

Reagan win a disaster for public employees; hard times forecasted

ALBANY — CSEA President William L. McGowan predicted last week that more tough times lie ahead for public employees as a result of the defeat of Jimmy Carter's bid for reelection as President of the United States.

"Our union endorsed President Carter because our Statewide Political Action Committee and our elected Delegates felt that he offered the greatest promise of fairness for public employees," the union leader said. "It is sad that our effort wasn't successful this time, but every union has an obligation to speak out for the interests of its members and that is precisely what we did."

President McGowan said public employees will have to take a wait and see attitude on the incoming Reagan Administration, but he said the President-

elect's pledge to move immediately for a thirty percent reduction in federal income taxes could only mean disaster for public employees across America.

"States, cities, towns and school districts depend upon the support of the federal government to remain solvent," he said, "and a thirty percent slash in taxes with increased spending for defense can only mean more hard times ahead for our members."

"CSEA is ready to make its case before any forum for the desperate need to maintain federal assistance to state and local government," Mr. McGowan said. "Through AFSCME, and in our direct contacts with the new administration, our union will do all whatever it can to make our views heard and protect the interests of our members."

Official publication of
The Civil Service Employees Association

Vol. 3, No. 6

Wednesday, November 12, 1980

(ISSN 0164 9949)

Public SECTOR

Statewide political clout in evidence as union-backed candidates score wins

ALBANY — "This was the first election in which CSEA set out to really get involved in a big way — setting up phone banks, mobilizing volunteers, making mailings to members," said Bernie Ryan, Political Action Director, "And our statewide success rate was admirable."

Ninety-three percent of the CSEA-backed candidates for State Assembly seats were victorious, as well as 89 percent of the State Senate candidates endorsed by the union and 80 percent of those endorsed in Congressional races.

Statewide, regional and local political action committees and members worked hard during the weeks preceding the election to analyze candidates' records and positions, select endorsees, and work for their election.

"We had phone banks in 22 locations throughout the state. And for the first time we had membership lists, provided by AFSCME, from which we could work to make phone calls and mailings," Ryan explained, adding that the international, through its staff in Washington and Albany, worked closely with CSEA to make the campaign effort successful.

Ryan cited a number of races in which CSEA targeted its efforts and in which the union's support was the margin of victory. Included were State Assembly wins for: Paul Harenberg, 5th District; Angelo Orazio, 15th District; May Newberger, 16th District; Anthony Seminerio, 31st District; William Finneran, 89th District; Gail Shaffer, 105th District; Michael Bragman, 118th District; James McCabe, 123rd District; Roger Robsch, 134th District; and Joseph Pillittere, 138th District. Another key win was that of Joseph Bruno in the 41st State Senate District.

Moire Greiner, Political Action Chair in Region V, commented, "We were particularly pleased with the high number of endorsed candidates who won in the heavily populated Syracuse and Onondaga County areas. We feel we added valuable clout to the outcome of two races in particular: the win of incumbent Mel Zimmer in the 120th Assembly District, and Mike Bragman, challenger in the 118th Assembly District, who won a clear-cut victory."

A number of local issues and races also received the attention of Political Action Committees and volunteers. The Region III PAC, for example, was pleased with the win of their endorsed candidate for Ulster County Sheriff, Walter Bashnagel, who ousted the incumbent. And the PACs in Regions IV and VI successfully campaigned for defeat of local referendum issues: a return to the strong mayor form of government in the City of Troy, and a move to extend the terms of Niagara County legislators from two to four years.

"Actually most of the work during election campaigns — making phone calls, stuffing envelopes, etc. — is tedious, hard work," Bernie Ryan added. "There's nothing glamorous about it, and it's not easy to find volunteers who'll stick to it hour after hour. And yet that's what it's all about, the real nuts and bolts of getting your candidate elected. It's impossible to get the job done without this kind of manpower."

"Elections at every level are important to us as public employees, and CSEA members are just beginning to flex their political muscle and realize their potential as a political force," he concluded.

Top level labor-management facility tours under way

The first four stops in a facility-by-facility tour by CSEA and Carey Administration officials in an unprecedented joint effort to solve problems in state institutions of the Office of Mental Health and Office of Mental Retardation have been completed. Union officials say they are awaiting official responses from the state to a number of union demands before commenting on the value of the visits thus far.

