

Easing staff woes
at county infirmary
Page 5

DOT hazard duty pay
on our agenda
Page 8

CSEA's Trade Center
members remembered
Pages 10-11

New Feature:
CSEA from A to Z
Page 18

Vol. 5 / No. 1

JANUARY 2002

THE WORK FORCE

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



AFSCME, CSEA honor our Sept. 11 heroes

See page 3

Photo of the month



CSEA members who work at SUNY Potsdam took to the streets recently to raise money for the victims of the World Trade Center attacks in New York City. More than \$900 was raised during the rainy and cold walk. "The amount of money raised showed that everyone's heart was in the right place," said CSEA Potsdam Local President June Wilkins.

Bus bond issue saves CSEA jobs in Williamsville

Voters in the Williamsville School District recently approved a \$1.1 million bond measure to buy new buses, a move that clears the way for CSEA members in the transportation unit to keep their jobs.

The unit has been locked in an extensive struggle with management over the contracting about half of the CSEA-represented bus routes to a private bus company.

The district has not purchased new buses since 1997, and had planned to give more routes to the private company had the bond measure failed.

(Look for in-depth coverage of the Williamsville School District win in the February issue of The Work Force)



CSEA: Don't privatize Social Security system

The day before the President's Commission on Social Security released its interim report recommending privatizing the Social Security system, CSEA joined key lawmakers, senior and retiree groups and the AFL-CIO to warn about the dangers of such a plan.

The Albany news conference with U.S. Reps. Michael McNulty (D-Green island) and Maurice Hinchey (D-Saugerties) renewed criticism leveled last summer when the commission began its work.

At the time, CSEA and the others called it a sham because all of the president's appointments to the commission favored privatizing the system.

"Maintaining the security in Social

Security is an issue that affects everyone – children, working people and retirees," said CSEA President Danny Donohue.

"We cannot afford to see workers' futures put at risk while also cutting benefits," Donohue said.

The privatization proposals would provide options to invest retirement funds in the volatile stock market, Donohue and the others said. While holding out the promise of higher returns, the options would eliminate benefit guarantees and would also reduce existing benefit levels, they added.

The proposals are expected to be taken up by Congress the next few months.

Winning the first step to save Nassau University Medical Center jobs

CSEA won round one of its fight to save more than 500 jobs at Nassau University Medical Center when hospital directors refused to buy into the layoff scheme.

By one vote, the hospital's board of directors rejected a proposed budget which sacrificed workers in a tide of red ink.

Hundreds of CSEA members and Long Island labor activists picketed the hospital as the directors met. The unionists demanded center managers explore other ways to close a hefty hospital budget gap than the proposed firing of 500 hospital workers.

"I am dedicated to saving this hospital, but not on the backs of our workers," said CSEA Nassau County Local President Tony Giustino to Nassau Health Care Corporation (NHCC) chief executive officer Richard Turan.

"In every meeting that we had with Mr. Turan, he had steadfastly refused to discuss any alternatives to the proposed 500 layoffs – including early retirement buyouts or redeployment of hospital workers elsewhere in county government," said Region One President Nick LaMorte.

Political support

State Assemblywoman Earlene Hooper made a passionate plea for the survival of NHCC and its workers.

She pledged her support to the hospital and asked the hospital's directors to do the same.

"As a taxpayer, a politician, a citizen of this county, I have an obligation to do all that I can to save the hospital that belongs to each and every one of us," Hooper told the

hundreds of union activists in the crowd.

What was scheduled to be a formality in passing Turan's budget was an upset victory for CSEA.

"This is nothing short of a major victory for the taxpayers of Nassau County who demand and deserve the best quality of health care," said Giustino.

"This is a giant leap to save health care in Nassau County," he said.

— Rolando Infante

AFSCME's Lucy to speak at Albany's King celebration

Bill Lucy, a civil rights activist from the 1960s and now secretary-treasurer of CSEA's international union, AFSCME, will be the guest speaker at Albany's Martin Luther King Jr. celebration on Jan. 21.



Lucy, who was with King in Memphis in 1968 when King was assassinated, will speak at the Wilborn Temple, near the Empire State Plaza, at 1:30 p.m.

The program will highlight King's commitment and support for workers' rights and civil rights.

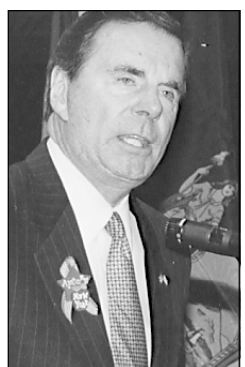
It is being sponsored by the Solidarity Committee of the Capital District, the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, and the Albany chapter of the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement.

AFSCME women pay tribute to our heroes

NEW YORK — The AFSCME Eastern Women's Conference saluted and paid tribute to the many



Donohue



McEntee

public employees who exemplified dedication and heroism during and after the Sept. 11 World Trade Center disaster.

AFSCME President Gerald McEntee, AFSCME Secretary-Treasurer William Lucy, CSEA President Danny Donohue and U.S. Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton were among the more than 1,500 people who honored the union heroes and the victims of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

Included in the crowd were more than 300 CSEA members.

"Over 700 labor workers lost their lives that day," McEntee said. "Most were public employees.

"There were no CEOs (helping) at the World Trade Center on September

11. In fact, the only people going up the stairs that day were public workers. Public employees are the heroes of America, day in and day out!" McEntee said.

Women at ground zero

McEntee said many of the people who have been working at ground zero nonstop since Sept. 11 have been women.

"Union women are clearing debris, working in the morgues and doing everything they can to help," he said. "The women of AFSCME are setting an example for the American labor movement. They are activists and leaders, and they are helping members to fight when the doors of opportunity are closed to women."

Lucy urged women to use "the power of your numbers and the power of your union to help this country do the right thing by workers."

Members mourned

Among those many heroes from that terrible day were CSEA members who had worked to save lives at the disaster site, as well as those who sprang to action for the subsequent disaster relief efforts.

Five CSEA members, all employees of the state Department of Taxation and Finance office that was located at the World Trade Center, paid for their dedication with their lives that day.

Union leaders paid individual tributes to each of those victims: Yvette Anderson, Florence

Cohen, Harry Goody, Marian Hrycak and Dorothy Temple. (See profiles on Pages 10 and 11.)

CSEA President Danny Donohue, Executive Vice President Mary Sullivan and Metropolitan Region President George Boncoraglio, all AFSCME international vice presidents, met with the families of the CSEA victims.

The CSEA officers, with AFSCME's Lucy, presented the families with checks from the unions' Sept. 11 Fund.

Later in the program, Donohue read the AFSCME tribute to CSEA's five members who remain missing in the World Trade Center disaster.

Tribute to living heroes

The event also paid tribute to the living heroes of the disaster, including several dozen CSEA members, through a "Parade of Heroes" that showcased union members who either worked at ground zero or actively worked at relief efforts in other parts of the state.

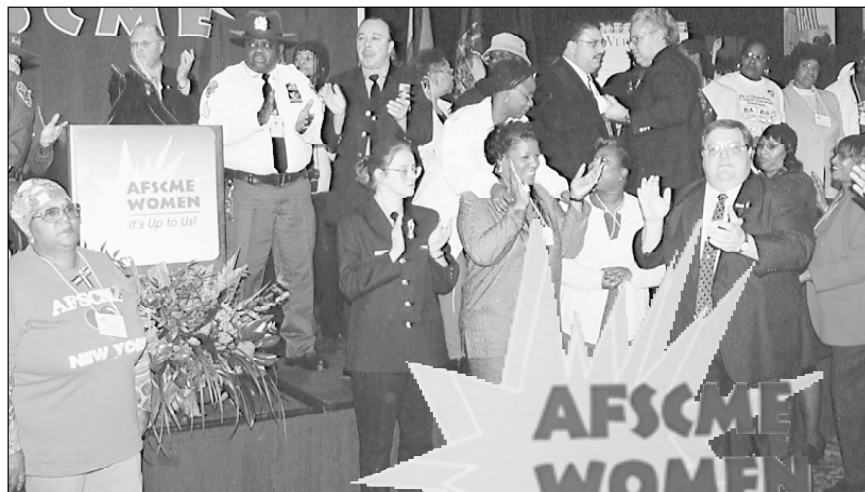
CSEA members also spoke of their experiences during Sept. 11.

Jackie Stanford, a CSEA member from the state Insurance Fund and the chairwoman of the CSEA Statewide Women's Committee, told the crowd during her introduction of Clinton of the devastation she witnessed on Sept. 11.

"I was in the eye of the storm," Stanford said. "We had walked across the bridge to Brooklyn when I saw the second tower fall. My life has changed forever."

Clinton paid a warm tribute to public employees affected by the disaster.

"People around the world saw incredible courage on that day because they saw public employees working under the most difficult circumstances," she said. "We know that the suffering and damage and hurting goes on. How can we ever appreciate the sacrifice that public



Photos by James McCray

employees made if we don't help them personally," Clinton said.

