to help Lansing and his wife weather these rough times.

“We cannot abandon Mark and his wife in this battle because it is our battle, too.”

Firing reflects HVCC anti-union attitude

Job or no job, he's still unit president

TROY—Mark Lansing may have been fired from his job with the Hudson Valley Community College's Faculty Student Association (FSA), but CSEA says HVCC FSA management can't fire him from his union office.

So, in a unique situation, Lansing will once again begin showing up on campus in his role as CSEA FSA Unit president to provide day-to-day union representation needs of the 18 private sector members of the unit.

CSEA statewide President William L. McGowan, acting on a request from CSEA Capital Region President C. Allen Mead, has directed Lansing to continue to serve as unit president.

CSEA says Lansing's firing is nothing more than part of an overall anti-union campaign by the management of HVCC FSA. A grievance filed by CSEA over Lansing's firing will go to binding arbitration soon before an arbitrator from the American Arbitration Association.

Meanwhile the union is also preparing for an upcoming formal hearing before the state's Labor Board concerning a

series of unfair labor charges CSEA has filed against HVCC FSA alleging anti-union actions by FSA management against the union, its members and elected officials.



A "BRING MARK BACK" campaign has been launched by HVCC FSA members, who are wearing badges such as these on campus.

LANSING WAS FIRED in January and has been struggling since to get his job back. Meanwhile, he continues to act as unit president.

"I know the wheels of justice turn slowly," Lansing says. "What I didn't know is that the wheels often roll right over you in the process."

"The way Mark was let go prevents him from collecting unemployment insurance. We have to do something to help him," says Region IV President Mead. "We cannot abandon Mark and his wife in this battle because it is our battle, too."

CSEA Capital Region activists contributed \$250 for Lansing during a recent regional business meeting. Mead asks that every CSEA local in the region and in the state pass the union hat at picnics, clam steams and meetings to assist Lansing.

"Anti-union forces are publicly challenging the rights of workers to belong to unions and they are even challenging the rights of unions to exist in this country. CSEA has to support leaders like Mark in their battle against anti-unionism before this cancer spreads from the private sector to the public sector," Mead says.

"If you were in Mark's shoes, you would certainly like to see the union you are fighting for come to your aid on an individual-to-individual basis."

Toxic building closed at CSEA urging

STONY BROOK — The SUNY Stony Brook administration, under fire from CSEA and other concerned groups, has finally agreed to close the Javits Lecture Center because test results prove that the center is contaminated with toxic chemicals.

The contamination resulted from a fire in a storage area last year, and the reaction of the heat and chemical cleaners created a contaminated ash which coated air ducts, walls and furniture.

Classes were held in the building and Stony Brook CSEA Local 614 members on the maintenance staff were still ordered to work in the building.

CSEA, the teaching professionals union, the New York Public Interest Group and the students have been pushing the university to take action for months.

According to CSEA Industrial Hygienist Joanne Curtis, lab results from samples taken from a classroom wall and doorway showed that there are furans in the soot.

"Worse than that, there are large amounts of a gummy

substance which contains phenols, a much more immediate health hazard," Curtis said.

Phenols are a toxic chemical often found in cleaners. Long-term exposure can result in kidney and liver damage, mental illness and death.

CSEA is now waiting for the results of a complaint filed with the state Department of Labor over the situation.

Unfortunately, the way the samples were taken leaves a question about the concentration of the contamination in the building, Curtis said.

"We don't know the extent of the concentration," she said, "but it's probably worse than we think."

CSEA Region I President Danny Donohue said the union's demands are clear.

"We want the place closed down, sealed off and cleaned by professionals who know how to remove these contaminants with no further health risks," he said.

Sign up for LPN workshop

CSEA has clarified the registration process for licensed practical nurses (LPNs) employed by the state who want to attend one of the LPN Workshops to be offered through the fall.

The workshops, negotiated by CSEA in the Institutional Services Unit contract, offer LPNs a chance to continue their education during the workday without having to charge the time to leave accrual.

LPNs who want to attend one of the workshops should first contact their facility personnel or training and education office and fill out a nomination form. The copy at right can be used.

If there are any problems or questions after contacting the facility offices, LPNs should talk to their CSEA local president.

Local officers with questions should contact CSEA Research staff members Frank Abbey or Mark Lawrence at CSEA Headquarters in Albany (telephone 1-800-342-4146).

The Governor's Office of Employee Relations (GOER) has informed department education and training officers of the workshops, which will be offered across the state.

The workshop schedule is printed below.



GOER/CSEA LPN SEMINARS NOMINATION FORM

NAME _____

AGENCY _____

FACILITY _____

WORKSHOP:

DATE _____

SITE _____

SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS:

VEGETARIAN _____

KOSHER _____

OTHER _____

EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE _____

SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE _____

Please Return To: Dominique Torres
GOER/PPED
23rd Floor, Corning Tower
Albany, New York 12223

Schedule

DATE	LOCATION	REGION	SITE	DATE	LOCATION	REGION	SITE
07/24/87 FRIDAY	LONG ISLAND	1	HOLIDAY INN HAUPPAUGE 1740 EXPRESS DRIVE SOUTH HAUPPAUGE, NY 11788	10/13/87 TUESDAY	LONG ISLAND	1	MARIOTT HOTEL GARDEN CITY, NY 11530
08/14/87 FRIDAY	UTICA	5	SHERATON INN 200 GENESEE STREET UTICA, NY 13502	10/14/87 WEDNESDAY	LONG ISLAND	1	HOLIDAY INN HAUPPAUGE 1740 EXPRESS DRIVE SOUTH HAUPPAUGE, NY
09/11/87 FRIDAY	ROCHESTER	6	MARIOTT THRUWAY HOTEL 5257 WEST HENRIETTA ROAD ROCHESTER, NY 14623	11/04/87 WEDNESDAY	SUFFERN	3	HOLIDOME 3 EXECUTIVE BOULEVARD SUFFERN, NY
09/10/87 THURSDAY	BUFFALO	6	HYATT REGENCY MAIN STREET BUFFALO, NY 14202	11/05/87 THURSDAY	TBA		
09/17/87 THURSDAY	SYRACUSE	5	SHERATON UNIVERSITY INN AND CONFERENCE CENTER 801 UNIVERSITY AVENUE SYRACUSE, NY 13210	11/24/87 TUESDAY	LONG ISLAND	1	HOLIDAY INN HAUPPAUGE 1740 EXPRESS DRIVE SOUTH HAUPPAUGE, NY 11788
09/18/87 FRIDAY	BINGHAMTON	5	QUALITY INN ROUTE 11, BOX 69 Binghamton, NY 13904	11/25/87 WEDNESDAY	NEW YORK CITY	2	PENTA HOTEL 7th AVENUE & 33rd ST. NEW YORK, NY

A realistic approach



Region IV workshops

Working sessions seeking real solutions to daily on-the-job problems and the latest information on some critical issues were the order of the day at a pair of recent Region IV workshops.