Learning together

The women's conference also offered workshops on women's issues such as sex discrimination and domestic violence, organizing, member mobilization and political action.

"It was very enjoyable getting together with members from around the country," said Ida Bowens, a state Insurance Fund clerk. "The workshop on grieving was especially helpful for those who have lost loved ones."

Karen Pecora, a CSEA member and first vice-president of the Westchester County Unit, said she was impressed by her first women's conference.

"I think it's great that there are so many women in leadership roles in the union, but I still don't feel that there are enough women leaders. I hope that more women are encouraged to become leaders, because they are the movers and shakers of this union," she added.

— Janice Marra



Clinton with Jackie Stanford

“It was very enjoyable getting together with members from around the country. The workshop on grieving was especially helpful for those who have lost loved ones.”

— Ida Bowens, state Insurance Fund

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IN TOUCH WITH THE WORK FORCE

CSEA President Danny Donohue



Without surrendering to doom and gloom predictions, there's no doubt there will be difficult economic times in the year ahead.

Even before the events of Sept. 11, the state and national economy were slowing down. Since then, the state has drastically tightened its belt with a ripple effect at every locality across the state — some affected worse than others depending on their own fiscal circumstances.

Gov. George Pataki's proposed budget will likely include significant cutbacks as the state contends with a projected multi-billion dollar deficit.

The challenges are real. But in some places there are already some bogus and self-serving attempts to scapegoat CSEA members for budget problems, which are far more complicated than that.

CSEA members have always been willing to shoulder their fair share to help employers deal with a crisis.

We have demonstrated that time and again when the issues are presented fairly. But we are not willing to make unilateral concessions on demand.

Whatever rights and benefits CSEA members have are the result of give-and-take negotiation which management, as well as the union, have agreed on in good faith.

Particularly in times of crisis, the work of CSEA becomes more important and often more difficult.

Members have to do more with less help and fewer resources. For that reason alone, CSEA will not be pressured by the heat of the moment.

It's never a pleasant experience but adversity seems to bring out the best in CSEA.

I have full confidence that CSEA members will rise to the challenge once again in 2002 to ensure the necessary and cost-effective delivery of services to all New Yorkers while demanding fairness and respect from New York's elected officials.

That has been CSEA's history and that will be our future.

As union works to solve staffing crunch, stories of stress on the job

GOSHEN — Overworked CSEA members at the Orange County Infirmary gave county lawmakers first-hand accounts of their harrowing days in a facility fraught with short staffing, mandatory overtime and employee exhaustion.

"I have heard of many long-time employees talking about looking for other jobs," Carrie Maher, a nursing care supervisor at the facility and a 19-year CSEA member, said at a recent Legislature meeting.

"My biggest fear now is that the workers will reach the breaking point," she said.

CSEA represents about 500 employees, including health care workers, at the facility.

Huge staffing shortage

The severe staffing shortages at the infirmary have led to nurses being forced to work 16-hour shifts several times a week, and being called into

work on scheduled days off.

Many of the workers who addressed the Legislature are concerned these working conditions could lead to insufficient care for the facility's mostly senior-citizen residents.

CSEA Orange County Unit President Ron Greene said while he is pleased county lawmakers are addressing the concerns, he is hoping they will retain a strong commitment to alleviating the staff shortages.

"We're hoping the county seriously considers our recommendations," Greene said. "This issue must be addressed now."

— Janice Marra



WORK FORCE FACTS

CSEA's recommendations for retaining Orange County Infirmary employees

- ✓ Increase base pay for full-time RN, LPN and CNA positions
- ✓ Make free nursing degree programs available to county workers
(Upon completion of the program, nurses would sign an agreement to remain at the facility for two or three years.)
- ✓ Agree to pay off student loans
(A signed agreement as outlined above would be put into place.)
- ✓ Provide free retraining for nurses currently out of the work force
- ✓ Allow nurses in other county departments to work at the infirmary on a per diem basis
(County nurses from other departments are currently barred from working at the infirmary.)
- ✓ Allow 8, 12 and 16-hour shifts to be scheduled
- ✓ Add part-time nursing positions
- ✓ Create a better working relationship with Orange County Community College, BOCES and local high schools to attract recruits
- ✓ Create hiring bonuses
- ✓ Make per diem workers part of the CSEA bargaining unit
- ✓ Provide a trainer for new hires

Lewis Hospital workers stand tough for fair contract

LOWVILLE — They've been negotiating for a new contract for more than 15 months, but the 280 workers at Lewis County General Hospital are hanging tough.

They're sticking together for what they believe in and mobilizing to take control.

That's why more than 60 of them recently took to the streets for about two hours in 30-degree weather outside the hospital in an informational picket prior to a hospital board meeting. The workers

want to make it clear they're not going to back down in their fight for a fair contract.

According to Unit President Sue Ross, an ultrasound technician at the hospital, the workers are upset hospital negotiators have yet to address directly any of the CSEA proposals.

"They've completely ignored our proposals from day one," she said. "Instead, they waste their time and ours complaining that we have too many proposals and making ridiculously low offers that we're not willing to accept. This has never been a true negotiation, because it's only been their proposals up for discussion, never ours."

Ross said the union is also up in arms over



a management proposal to provide part-time workers with health insurance that would require them to pay higher premiums than other county workers.

"Overall, this is about fairness and respect, and we're going to stand tough for what we believe in and deserve," she added. The union is awaiting a factfinder's report after mediation sessions were unsuccessful.

Recently, union leaders and activists met with CSEA Central Region staff to start coordinating a strategic contract campaign.

The informational picket was one of the initial tactics put in place to raise visibility of the hospital workers and their concerns.

— Mark M. Kotzin

Voices of the Work Force

"I sincerely love my union and what CSEA does for us on the job. CSEA has done so much. They have saved us from cutbacks and layoffs. They keep us informed. The union has great representation and benefits. It's the best union!"



— Dianne Bermudez-Thrush, mental health therapy aide, Brooklyn Psychiatric Center, and an 11-year CSEA member

Crime victim staffers help WTC victims reclaim shattered lives

The numbing reality didn't start to creep in until Hector Perez began interviewing the spouses of victims of the World Trade Center attack who were his age.

"I had a gentleman whose wife had just started working there," said Perez, an investigator with the state Crime Victim's Compensation Board.

"He came in with their 3-year-old daughter. They were both 28.

"It started to really hit me then."

Perez and Bert Bernard are among the many tireless CSEA members from the state Crime Victim's Compensation Board who spent weeks helping families sort through paper work and file claims within days of the tragedy.

"I wanted to be at ground zero," said Perez. "But when they asked for volunteers for the armory, I immediately signed up."

Helping thousands

The duo were assigned to the family center at Pier 94, a heavily guarded location where they helped hundreds of families with claims for funeral expenses, memorial services, loss of support, and loss of earnings.

"You feel so drained at the end of the day," said Bernard, who added he had not seen a large tragedy since the 1990 Happy Land social club arson in the Bronx that killed 87 people.

"I cried inside a lot some times," said Bernard, who admitted he fought the urge to cry publicly because he knew he needed to get the job done.

It was especially hard when the urns were distributed to loved ones after a memorial service. "You had to be there to console," Bernard said.

In the first few days of the tragedy, it wasn't uncommon for workers like Bernard and Perez to work from 8 a.m. to midnight. Later, their hours changed from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Family bonds

"After a while, you saw the families so often that you couldn't help but become close to them," said Perez, who recalled several occasions where he played with the babies and children of the missing.

"We're not counselors," said Perez. "But, we ended up doing counseling directly or indirectly."

Perez, who is fluent in Spanish, also



helped translate for many families.

"Never in my wildest dreams did I imagine that I would be doing this kind of work," said Perez, who has been with the agency nine months.

"Now, back in the office, I feel confident. We definitely pulled some shifts there," he said.

At their offices in downtown Brooklyn, Bernard and Perez said they are proud of the work they were able to accomplish and the comfort they provided.

"It took a while to refocus," said Perez. "But when I came back to the office I felt some relief."

Yet, the time they spent dealing with these families will be forever etched in their minds.

"We don't have just a story," said Perez, glancing at Bernard who slowly shook his head. "We have stories."

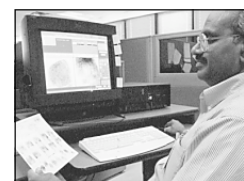
— David Galarza



Hector Perez, left, and Bert Bernard of the Crime Victim's Compensation Board working at the World Trade Center disaster

Voices of the Work Force

"I like working as a public servant for the people of New York State. One of the challenges of my job is trying to identify fingerprints that some people think are impossible to identify."



— Raj Prasad, fingerprint examiner, state Division of Criminal Justice Services, Albany

Grievance affirms CSEA's right to talk to members

When managers at the Arthur Kill Correctional Facility stonewalled CSEA's efforts to meet with them to solve a problem, the union didn't back down.