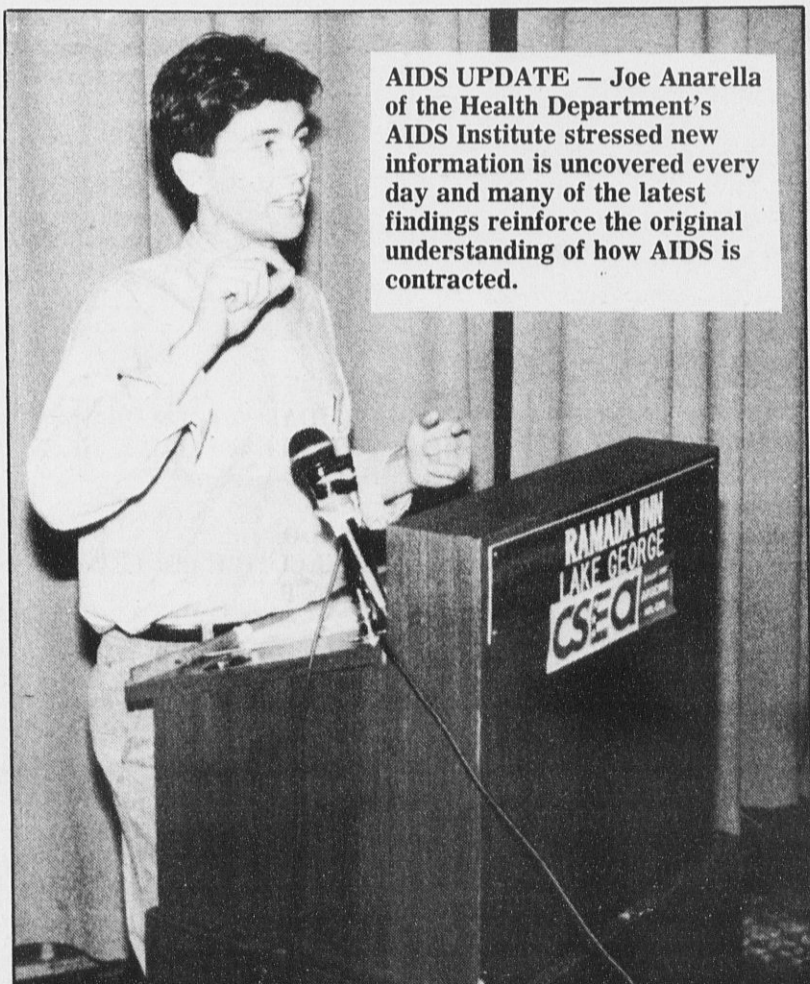
The fourth annual School and County Committee workshop was a unique experiment in active problem-solving. Participants used their time to develop new ideas for resolving longstanding workplace difficulties. Instead of approaching generic simulated situations, the group focused on actual circumstances they face every day.

The region's Health and Safety workshop was filled with new information about video display terminals (VDTs), asbestos and AIDS. The presentations by area experts were videotaped and are available for local meetings, lunchtime updates and other events.

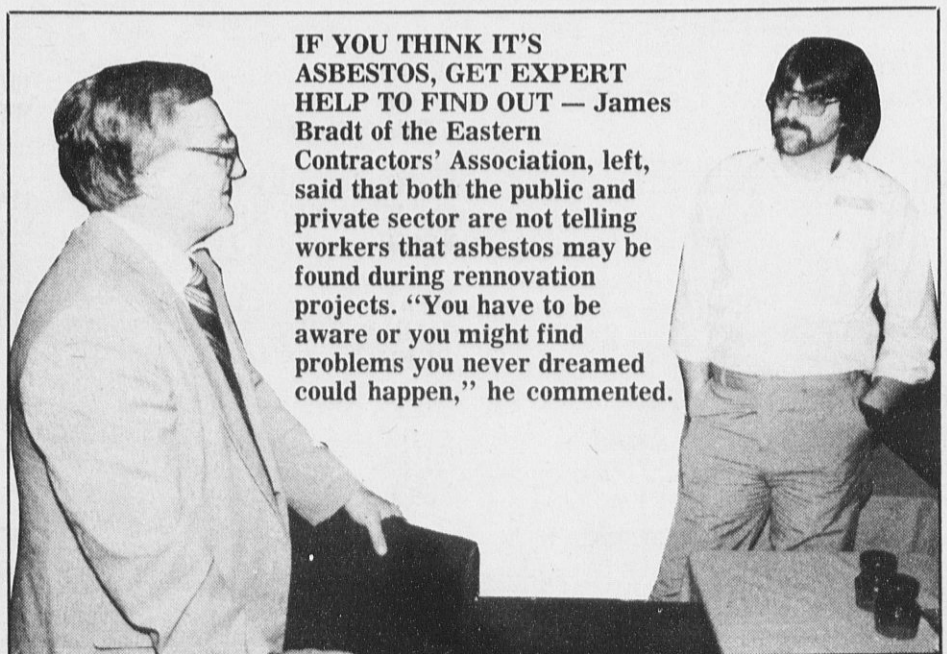
WORKSHOP CHAT — Regional School Committee Chairperson Shirley Ponkos, County Committee Chairperson Lester Cole and the committees' adviser Lou Altieri share ideas with CSEA Region IV President C. Allen Mead about the success of the "To know your union and use it" workshop concept. The program took a hands-on approach to solving on-the-job problems faced by CSEA members every day.



INTERESTED LISTENERS — Clinton County Local President Jeanne Kelso, CSEA Secretary Irene Carr and Treasurer Mary Sullivan listen to problem solving strategies.



AIDS UPDATE — Joe Anarella of the Health Department's AIDS Institute stressed new information is uncovered every day and many of the latest findings reinforce the original understanding of how AIDS is contracted.



IF YOU THINK IT'S ASBESTOS, GET EXPERT HELP TO FIND OUT — James Bradt of the Eastern Contractors' Association, left, said that both the public and private sector are not telling workers that asbestos may be found during renovation projects. "You have to be aware or you might find problems you never dreamed could happen," he commented.

Knocking down the barriers

SUNY worker a victim of discrimination

NEW PALTZ — A CSEA local president will take a sex discrimination case to the state Human Rights Commission after SUNY at New Paltz officials last month fired a female groundsworker.

After sticking to her guns in pursuing the



FIGHTING DISCRIMINATION — Nina Wodolaskyj-Ronk, center, was recently fired from her groundskeeper job at SUNY at New Paltz, after enduring sexual discrimination on the job. Local 610 President Diane Lucchesi, left, plans to file a complaint with the state Human Rights Commission on Wodolaskyj-Ronk's behalf.

job, Nina Wodolaskyj-Ronk was fired as unqualified for the entry-level position.

"I had humiliation, I had harassment, I had isolation," she said. "Now, to top it off, I have been terminated. All I can do is to try to get my job back."

SUNY Local 610 President Diane Lucchesi plans to help through the Human Rights Commission.

Wodolaskyj-Ronk was employed at the college as a cleaner for a year when the groundskeeper position was initially posted, Lucchesi said.

The entry-level job requires no special skills, she noted, but shortly after Wodolaskyj-Ronk applied for the job, a second notice went up, further defining the duties of the job. She bid for the job again.

The job was posted a third time, and again more duties were defined. Again, Wodolaskyj-Ronk bid for the position.

When she was finally interviewed, the supervisor told her he was going to give her an oral test.

"He asked her questions that had never been asked of any other applicant," Lucchesi said. "This is an entry-level non-competitive job, which means an applicant is not expected to have prior knowledge of any specifics of the job."

Wodolaskyj-Ronk finally went to the college affirmative action officer to

complain and soon got the groundskeeper job.

One of the conditions of the job is a year-long probationary period with evaluations every two months.

But management again made its own exception for the female groundskeeper. She had to meet with her boss once a week to "discuss her work performance."

In addition, Lucchesi said, she never had formal training or an orientation.

The final insult came when a supervisor used a Polaroid camera to photograph an area where Wodolaskyj-Ronk had worked.

"This has never been done to a male employee," the local president said.

The affirmative action office was again contacted and a meeting was held with college officials.

"This time they told me that Nina is not qualified for the job and if she didn't improve they would fire her," Lucchesi said. They made good on their threat, firing Wodolaskyj-Ronk last month, claiming she was unqualified for the job.

"The affirmative action program at SUNY is not giving this the backing or the priority it's supposed to have," Lucchesi said.

"Nina has been harrassed," she said. "No male employee has ever been treated this way and I'm going to see that it never happens again."

Human rights case wins workers 12% jump

CENTRAL ISLIP — All 12-month clerical employees in the Central Islip School District can look forward to 12 percent increases in their 1986-87 salary schedule.