CSEA Metropolitan Region Labor Relations Specialist Marcia Schiowitz didn't take management's "no" for an answer, filed a grievance, and won the union's fight to meet with its members at the prison.

Undaunted by the stony-faced silence of managers, Schiowitz's persistence scored a victory.

"It was an affront by the Arthur Kill Correctional facility management at the supervisory level, internally and externally, and to everything we represent," said Schiowitz.

"It was something that they would not have accepted for themselves," she said.

CSEA member and shop steward Barbara Morrissey had filed several grievances and tried to get her supervisor's approval to meet with the CSEA reps on three dates. All were denied.

After filing the charge with the state Public Employment Relations Board (PERB), CSEA was assured prison managers would not interfere with legitimate union business.

"All the benefits, rights and privileges that we fought hard to achieve will be honored, specifically at Arthur Kill," said CSEA Metropolitan Region President George Boncoraglio.

"We demand respect for our members and for CSEA," he added.

— David Galarza

Members stand up to workplace "abuse"

Motor-mouth managers stopped in their tracks at LI motor vehicle offices

If the customers don't give you lip, managers might.

CSEA members working at the state Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) office on Long Island often must endure surly and obnoxious customers, but that's part of the job.

Now the union is making sure members won't have to tolerate abusive comments or actions from some managers.

CSEA activists said some union members have not been treated respectfully when the managers talk about dress code, time and attendance, and cashiering issues to employees.

In response, CSEA Local President Liz Pearsall began a campaign to curb the abusive actions and improper language used by DMV managers by distributing a union incident report form to all shop stewards.

"We are not going to allow them to disrespect the workers," she said.

"The form calls for information on the nature of the incident, the people involved, whether it is grievable and other information," said Pearsall.

"We found out through the forms that we have a lot of abuse and threats from the DMW

managers towards our workers. Our Long Island Region Executive Board will be aggressively looking into these matters," she said.

Pearsall also addressed a statewide DMV problem regarding the outdated departmental guidelines for cashiering accountability.

One 20-year guideline allows only a \$100 error maximum for cashiers each year. One large transaction, such as commercial driver's license, can top \$100.

"Our members demand the state Department of Motor Vehicles stop picking the pockets of motor vehicle representatives," said Pearsall.

A single mistake could result in discipline, Pearsall said.

Huge workload, less time

The Local is also looking into the problem of the growing workload CSEA members face.

Long Island's growing population and the crush of summer customers have boosted DMV workloads in Nassau and Suffolk counties.

Department managers insist on keeping customer waiting times down, regardless of the stress it places on employees.

"This has placed a severe burden on the conscientious cashiers who must now complete their transactions in record time with no errors," Pearsall said.

— Rolando Infante



Union training helps labor department weather anthrax scare

ALBANY — Sandwiches, chips, soda and anthrax anxieties were on a recent state Labor Department lunch menu for mail room employees who were enduring an exposure scare.

"They were great, right from the get go," CSEA Labor Local President Barbara Moloney said about the workers who relied on CSEA training to stay calm and follow procedures.

"I know they were a little bit afraid, but they all were hanging together and hanging tough," she said.



Mailroom worker Abner Seaborn put emergency training to work recently when he opened a suspect letter at the Department of Labor in Albany.

Mailroom anxiety

The day had been normal until about 9:30 a.m. CSEA member Abner Seaborn became suspicious of a letter addressed in handwriting only to "Department of Labor, Albany, New York" with no return address.

When opened, a powdery substance was inside.

"I quickly put the letter down on the table top," Seaborn said, his 82-year-old voice showing little emotion.

"I knew I had to tell my supervisor what happened and then evacuate the area," he added.

Seaborn said he changed clothes, took a shower, and "went home in a special white (protection) suit and came back in other work clothes," he said, adding he didn't want to expose anyone else in his work site to the possible contamination. He was also referred to his doctor.

"He kept himself away from the other workers," said mailroom supervisor Cathy Richards.

About 15 other mailroom employees were moved to another part of the building. The building's ventilation system to the first floor mailroom was shut down and the mailroom was sealed off.

"We have been trained what to do in an emergency. Abner and everyone else in the unit depended on that training to get them through this situation. He stayed calm, and so did they," Richards added.

The white powder was rushed to a state Health Department lab, which determined no anthrax was present.

— Daniel X. Campbell



Remembering "members of the family"

Willie Terry immediately knew he had lost five members of his union family as he watched the World Trade Center crumble.

For 13 years, the CSEA member at the state Department of Taxation and Finance had walked the cavernous innards of the World Trade Center.

He knew the stairwells, the elevators, the underground shopping plaza.

Terry also knew most every CSEA member who worked in the massive building — including the five union members who remain missing.

"It hasn't hit me totally that they are gone," said Terry, who moved to Albany three years ago, about his New York City colleagues.

"These were my friends. We worked closely together. They were part of my family at work," he said.

Voices of the Work Force



"I like to do problem solving. And I like the unity that being part of the union brings."

— Donna Daughton, social welfare manager and 26-year CSEA member, Dutchess County Department of Social Services

Gov. orders state to negotiate:

Veto of hazardous duty pay won't stymie union's push for fairness

BEACON — Despite Gov. George Pataki's recent veto of hazardous duty pay legislation for thousands of CSEA state transportation department members, union leaders said they hope a similar agreement will be soon negotiated in Albany.

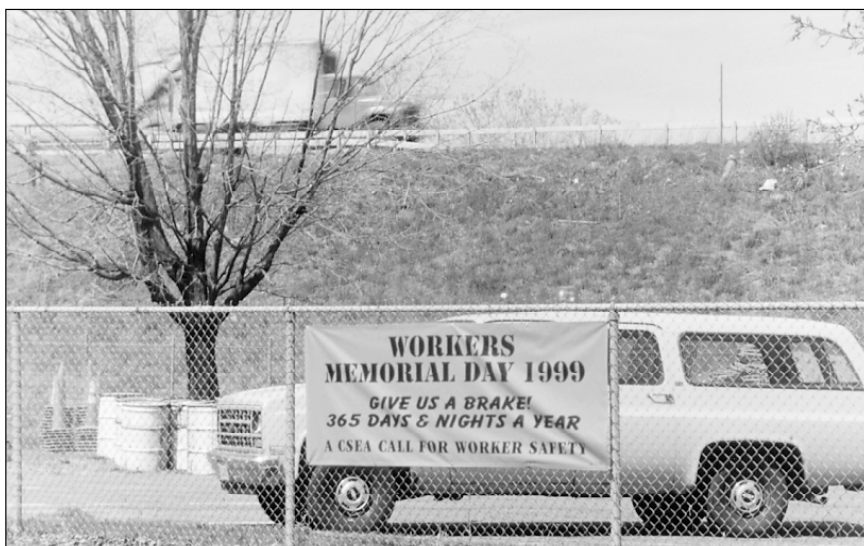
For a second time, Pataki vetoed legislation that would have paid a hazardous duty differential to state Department of Transportation (DOT) workers who work in or near traffic. The governor vetoed a similar bill in 1999.

In his veto message, however, Pataki directed state negotiators to begin negotiating with CSEA about the issue. The governor's previous veto message did not contain that language.

"We're out there in the worst road conditions and we don't have the option of staying home," said Dwayne Palen, president of a CSEA DOT Local representing employees throughout Columbia, Dutchess, Putnam and Westchester counties.

"Drivers hit our work signs and cones, and our workers have also been hit by motorists. These instances happen all the time and we want to be properly compensated for putting ourselves in danger," he added.

Below, Albany DOT workers put up this remembrance for Workers Memorial Day 1999. *The Work Force* featured a story on the safety and health page in September 1999 urging the governor to sign the hazardous duty pay bill at that time.



CSEA represents about 6,000 DOT employees, many of whom would benefit from a hazardous duty differential because they are assigned to road crew duties throughout the state.

Not giving up the fight

Many union members employed at DOT are disappointed with the veto, but they are not giving up their fight to be compensated for their potentially dangerous job duties.

Peter E. Ronne, president of CSEA DOT Local 515, representing workers in Orange and Rockland counties, said his members want the state to recognize the dangers they face daily.

"I have to say that we feel slighted and victimized by politics," Ronne said.

"Our people feel the governor is putting this issue on the wayside and that he's unappreciative of the work that we do," Palen added.



CSEA members repair a stretch of Interstate 87 near Albany. The workers often find themselves inches from speeding traffic.

High-speed danger

In many cases, the work can be extremely hazardous.

Union members at DOT typically operate heavy equipment, such as snow plows, maintain highways and repair signal lights and road signs. These duties often put the employees literally in the middle of heavy traffic.

"We have near-misses every day," Palen said.

Palen said CSEA members from his Local will continue to lobby the state for a hazardous duty differential.