"The clerical employees felt that they were the victims of sex-based wage discrimination," said CSEA Field Representative James Walters. "A complaint was filed with the Human Rights Commission and the district settled and was forced to negotiate with CSEA for the monetary amount."

When CSEA negotiated the most recent contract for the unit, part of CSEA Suffolk Education Local 870, the district would not agree to the large increases.

"It's unfortunate for the district that this escalated into a human rights case," Walters said. "But the outcome certainly benefits the members."

The agreement also guarantees that the 12 percent increase cannot be used in any way to deprive the clerical employees of future negotiated wage increases.

Also, wage increases for those employees working less than 12 months will be pro-rated.

"This is a landmark case because it offers CSEA another tool in negotiations," Walters said. "The employer is told if the outcome of the negotiations is not fair and equitable for the employees, then a human rights complaint can be filed."

Joanne Martin, a clerk typist in the high school guidance office, said she will use the money to pay overdue bills.

"I'm going to put it directly into my checking account," she said.

Carmela Arato-Serra, a clerk typist in the Mulligan School, will use the money to help pay medical bills incurred by her son Sal, who is due to undergo a bone marrow transplant as treatment for leukemia.

"I'd like to use some of the money to fix up the house. The rest of it will be used to pay doctor bills and do some extra things for Sal," she said. "After he recovers from surgery, I'd like to pay for him to travel to Las Vegas, where his girlfriend's family lives."

Bus drivers win discrimination suit

NEW YORK — Bus drivers in the Monroe-Woodbury School District in Orange County won a landmark lawsuit which ruled that the school district discriminated against female bus drivers when it refused to assign them to certain bus routes.

The clash began in 1978 when the district began providing transportation to the children of the Satmar Hasidic community, an ultra-orthodox sect.

Because the bus runs for the Hasidic students involved more hours, the routes were assigned to drivers with the most seniority, according to the drivers' contract with the district. Many of the senior drivers are women.

But Hasidic attorneys, citing religious beliefs, refused to allow male students to ride on buses with female drivers.

Under a court order renewed every fall since 1978, school district officials assigned male drivers with less seniority, violating the contract with the union to accommodate the religious community.

Last September, however, the court refused to grant the injunction. When bus assignments were made prior to the school

year, three women had routes in the Hasidic community. The students refused to ride the buses, so the school discontinued the routes and bumped the women to the bottom of the seniority list.

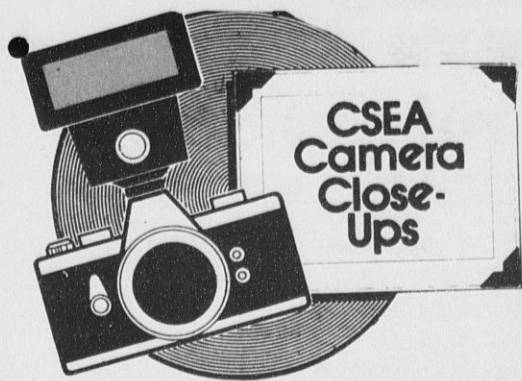
But U.S. District Court Judge Robert Ward ruled that accommodating the religious community violated the constitutionally-mandated separation of church and state.

Still at issue is payment of wages lost by the senior women drivers. While Ward agreed that the school district had discriminated against the drivers, he said officials did not violate their civil rights. He did, however, advise the women to pursue claims for pay.

Ward also asked the school district and bus drivers to submit a plan that would preserve the drivers' seniority if their bus runs are cancelled.

CSEA Regional Director Diane Campion, a former field representative in the Monroe-Woodbury district, hailed the decision.

"I'm glad that CSEA and the bus drivers saw this issue through," she said. "It's been a long road and it's not over yet. I'm confident that we will reach a satisfactory solution."



RITA ARONSON, Tax and Finance CSEA Local 690

"Yes, public employers should pay interest. We can't miss paying our bills on time. You can't miss paying your taxes or else you get a penalty and interest on top of that. It might stop all the unnecessary delays."