"We'll do whatever it takes to get the hazardous duty pay," he said. "It's something that needs to be done."

— Janice Marra



Voices of the Work Force



"I love the guys' sense of humor here at the office. You really enjoy the day working here. I worked at Greenhaven state prison for 12 years, so this is so much different. I have windows here!"

— Joan Morris, stores clerk, state Department of Environmental Conservation, who works at a state boat repair facility on the shores of Lake George



“We want a contract!”

Pickers greet Wayne school board for second time

TOWN OF ONTARIO — Fired-up members of the Wayne Central Schools Unit took to the streets, picketing the local school board for the second time in four months over the lack of a contract.

Nearly 100 red T-shirt-clad marchers, chanting “We want a contract” greeted board members and the public attending the meeting.

The Unit’s members wore their T-shirts despite a memo from management that the word “fight” on their “CSEA Contract Fight” shirts couldn’t be worn, or they would face disciplinary charges.

Some members wore their shirts inside-out or altered the slogan. No disciplinary charges had been filed as of press time.

The 232-member Unit has been working without a contract for more than a year. Activists vowed to hit the streets again if talks do not progress soon.

— Ron Wofford

School district merger brings out best of CSEA members

It’s a huge Long Island merger, with the customers holding crayons and pencils instead of stock certificates and clapping erasers filling the air instead of the noise of applauding investors.

But the biggest investment for the South Manor and Eastport school districts is in more classroom space, and CSEA members in both districts are making this merger seamless.

The CSEA contracts for workers at South Manor and Eastport school districts are being renegotiated, with similar language being used in both so titles, salaries and benefits will be comparable.

This will make an easier transition when the merger occurs, said CSEA activists.

This summer, CSEA negotiated a contract in South Manor that took two years to hammer out.

At South Manor, CSEA represents all the full-time and part-time custodial and clerical staff, the



Dan Ball, custodian at Eastport School

full-time computer technician, nurses, teacher aides, part-time nurses aides and transportation employees.

“I am pleased that our contract, which was two years in the making, was finally settled. We are truly grateful that our labor negotiating team, led by Labor Relations Specialist Guy DiCosola, was able to secure our contract therefore giving us peace of mind,” said Nellie Maldonado, CSEA Unit president at the South Manor School District.



Nellie Maldonado, CSEA Unit president at South Manor School District

Contracts, titles aligned

At the Eastport School District, CSEA represents full-time and part-time teacher aides and custodial and clerical staff.

The contract with the teacher aides has been secured and the custodial and clerical staffs are in contract negotiations.

The teacher aides, custodial staff, and the clerical staff have been long-standing CSEA members.

“We are proud CSEA members because

we know that our contracts are in good hands and we will have a strong advocate at every level of government — from local to national,” said Meta Isaksen, CSEA Unit president of the Eastport School District teacher aides.

“In past and present contract negotiations, and the future Central School District, our members never waiver in believing in CSEA,” said Ron Senn, Unit president of the Eastport School District custodial and clerical staff.

— Rolando Infante

Voices of the Work Force

“I join my fellow CSEA members to celebrate the labor movement and pay tribute to our union that fights so hard for us each day.”



— Charles Camacho, a two-year CSEA member and custodian, William Floyd School District, Long Island

Family and friends remember...

Five CSEA members who worked for the state Department of Taxation and Finance remain missing after the Sept. 11 terrorist attack on the World Trade Center. Here are some remembrances from their family and friends.

IVETTE ANDERSON

Ivette Anderson loved to cook. In fact, she loved it so much that she was planning to start a new career in the culinary arts.

"She had a passion for cooking," said co-worker Terrell Silver.

"I know she would've been a big person in the hotel and restaurant industry because she knew what she was doing, she loved people, and she loved to have a good time," Silver said.



Anderson, a keyboard specialist with the state Bureau of Conciliation & Mediation Services, worked weekends at Charles Southern Soul Food Cuisine in Harlem, and was to graduate from a culinary arts school this year.

During a memorial for her, an instructor at the school asked her family to accept her diploma.

An active member of the White Rock Baptist Church, Anderson helped transport elderly parishioners to and from services and supervised youth ministry activities.

She was also very active in the CSEA Tax and Finance Local's Social Committee and was in the midst of planning the Local's annual holiday party.

But she could also be counted on to provide samples of her recipes throughout the year.

"She made the cole slaw for the picnic every year," said friend and co-worker Wanda Simmons.

Anderson is survived by her husband, Marvin, their son, Marvin, Jr.

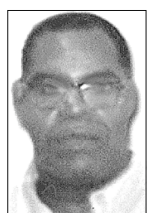
18, and a daughter, Rasha, 24, a part-time college student.

HARRY GOODY

Harry Goody was known as the "mayor" at work but his children had other titles for their beloved father.

"My children nicknamed him the 'Gadget Man' or the 'Sci-fi Man,'" said his wife, Brenda.

Goody, a supply assistant with the state Tax Department's Audit Division, loved gadgets and Brenda would often indulge him with toys and other fun gizmos.



Goody was also a helpful and humble person, Brenda added, which is why she believes Goody is not with us today.

"I know that he was helping his co-workers," said Brenda. "He had an

opportunity to get into an (already crowded) elevator but he allowed two co-workers to get on and he took the stairs."

Co-workers fondly remember how he would "hold court and give his opinion about certain things," said Leonard Chasten, who knew Goody for 12 years. "But, he was more of a listener than anything else."

Chasten often joined Goody for lunch and at bike-a-thons to raise money for charities.

"He was really proud of his bike, it was a custom Raleigh with a chrome finish," said Chasten. "He had recently bought some accessories for his bike to give it the full chrome finish, Chasten said.

A movie buff who loved trivia, Goody would often bet lunch with co-workers who dared to answer questions about movies or television.

"We bought more lunch for him than he ever did for us," said Chasten who considered Goody like an older brother.

Goody is survived by his wife of 26 years and their three adult children: Dimitrius, 25; Alexis, 23; and Jonathan, 21. Jonathan recently joined the Armed Forces.

FLORENCE COHEN

Florence Cohen liked collecting things like cups and newspapers. But she loved cartoon memorabilia.



"She was very much into the Loony Toon characters," said co-worker Paul Golas.

"There was always some kind of knick knack or a T-shirt, book, magazine or a stamp with one of these cartoon characters (on her desk)," Golas said.

Cohen, a keyboard specialist who worked for the state Tax Department for her entire state career, was always efficient at accomplishing tasks.

"She was usually two steps ahead of us," said Golas. "That's the kind of person that she was."

Golas imagined Cohen might have been helping co-worker Rose Rizzo evacuate her floor in the World Trade Center.

"I'm sure they were helping each other to get out," said Golas.

Florence is survived by a daughter, Joyce, a missionary in Kentucky.

MARIAN "MARTY" HRYCAK

Marian Hrycak had a passion for books.

"We have at least 2,000 books in the house and out of that I have seven," said his wife, Joanne.

"We weren't at the same speed. He could read two or three books at a time and I could only read one or I'd get all the characters mixed up," she said.

Before Sept. 11, the two had been planning a Vermont vacation.

"We loved the autumn," said Joanne, fighting back tears. "We were robbed of the years that we had together (now that their two children are grown)."

Marty, as he was known, was an investigator for the state Tax Department's Audit Division, conducting field observations and surveys for the Audit Unit.

He took immense pride in his children. His son, Greg, recently married and his daughter, Chrissy, worked her way through college and is now a nurse.

On the day of the attack, Joanne spoke briefly to Marty.

"He said he didn't want me to worry but that something happened to the building across from his," she said. "I don't know if it was a bomb or a plane but I'm fine," he told his wife on the phone.

"I asked him again, 'Are you all right?'" said Joanne. "He told me he loved me and that he would call me later."

Marty was last seen on the 78th floor helping three other men evacuate the building.

"What they did was take the best part of me away," said Joanne.

Marty had a voracious appetite for history books dealing with Russian and European history. He was born in Austria.

A week before the tragedy, Joanne and Chrissy adopted a puppy much to Marty's chagrin. "He said it was going to be a lot of work, like having a baby," said Joanne.

As their mischievous new beagle Chelsea grabbed her slipper and ran away, Joanne laughed as she imagined Marty saying, "I told you it was going to be a lot of work."

Marty is survived by his wife of 32 years; his daughter Chrissy, 25; and a son, Greg, 30.

DOROTHY TEMPLE

An old knee injury did not stop Dorothy Temple from going to work.



Originally from Montgomery, Ala., Temple had a large extended family she doted on and would visit often, according to her niece, Falana Temple.

"Anytime anything happened with a relative anywhere, Dorothy was there to support them," said Falana, who lived with her aunt in Brooklyn, after her mother died.

Temple, a keyboard specialist in the Income Tax Audit unit, loved to spoil her nephews and nieces with vacations to Disney World, Mexico and San Francisco.