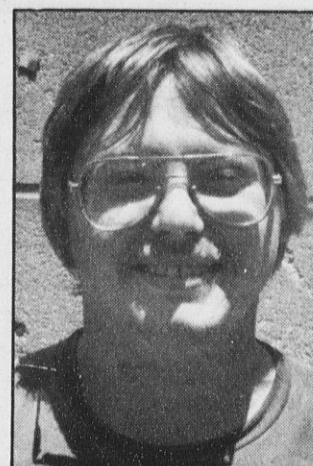
JOAN DRAGONETTE, Tax and Finance CSEA Local 690

"I feel the employer should pay because they're making interest on the money they aren't paying you. They know that eventually we're going to get the money, but they should be able to plan when the distribution of the funds will occur."



MIKE SHEFFER, City of Rensselaer CSEA Unit

"Yes, an employer should have to pay interest on money owed the employees. He's benefiting from not paying the money out and you know he's earning top interest on your dollar, but you're not getting one penny."



MARSHALL DOLGIN, City of Rensselaer CSEA Unit

"Definitely, the employer should pay. Three percent per month would be a good figure. We are required to pay interest on late payment of bills we owe. Let management feel the bite and this late payment stuff will end fast."

● Should a public employer be required to pay interest on negotiated salary increases, adjustments and comparable worth payments when they are delayed through management's fault?

Where asked:
Region IV

\$2 million in insurance refunds

CSEA President William L. McGowan has announced that \$2 million in refund of contribution checks have been mailed to participants in the Basic Group Life Insurance Plan.

To be eligible, a member must have participated in this plan for the entire distribution year of Nov. 1, 1985, to Nov. 1, 1986.

This is the seventh consecutive refund of contribution and was distributed to 65,348 members of the plan.

In addition, a special increase offer is available to qualifying insured members, in which a member may increase his or her

Basic Group Life insurance coverage to \$25,000, the maximum benefit available under the program.

CSEA members under age 70 may apply for the increase by completing the application sent with the refund of contribution check.

The deadline has been extended to July 15.

Any questions about the refund or the special increase offer should be directed to the CSEA Insurance Department, Capitol Station Box 7125, Albany, NY, 12224. Include your Social Security number on all correspondence.

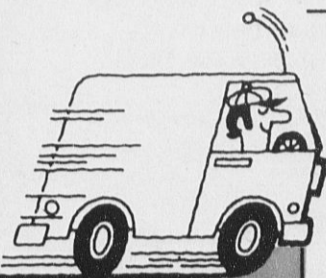
This, that

AND THE OTHER THING



Activist honor

Region II President George Boncoraglio presents an "Outstanding Activist" plaque to Metro Region activist Henry Reece in appreciation for his "fiesty service to fellow workers." A 20-year member and now retired, Reece served as a Bronx Psychiatric Center CSEA Local 401 officer and chairman of the grievance committee and the Region II PEOPLE Committee.



LET'S
KEEP
IN
TOUCH,
OK?

MOVED?

If you've moved recently, or plan to move in the near future, it's very important, to you and CSEA, that you notify the union of your new address immediately. Use this form for your convenience.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Name _____ Social Security No. _____

MY OLD ADDRESS WAS:

Street _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

MY NEW ADDRESS IS:

Street _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

My employer is: _____

My work location is: _____

I am a member of CSEA Local _____

MAIL TO: Civil Service Employees Association
Attn: Membership Department
143 Washington Avenue
Albany, New York 12210

CSEA MEMBERS ARE

Lighting up the sky!

By Sheryl Carlin
CSEA Communications Associate

CENTERPORT — The sun is shining brighter and the stars are sparkling a little more vividly at the Vanderbilt Planetarium these days.

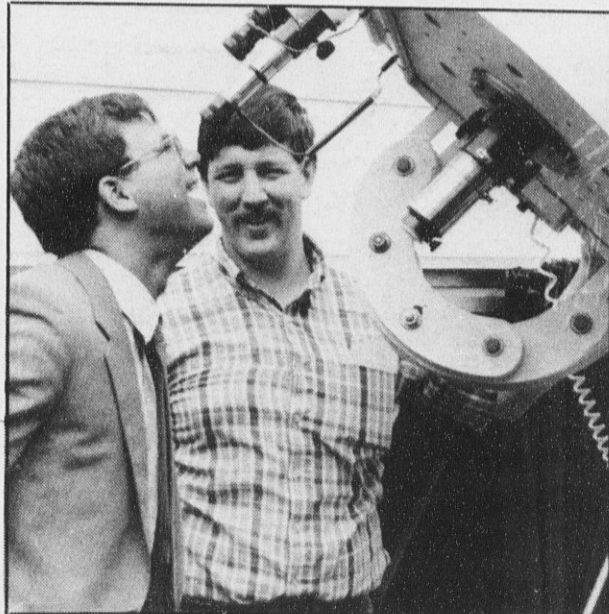
The planetarium on the grounds of the William K. Vanderbilt II estate here is all spruced up after an 18-month renovation, the first since it opened in 1971.

The unique worksite is staffed by members of Suffolk County CSEA Local 852 who hold some of rarest of job titles represented by CSEA. In addition to several groundskeepers and maintenance personnel, the staff also boasts such titles as artists, authors, photographers, presenters, an education coordinator and a musical director. There are also secretarial and clerical employees as well as members who work in the machine and electronics shops on the premises.

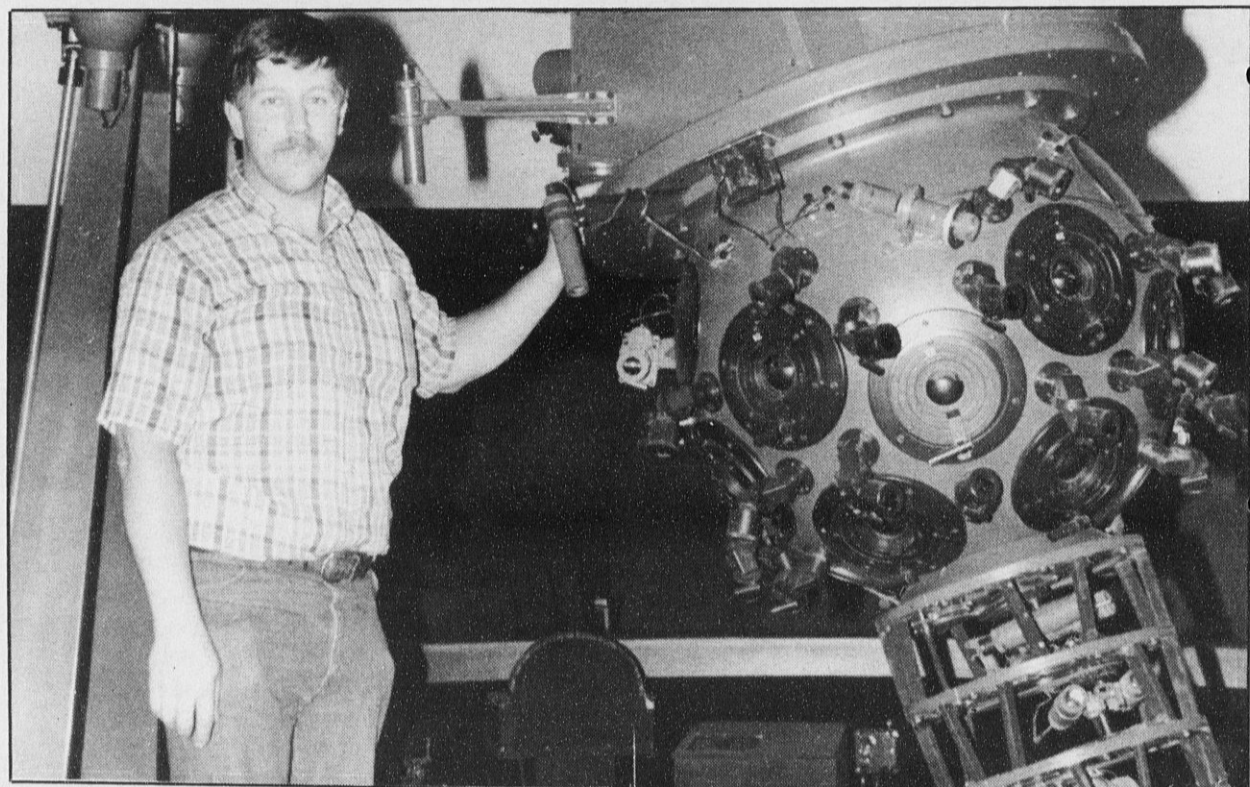
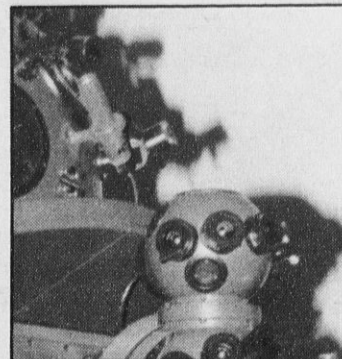
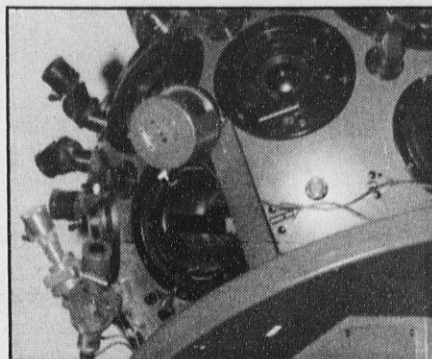
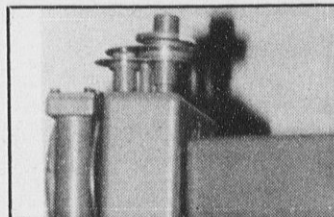
"The renovations were overdue," says CSEA member Stan Coffield, technical supervisor at the planetarium. "Seats were broken, there was deterioration in the sky dome and the sound system needed updating." All of which was understandable since more than two million visitors have passed through in the last 15 years.