Although she had several friends in Albany, another niece, Jada Temple, considered her aunt "a very private person."

Temple used a van service to get to work and was planning to retire soon because of her injury.

She is survived by her brothers and sisters, Luis, Jacqueline, Rosalyn and Larry.

— David Galarza



CSEA OSH conference urges activism

LAKE PLACID — CSEA's rank and file members need to take their safety into their own hands now more than ever, according to union activists and officers attending the union's Occupational Safety and Health Conference recently.



Reeves

Budget cuts to the state Department of Labor's Public Employee Safety and Health program, coupled with slashes to federal programs, mean grassroots activism from union members is more important

than ever, union leaders said.

"The state Department of Labor is becoming too employer friendly. On the federal level, ergonomic standards have been trashed. The new philosophy is to give

Union investigates:

Lockport Hospital member severely injured on the job

LOCKPORT — CSEA health and safety officials are looking into a workplace accident that injured a 35-year Lockport Memorial Hospital employee who was ordered to remove a huge electrical panel by himself.

CSEA's health and safety expert, John Bieger, is expected to investigate the accident that hurt Jesse Carnes, a stationary engineer.

Carnes is recovering from a fractured hip and other injuries.

"Jesse works alone on the third shift and was directed to remove a large electric panel box from a wall," said Bob DeCarlo, president of the private sector Local.

"It must weigh about 600 pounds or more, and he never should have been assigned to do that by himself. As he tried to move the box, it fell on him, hurting his hip and leg.

"He had to drag himself up 50 feet of stairs, and then call the emergency room," DeCarlo said.

Carnes underwent surgery and faces extensive rehabilitation, union leaders said.

Carnes' co-workers were very upset about his accident, according to DeCarlo, who met with management about it with CSEA Labor Relations Specialist Candy Saxon and Lorrey Bootes, the Local vice president.

State health and safety experts have inspected the area, but no report has been issued.

— Ron Wofford

private enterprise a free ride at the expense of working people ... even though research tells us safer workplaces mean fewer accidents and lower costs. For them, one and one equals three," statewide Secretary Barbara Reeves told the conference.



"Our front-line activists and rank-and-file members need to seek training and educate themselves about potential hazards and health risks on their jobs and in their work places," said CSEA Capital Region President Kathy Garrison.

"If you get hurt, it's too late," Garrison said.

"In safety and health, it's very unique. One person can make a difference. We need to educate, motivate and agitate people to strive for changes in their workplace," said CSEA Occupational Safety and Health Committee Chairman Jim McHugh.

"They need the union leaders of the Locals to get out and get training for them. I think a lot of people don't care until something happens to them. The Local and region officers need to encourage proper training," said OSH Committee member Calvin Wisher.

WTC smoulders, air quality rate OK

MANHATTAN — While the smoke still rises from stubborn fires raging deep beneath the World Trade Center, tests conducted at CSEA work sites near ground zero show employees face no immediate health threat.

"Individual chemicals at the levels we're finding pose no risk," said Matthew Kozak, CSEA's board-certified industrial hygienist.

CSEA's test results coincide with the findings of the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the Environmental Protection Agency and the state Department of Health, Kozak added.

But despite the low levels detected, Kozak cautioned there is still "some concern over the effects these chemical may have."

Checking Liquor Authority offices

Kozak recently joined Dan Morra, occupational safety and health specialist for CSEA's Long Island Region, and Frank Cosentino of the state Liquor Authority (SLA), for a safety inspection of the agency located two blocks from ground zero.

After the attack, workers there were not allowed to return for nearly a month.

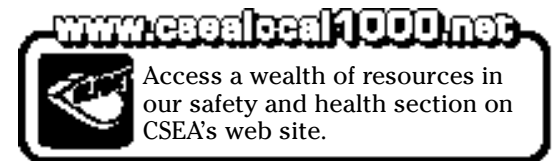
More than 500 union activists and officers attended the conference.

Programs offered included preventing workplace violence; investigative and survey techniques; lead in the workplace; needle stick prevention; fleet and motor safety; ergonomics for school bus drivers; occupational stress; hard hat ergonomics; zero lift policies; and computer vision syndrome.

The sessions wrapped up with a special program about "Free the Children," an organization dedicated to eliminating child labor around the world.

For more information about the conference or to learn how you can become active on a safety and health committee, or if you have a safety or health issue at your work place, contact your Local or Unit president.

— Lou Hmielecki



Employees careful

In addition to air quality concerns, inspections at the SLA and the state attorney general's office revealed other safety and health problems.

"We found other safety concerns that were addressed and fixed," said Kozak about poor ventilation, blocked exits and improper storage at some of the sites.

"We are not done testing," Kozak said. "We are going to follow up as needed."

— David Galarza



A textbook case of community spirit and helping children

SYRACUSE — Kids desperate for books and a threadbare library were all CSEA Central Region President Jim Moore needed to see before wallets sprang open and smiles returned to kids' faces.

In a Central New York version of a holiday "miracle," CSEA members raised more than \$5,600 in about a day to help renovate a run-down Syracuse school library.

Until recently, the Blodgett Elementary School library was little more than a room with a couple shelves, some ratty chairs, and so few books that students couldn't even take them home.

The school was built before World War I and is in an area identified a few years ago as one of the 10 poorest neighborhoods in the nation.

CSEA members, who perform clerical and maintenance work in the aging building, and their union colleagues across the area, recently teamed with a local charity to raise money to rehab the library into a space that would excite children about learning and reading.



Photos by Mark M. Kotzin
CSEA Central Region President Jim Moore, at left, talks with the Rev. Joe Coudriet, the library project coordinator for Mercy Works, in the Blodgett Library's Roman amphitheater. At right are photos of the library's interior featuring Egyptian scenes and a Renaissance-styled reading area.

Finishing touches are being applied to the library's "Dream Center," which boasts tens of thousands of donated books, a space shuttle computer lab with high-speed Internet computers, an Egyptian entryway, a Roman amphitheater, a Jurassic jungle with a resident dinosaur and erupting volcano, and a Renaissance-styled reading area.

It all started with some books

Moore said the union's involvement started with a book sale held at a CSEA conference as part of the region's "Making A Difference" community service campaign that would prompt every Local to participate in a community service project within a year.

The Blodgett Library was identified as a worthy recipient of the \$181 union members raised at the book sale.

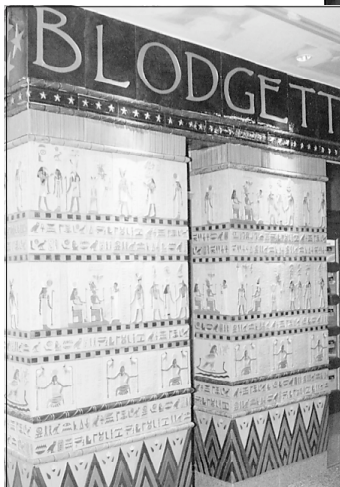
"When I saw the library and saw the faces of the kids, I knew it was a worthwhile project. I was hooked," Moore said.

But Moore knew that with tens of thousands of dollars still needed to pay for the nearly completed library renovations, CSEA's \$181 wouldn't make a real dent.

Moore marshaled his union activists, and in one day of area-wide fundraising, CSEA members raised more than \$5,600 for the library.

Doing it for the kids

CSEA member Kathy Kelly, a developmental aide who works at the Antrim IRA Group Home for the Central New York Developmental Disabilities Service Office, toured the library, helped recruit other fundraisers,



and collected money.

She said she was amazed when she saw the renovated library.

"I thought it was phenomenal. I asked a few kids on the way out what they thought of the new library. The looks on their faces answered that question for me — that it was worth it for us to help. I was damned and determined to raise a decent amount," Kelly said.

Moore said he was extremely proud of the union's effort and the money that was raised.

"This is the first time we've ever gotten together on a large scale like this and attempted to get all the Locals in an area to work together for a common cause that wasn't directly labor-related," Moore said.

"We were very pleased with how the Locals were able to come through for us in a very short time. I hope this makes our

members proud to see they are making a difference in their community," he said.

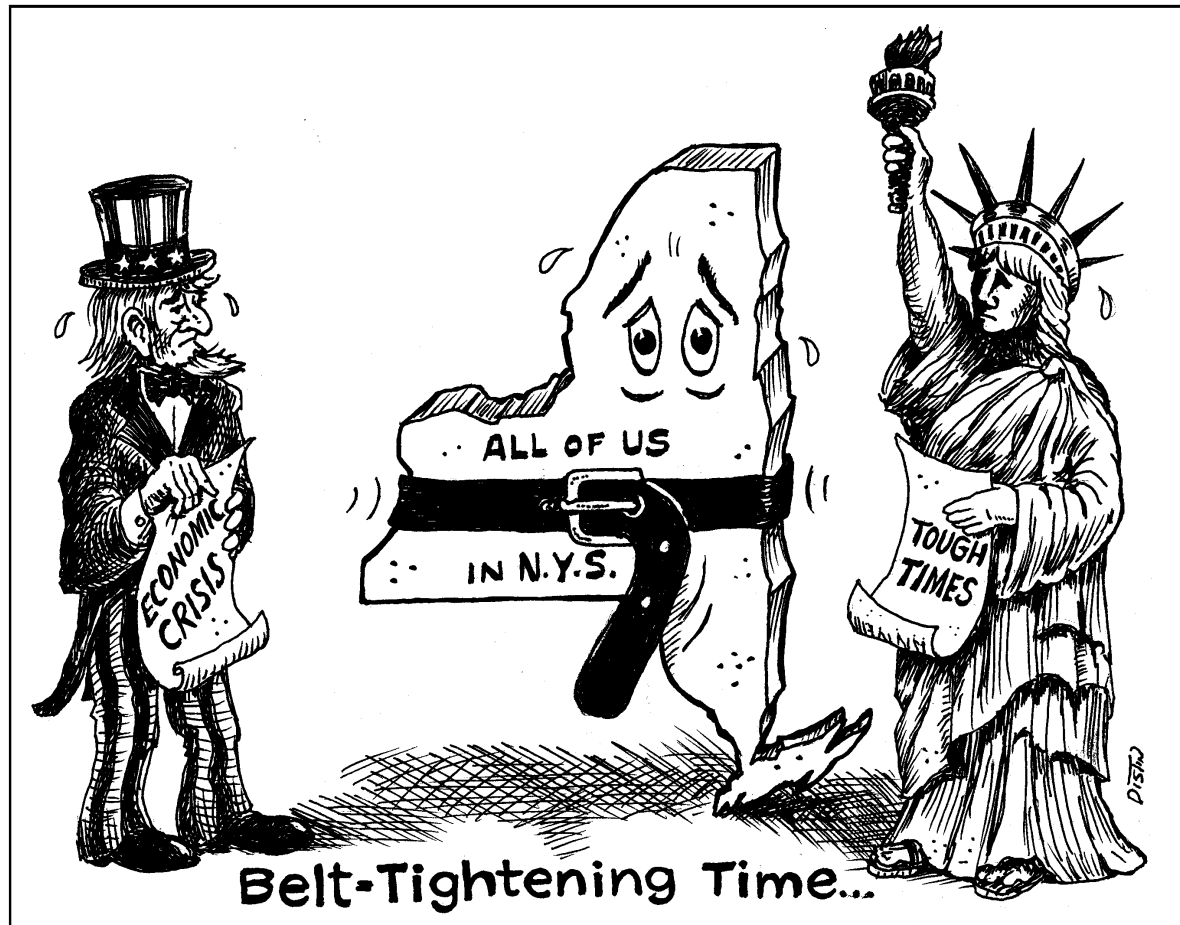
Moore said he was especially proud of the 23 new CSEA members in the Manlius Highway Department, who raised the most money per member of any Unit or Local, and haven't even been officially recognized by the state Public Employment Relations Board as union members yet.

— Mark M. Kotzin

The Blodgett Dream Center still needs more than \$40,000 to pay for the completed renovations.

CSEA members may send checks payable to Mercy Works, Inc. to: Mercy Works, PO Box 3044, Syracuse, NY 13220.

Contributions will be tax-deductible.



1998

The storm of the century

A freak ice storm thickly coated the North Country in the winter of 1998, blocking roads with downed trees and snapping power and telephone lines in a six-county area.

Tens of thousands of residents were without utilities and other basic necessities for as long as two weeks, and thousands were forced to live in emergency shelters.

CSEA members who worked in the area, and other members from across the state, met the disaster head on.

Union members converged on the area to help residents and National Guard troops clear roads and restore public services.



Also in 1998:

- ❖ The U.S. Justice Department files two antitrust lawsuits against Microsoft Corp., accusing it of abusing its near monopoly in the computer market;
- ❖ The United Auto Workers ends a 54-day strike against General Motors;
- ❖ James P. Hoffa, son of the late Teamsters President James Hoffa, is elected president of the Teamsters;
- ❖ The Yankees win the World Series, beating the San Diego Padres;
- ❖ "Chairman of the Board" singer Frank Sinatra dies at 82. U.S. Congressman and former entertainer Sonny Bono is killed in a skiing accident.

From corporate board rooms to union halls, labor puts stamp on Stamford

By rallying around an issue they cared about and building strong coalitions with community allies, union members have turned the Fortune 500 city of Stamford, Conn. into a union town.

Speaking at CSEA's Annual Delegates Meeting, AFL-CIO Stamford Organizing Project Director Shannon Jacovino told union members that ministers, community leaders and politicians have repeatedly supported union members to win organizing drives, contract campaigns and save affordable housing.



Jacovino

Called "the other capital of Connecticut," Stamford is the economic and political power base of the state.

Connecticut has the fourth largest concentration of Fortune 500 companies in the nation.

To harness some of that corporate power for working people, Jacovino said project organizers needed to enlarge their power base to include churches, public housing advocates, seniors and politicians.

She said they also needed an issue to expose what had been happening to working people in Stamford for years.

Housing was the Achilles heel

In Stamford, that issue was affordable housing.

Since the late 1970s, as more and more economic development took place in Stamford, entire neighborhoods of working people were razed to build luxury apartments.

With its high cost of living (minimum rent for a studio apartment in Stamford is typically \$900 to \$1,000 a month) most of those who live in Stamford public housing have full-time jobs. And many of them are union members.

"It became clear to us early on that the issue of protecting and creating more affordable housing was important to our members," Jacovino said. "Members would say 'we can get these great contracts but I can't afford to live in Stamford.'"

Jacovino said the issue drew the support of religious and community leaders and helped change the perception of the union as an outside entity.

"When we first got into town and started talking to ministers and community leaders, while they appreciated the work unions did to help raise people's standard of living, they felt unions tended to be opportunistic," Jacovino said.



Community involvement needed

"They felt we came in and asked for help when we needed help but then didn't give a lot back to the community," she said.

"The fact that we had the ability to organize the clergy and our members and other community groups to actually do something about this issue really changed the way that people looked at unions," Jacovino added.

Beside winning a law to protect affordable housing in Stamford, union members have accomplished a great deal more there.

"The Stamford Project is a story about what labor can do when we're truly united," New York State AFL-CIO Director Al Davidoff said.

"It's a story about building effective coalitions with the community that are based on mutual respect and that last beyond one or two struggles. Most of all it's a story about concrete success in the areas that matter most to us — success in bargaining, in organizing and in political action," he said.

— Ed Molitor

WORK FORCE FACTS

In the three and a half years since the Stamford Project began, the unions have:

- ✓ Won 28 contracts;
- ✓ Increased city retirees pensions;
- ✓ Elected two union members to the city council;
- ✓ Organized 2,500 janitors, 240 head start workers and 12 nursing homes;
- ✓ Beat a nasty hotel decertification campaign that was led by the employer.

Part of national union campaign:

"Family" man helps other families on and off the job

BUFFALO — "Family" is an important word for attorney John Aman, on the job and off.

One of 11 hearing examiners for Erie County Family Court, Aman, an eight-year member of the Office of Court Administration Local, hears and decides child support cases, making vital decisions that affect about 5,000 families a year.

"There are state guidelines for child support — 17 percent of gross income — but many times extenuating circumstances must be considered," said Aman.

"There may be children in another family depending on the same provider, for instance."

National exposure

Aman's work with families and his professional skills are being recognized nationally.

He's being featured in organizing material produced by the AFL-CIO as the national labor federation emphasizes the importance of organizing professional workers across the U.S.

"Growing up, I watched my father work hard every day, and I was aware of the benefits his union membership provided for our family," said Aman, who is president of the statewide Hearing Examiners Association.

"My late father was a warehouseman, and belonged to the Teamsters for 30 years. Every employment I have had has been union related, because of my father's beliefs and ideals," Aman said.

"As a history major, I became aware of the importance of unions in this country's fight for a better way of life for its hard-working citizens. And in law school, I took several labor law courses and became very cognizant of the great role unions have played in the development of many of our legal principles.

"In my present CSEA union membership, I'm aware of how hard my union works every day to make my family's existence a better one," Aman explained.

Aman and his wife have been active foster parents, having taken in five foster children in the past 10 years, one of whom they adopted when his mother was unable to prepare for his return.

They also have acted as foster parents for the Belfast Relief Program.

"As you can see," said Aman, "family is very important to me."

— Ron Wofford



Aman

Health insurance option transfer period extended to Dec. 28

Members who are considering changing health insurance options for 2002 should weigh many factors before making a decision.

A good source of specific health insurance information is the free *Choices* guide available from the agency 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).

There are many factors that affect health plan choices for the New Year.

Enrollees and their families enrolled in United HealthCare HMO must choose a new health carrier because that HMO is no longer offered to state employees after Dec. 31.