The staff often worked until 4 a.m. in the days just before the planetarium reopened, prompting Planetarium Director Mark Levine to announce at the reopening, "Everything you see has been produced in-house by the most dedicated staff I've ever had the opportunity to work with!"

The staff designs their own control systems, display systems, scripts and



CSEA FIELD REPRESENTATIVE Jim DellaRocca looks through the planetarium's telescope. Watching is Technical Supervisor and CSEA member Stan Coffield.



PLANETARIUM TECHNICAL DIRECTOR STAN COFFIELD stands beside the four-ton projector that reproduces the sky on a 60-foot sky dome.

special effects.

"This job takes a lot of experience. It's not the type of job you can just walk into off the street," Coffield says.

"It would take between six months to a year to get productive work out of a new employee here."

Coffield, who majored in electronics in college and has participated in many technical seminars since, admits "I learned a lot as I went along."

The planetarium staff conducted many of its astronomy programs in area schools, libraries and parks while the building was being renovated. It will be another year or more before all the new lobby exhibits are in place and all the new technical equipment is ready for use.



At the heart of the facility is the Sky Theatre, where a four-ton projector recreates the sun, moon, planets and 11,369 stars on a 60-foot sky dome. "With our new wall sound system, when we want to make it sound like thunder, it sounds like thunder," adds Coffield.

CSEA members also maintain the well-groomed grounds of the 43-acre Vanderbilt estate. The mansion has 24 rooms filled with beautiful original Vanderbilt furnishings as well as intriguing wildlife exhibits.

The planetarium offers sky shows, lectures, children's programs, astronomy courses and concerts throughout the year.

Everything you see has been produced in-house by the most dedicated staff I've ever had the opportunity to work with.