Check the Rates

Rates are another factor that will affect health plan decisions. At the time this article went to press, the health insurance rates and deadlines publication for 2002 was being printed and mailed to enrollees' homes.

Members who want to change health insurance options must submit a signed Health Insurance Transaction Form PS-404, to their agency health benefit administrator by Dec. 28.

The 2002 biweekly health insurance premium deductions for CSEA active state employees are:

NYSHIP 2002 Premium Rates (* For CSEA Active Employees)

Health Plan Name 2002 Family Premiums	NYSHIP Option Code	2002 Individual Premiums	
The Empire Plan	001	\$9.40	\$42.04
**Aetna US Healthcare	210	\$40.06	\$127.71
**Blue Choice	066	\$23.16	\$89.80
**CDPHP (Capital)	063	\$9.11	\$52.05
**CDPHP (Central)	300	\$9.03	\$50.71
**CDPHP (W. Hudson Valley)	310	\$9.38	\$59.69
**Community Blue	067	\$8.13	\$44.09
**Empire BC/BS (formerly Blue Choice HMO) (Upstate)	280	\$18.77	\$87.48
**Empire BC/BS (formerly Blue Choice HMO) (Downstate)	290	\$23.42	\$99.62
**GHI HMO Select	220	\$20.21	\$91.02
**HIP Health Plan	050	\$12.23	\$56.22
**HMO Blue	160	\$41.40	\$146.71
**HMO-CNY	072	\$23.11	\$106.03
Independent Health	059	\$7.24	\$39.65
**MVP	060	\$19.87	\$93.84
**Preferred Care	058	\$13.59	\$66.48
**Univera Healthcare (Formerly CNY)	055	\$15.57	\$83.44
Univera Healthcare (Formerly WNY)	057	\$7.74	\$42.00
**Vytra Health Plans	070	\$9.29	\$62.90

* In accordance with the 1999-2003 collective bargaining agreement, New York State pays 100 percent of the individual and dependent prescription drug premiums under the Empire Plan and HMOs until Jan. 1, 2003. Enrollees contribute nothing towards prescription drug premiums until that date.

** The state's contribution toward NYSHIP HMO coverage is 90 percent of the cost of individual coverage and 75 percent of the cost of dependent coverage, toward the hospital/medical/mental health and substance abuse components of each plan, not to exceed 100 percent of its dollar contribution of those components under the Empire Plan. Members in an HMO with premiums that exceed the state's dollar contribution toward the Empire Plan will be required to contribute the additional premium above this limit.

Payroll Dates

New health insurance options for Administrative Lag-Exempt employees will begin Jan. 3, 2002. If you change options, the earliest paycheck in which an adjustment will be made is the paycheck of Dec. 19, 2001.

New health insurance options for Administrative lag payroll employees will begin Jan. 3, 2002. If you change options, the earliest paycheck in which an adjustment will be made is the paycheck of Jan. 2, 2002.

New health insurance options for employees under the Institutional payroll will begin Dec. 27, 2001. The earliest paycheck in which you will see a health insurance

Empire Plan changes for Jan. 1

In accordance with the CSEA-NYS 1999-2003 collective bargaining agreement, the following health insurance changes affect CSEA active state members enrolled in The Empire Plan.

Effective Jan. 1, 2002

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

- **Emergency room copay** increases from \$30 to \$35. Copay will continue to be waived for persons admitted to the hospital as an inpatient directly from the outpatient setting.

- **The Empire Plan Benefits Management Program** (formerly administered by Intracorp) will receive a change in the vendors who administer the program. Empire Blue Cross and Blue Shield, the Empire Plan hospital vendor and United HealthCare, the Empire Plan medical vendor, will jointly administer and coordinate this existing program.

Empire Blue Cross and Blue Shield 1-800-342-9815 or 518-367-0009

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

United HealthCare 1-800-942-4640

Enrollees must contact United HealthCare for prospective procedure review prior to receiving any elective magnetic resonance imaging (MRI). United HealthCare will also oversee voluntary specialist consultations and outpatient medical case management.

New Benefit Available 10/1/01 Complementary Alternative Medicine Program

- CAM Program is administered by the Managed Physical Network/American Complementary Care Network (MPN/ACCN).
- A discount-based network of providers who specialize in massage therapy, acupuncture and diet/nutrition is now available to Empire Plan enrollees and dependents.
- The Empire Plan's CAM Program consists of a network of licensed acupuncturists, massage therapists, and dietitians/nutritionists who have agreed

to accept a discounted fee from Empire Plan enrollees. This is an enrollee-pay-all program (affinity product), however, the enrollee receives a 25 percent discount off the provider's normal rates.

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

- Provider information and other information can be obtained on the Internet at www.empireplanacam.com.

Empire Plan claims deadlines for 2001

Empire Plan enrollees have until March 31, 2002 (90 days after the end of the calendar year) to submit medical expenses which were incurred during the 2001 plan year to:

United Health Care Service Corp.
P.O. Box 1600
Kingston, N.Y. 12402-1600
1-800-942-4640 (for claim forms or questions)

For the Empire Plan Basic Medical Program, the Home Care Advocacy Program (HCAP) and for non-network physical medicine services (MPN).

ValueOptions

P.O. Box 778
Troy, N.Y. 12181-0778

1-800-446-3995 (for claim forms or questions)

For non-network mental health and substance abuse services received in 2001.

CIGNA/Express Scripts

Member Reimbursement/Claims Review Unit
P.O. Box 1180

Troy, N.Y. 12181-1180

1-800-964-1888 (for claim forms or questions)

For prescriptions filled in 2001 at non-participating pharmacies or without using your New York Government Employee Benefit Card.

Participating providers/pharmacies will submit claims directly to the appropriate insurance carrier on your behalf.

If you have a non-network claim submission, make sure you complete the requested subscriber information on the claim forms, include the original billing or receipt (if requested), and sign the claim form.

deduction change will be the payroll check of Dec. 27, 2001.

Because of processing time, most paycheck changes will be made retroactively in mid to late January and will include retroactive deductions to the effective date of coverage.

More information about the option transfer period is available at the agency personnel office.

See Page 17 for more JCHB news.

Understanding NYSHIP prescription drug coverage

Active CSEA state employees are currently receiving NYSHIP premium rates and benefits information for the calendar year 2002.

The escalating cost of prescription drugs continues to be a concern for CSEA. Prescription drug costs are currently trending (increasing) in double-digits nationally.

One of the best ways to combat these rising costs and health care costs in general is to become an educated consumer.

Consumers should be aware of what they are paying for

- Whether enrolled in the Empire Plan or an HMO, New York State pays the largest part of the cost of a state enrollee's medical premium.

- New York State pays 90 percent of the cost of the individual premium and 75 percent of the cost of any dependent coverage for HMOs, up to the state premium cap for the Empire Plan (some HMO premiums are above that cap, therefore, requiring additional employee cost-sharing).

Prescription drug premiums are currently handled differently:

- In accordance with the 1999-2003 collective bargaining agreement, New York State pays 100 percent of the individual and dependent prescription drug premiums under the Empire Plan and HMOs until Jan. 1, 2003 (versus 90 percent individual, 75 percent dependent)

- For calendar year 2002, New York State will contribute \$4.45 for the individual prescription drug premium for the Empire Plan (which would otherwise be the 10 percent enrollee responsibility). New York State will contribute \$15.03 for the family prescription drug premium for the Empire Plan (which would otherwise be the 25 percent enrollee responsibility).

- 2002 premium savings for HMO enrollees vary depending on the plan. To determine plan savings, compare Schedule I (w/Rx premium) to Schedule II (CSEA -no Rx premium) of the Rates and Deadlines for 2002.

- Effective Jan. 1, 2003, CSEA enrollees will be required to contribute the 10 percent of the individual prescription premium and 25 percent of the dependent prescription drug premium.

Prescription drug copays do apply to CSEA enrollees

*** Out of pocket expenses vary, depending on health plan enrollment.**

- Empire Plan enrollees currently pay a \$3 copay for generic drugs and \$13 copay for brand drugs (w/no generic equivalent) for up to 90-day supply (available at participating retail pharmacies or mail order)

- NYSHIP HMO plans vary — the average prescription benefit currently offered under NYSHIP HMOs is a three-tiered prescription drug plan with \$5 copay for generic, \$15 copay for preferred drugs and \$30 copay for non-preferred drugs.

- The day supply per prescription may vary by plan. Some HMOs require three separate copays for a 90-day supply, while others may only require one or two copays.

- The HMO may offer a mail order program. Enrollees should investigate if their plan offers this benefit, which can save out-of-pocket costs

All consumers are affected by direct-to-consumer advertising. Although this form of advertising serves as a tool to help educate consumers to enhance communication with physicians, it also serves as a tool which consumers use to request the newer higher-cost medications, even if they may not be clinically appropriate.

Prescription drugs can be broken down into several different therapeutic classes. Following are five of the top therapeutic classes of prescriptions and the approximate cost for those prescriptions for someone who does not have a prescription drug policy.

Please note that depending on one's specific needs, these costs may be higher/lower based on actual prescription and dosage cost for a 30-day supply.

Ace Inhibitors (help control high blood pressure, congestive heart disease, etc.). A 30-day supply costs anywhere from approximately \$75 to \$120.

Antidepressants (depression, panic disorders, post-traumatic stress). A 30-day supply retails from approximately \$110 to \$190.

Antihyperlipidemics (help lower cholesterol and triglycerides). A 30-day supply retails from approximately \$75 to \$120.

Diabetic (sugar diabetes). A 30-day supply retails from approximately \$60 to \$320.

Gastrointestinal Drugs (treat ulcers, heartburn, gastro reflux). A 30-day supply retails from approximately \$75 to \$260.

Prescription drugs continue to be an ongoing national concern. The CSEA Joint Committee on Health Benefits will continue to do its best to provide timely information about issues of importance, including the rising costs of prescription drugs, and what enrollees, as consumers, can do to help lessen these costs.

General Announcement: Notice of nomination and election of 2002 AFSCME Convention Delegates

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

The region nominating meetings kick off the AFSCME delegate election process, which continues in accordance with the schedule of election approved by the CSEA Board of Directors on Nov. 29.

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

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

Who is eligible

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

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

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

Nominees do not have to be at the nominating meeting.

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

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

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

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

CSEA Region Nominating Meeting AFSCME Convention Delegates Election

Saturday, Jan. 5, 2002

All meetings will start at 11 a.m.

LONG ISLAND REGION

(41 delegates)
Region Office, 3 Garet Place
Commack

METROPOLITAN REGION

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

SOUTHERN REGION

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

CAPITAL REGION

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

CENTRAL REGION

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

WESTERN REGION

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

Here is the election schedule::

Jan. 5, 2002

Region nomination meetings.

Feb. 15

Ballots mailed

Feb. 25

Replacement ballots available

March 11

Ballots due 8 a.m.; tally commences

Resolutions adopted at CSEA's annual delegates meeting

Delegates to the 2001 annual meeting approved the following resolutions:

*CSEA continue to support state legislation that prohibits local governments from unilaterally reducing health benefits or increasing costs for retirees unless a corresponding change is negotiated for current employees; and that the year-to-year protection of their health benefits that school district and BOCES retirees have, be extended to local government retirees.

*CSEA continue to lobby for more state money for additional nursing home staffing and that AFSCME join us in lobbying efforts on the issue.

*CSEA honor the time and commitment its members (active and retired) give to numerous community, social and religious organizations.

*CSEA educate and encourage activists to become involved in living wage campaigns.

*CSEA fight to restore federal ergonomics standards.

Scheduled AFSCME dues adjustment

The scheduled adjustment in membership dues and agency shop fees is effective Jan. 1, 2002 to reflect AFSCME's minimum dues structure approved by delegates at the 1998 AFSCME convention and reported to the membership in 1999.

The change applies to annualized salaries, not including overtime or location pay, based on salary at Jan. 1, 2002. No adjustments will be made during the year for raises or increments.

New hourly and per diem employees have dues deducted at the "Under \$5,000" category of \$4.15 bi-weekly.

CSEA's membership dues and agency shop fee structure effective Jan. 1, 2002:

Annual earnings	Bi-weekly rate
Under \$5,000	\$4.15
\$5,000-\$9,999	6.23
10,000-12,999	8.54
13,000-15,999	10.66
16,000-21,999	12.09
22,000-27,999	13.56
28,000-29,999	13.83
30,000-31,999	14.76
32,000-33,999	15.58
34,000-35,999	15.86
36,000-37,999	16.72
38,000-39,999	17.61
40,000+	18.04

Community outreach

CSEA Capital Region President Kathy Garrison, at right, with CSEA member Joanne Brannock from the state Education Department cut thousands of potatoes for the annual Project Equinox community Thanksgiving dinner. CSEA members volunteered again this year to help prepare the free dinner for thousands of needy Albany residents.

Summary of the November 2001 statewide board of directors meeting

Editor's note: The Work Force publishes a summary of actions taken by CSEA's board of directors. The summary is prepared by CSEA Statewide Secretary Barbara Reeves for union members.



Reeves

ALBANY — CSEA's statewide Board of Directors met on Nov. 29, 2001. In official business, the board:

*Supported actions of the Nov. 5 Mini-Board meeting ratifying a contract with the Field Staff Association and adopting a resolution to make reservists called to action "whole" for union status purpose on return from active military duty;

*Appointed Jean Ahlert to fill a vacancy on the Publications Committee;

*Extended lease for office space for Dutchess Local 814;

*Appointed Alfredo Carlo to fill a vacancy on the Appeals Committee;

*Appointed Verne French and Carol Guardiano to fill vacancies on the Charter Committee;

*Adopted schedule for 2002 AFSCME Delegates election;

*Approved appointment of Harry Ader, Catherine Custance, Jane D'Amico and Ray Santora to the Long Island Region Political Action Committee;

*Approved appointment of William Riccaldo, Jack McPhillips and Naomi Kaplan to the Southern Region Political Action Committee;

*Approved appointment of Sue Brill, Colleen Wheaton, Randy Rogan, Annette Testani, John DeMetro, Laurie Steyer and Odessa Krech-Helmer to the Central Region Political Action Committee;

*Approved appointment of Wilma Hasser, Roosevelt DeCarlo and Ray Drechsel to the Western Region Political Action Committee; and
*Placed into administratorship Horseheads SD Unit 6355-01/Local 808 and White Plains Schools Unit 9236-00/Local 860.

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



WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?



Know your dental plan

Did you know that only 48 percent (113 million) of all Americans have dental benefits? That means 52 percent are paying completely for their dental care. In 1970, only 12 million Americans had dental benefits.

Those of us who have dental benefits are fortunate and statistics prove those who have dental insurance usually have better dental health.

Even if our dental plans don't cover all of the dental work we require, we do have help paying for our dental care.

Employers provide dental benefits to employees for a variety of reasons.

The most important reason is to promote oral health and in turn general health of employees.

Improved oral health is directly tied to the general health and well-being, self esteem and nutrition of the individual.

Also, providing dental benefits makes economic sense for employers, since those without dental benefits may have more occurrences of dental disease, which results in employee absences or poor work performance.

Dental decay (cavities) and periodontal (gum) disease are very common in our society today. It makes sense to provide benefits to prevent or correct these very common diseases.

Many people expect their medical and dental benefits to reimburse and function in the same manner.

This is not possible because of the many differences in medical and dental disease and treatment.

Medical insurance is designed to cover the costs of diagnosing, treating and curing serious illnesses.

Physicians, specialists, tests, laboratories, expensive technological tools, numerous procedures and masses of medications are often required to diagnose and treat general health problems.

Diseases and problems covered by medical benefits are often unpredictable and catastrophic.

Dental disease is usually preventable.

Costs of treating dental disease are much less, and the complex and varied resources required for medical care are usually not required.

Because of the nature of dental disease, dental benefits focus on prevention and early diagnosis and treatment.

Do you know how to use your dental plan to its fullest?

How well do you know your dental plan?

Dental benefits are making a difference and improving the health of America, but there are limitations to all dental plans. It is important for you to:

1.) Know your dental plan. Read your plan book. Remember, dental disease is preventable. Take advantage of the preventive and diagnostic coverage. It is wiser to prevent or correct problems when they are small rather than waiting until you have an uncomfortable, costly problem to resolve.

2.) Be aware of the limitations of your dental plan and understand that if you require treatment not provided by your plan, you may have some out-of-pocket expense. Dental treatment decisions should be made by the dentist and the patient. Your dental benefits should be considered, but they should not be the deciding factor for your dental treatment decisions.

3.) Communicate with your dentist, benefit provider and employer.

4.) Practice good oral hygiene procedures and nutrition as recommended by your dentist or dental assistant. Dental disease can often be prevented but it requires some work on your part. Visit your dentist regularly for cleanings and examinations. Seek dental treatment on a routine basis.

5.) Ask questions. You are a partner in your oral health. The team consists of you, your dentist and dental hygienist, and your dental benefits provider. If you don't understand something, ask a question about it. Many times it seems as if people in the dental field speak a different language. They can explain things in other terms that are more understandable if you ask.

The CSEA Employee Benefit Fund provides dental benefits to many CSEA bargaining units.

If you do not have dental benefits, you can contact your labor relations specialist or the CSEA EBB marketing department at (800) 323-2732 for information on how to set up a dental plan suited to the needs of your Unit.

Dental health is a key factor to your general health.

Do yourself a favor: Know and use your dental benefits, visit your dentist regularly and follow preventive home care instructions.

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