Top level labor-management discussions in conjunction with the tour visits were held at the Binghamton Psychiatric Center, Broome Developmental Center, Marcy Psychiatric Center, and Utica Psychiatric Center.

CSEA President William L. McGowan heads up a team of union staff and officials, while Meyer S. Frucher, Director of the Governor's Office of Employee Relations, heads up the Carey Administration team. Following an evaluation of the initial visits, the tour will move on to other facilities across the state.



CSEA OFFICIALS conferring with state officials during recent top level labor-management meeting at Utica Psychiatric Center include, from left, Utica Psychiatric Center Local President John Giehl, CSEA President William L. McGowan, CSEA Region V President James Moore, and CSEA Chief Lobbyist James Featherstonhaugh. Seated in background are Sue Burczinski, CSEA Board Member from Mental Hygiene Region 5; Collective Bargaining Specialist Paul Burch, and CSEA Field Rep Butch Ventura.

President's Message

Unionism is alive and well and winning worker justice

Who says labor can't win the big ones anymore? Not our brothers and sisters in the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU). They have waged a twenty-year battle with the J.P. Stevens Company to prove that unionism is alive and well in America and they have won.

After two decades of resistance to unionism and the federal government's National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), the J.P. Stevens Company has learned that it can't turn its back on unions and the demands of its employees. Stevens has been forced by a combination of traditional union pressure and some innovative corporate warfare to sign a contract with the ACTWU.

In the end it wasn't the federal labor laws that won dignity for the workers of J.P. Stevens. It wasn't any management desire to join the mainstream of American thinking and recognize that working men and women do have rights. It was numbers on a ledger sheet that told J.P. Stevens it was losing the war against the ACTWU. It was the membership of the union and the assistance of sister unions that made the difference.

So in late October one of the most notorious anti-labor corporations in American history agreed to give its employees the union representation they demanded in exchange for an end to a national union boycott that was crippling the company.

It agreed to give union workers at least the wages of non-union workers, ending one of the company's greatest union-busting tools. The company agreed to abide by the law in future ACTWU efforts to organize other Stevens factories and to extend the new contract to any plant so organized. It agreed to arbitrate contract disputes, a radical change from the company's previous "take it or leave it" attitude to workers. It agreed to health and safety protection for its workers and it agreed to dues check-off.

The workers of J.P. Stevens had won a twenty-year battle for dignity, security and economic equality.

It's a fact that an increasing number of people in this country, including workers, think that unions no longer matter. They question the need for unions when the government can protect this right, the courts can protect that right, and the boss is willing to give a little here and a little there. What too many people forget is the sacrifice, the hardship and the suffering that thousands of unionists had to endure to get this country where it is today.

If unions disappeared from the American scene, it wouldn't be long before the things that they have won for America would disappear too.

Each year CSEA devotes a lot of time and money to maintain a massive legal assistance program.

We have gone to bat for public employees who have been mistreated and, in some cases, we have spent thousands of dollars to win hundreds. We do this not because we are reckless with our membership's money, but because there comes a time when an employee and a union have to take a stand and fight for a principal no matter what the cost. CSEA has done that.

Our legal assistance program means victory for more than the members who are unfortunate enough to need its protection. It means protection for all of our members by providing a deterrent to management abuses, regardless of the price that must be paid to provide that deterrent. It is real protection for all CSEA members, but it is the kind of complex, expensive service that only a union can provide. That is what modern labor unions are all about.

The need for unions is as great today as it was 80 years ago. At the bargaining table, in the political arena and in the courts, unions are providing dignity, security and a measure of economic justice for their members. It's just that these battles are a great deal more subtle than they were in the past when clashes between labor and



management all too often ended in violence.

The lesson of the J.P. Stevens battles is that unionism is alive in America. Workers are still willing to take a stand for justice no matter the cost and no matter how long it takes to win. It proves that labor unions can employ not only the traditional tools of representation, but also sophisticated techniques like nationwide boycotts and corporate isolation.

And, as the New York Times said in an editorial reflecting on the ACTWU's struggle with J.P. Stevens, "It disproves the glib claim that unions have no relevance for the 1980's."

William L. McGowan

William L. McGowan

Manhattan Developmental Local 443 members are recognized

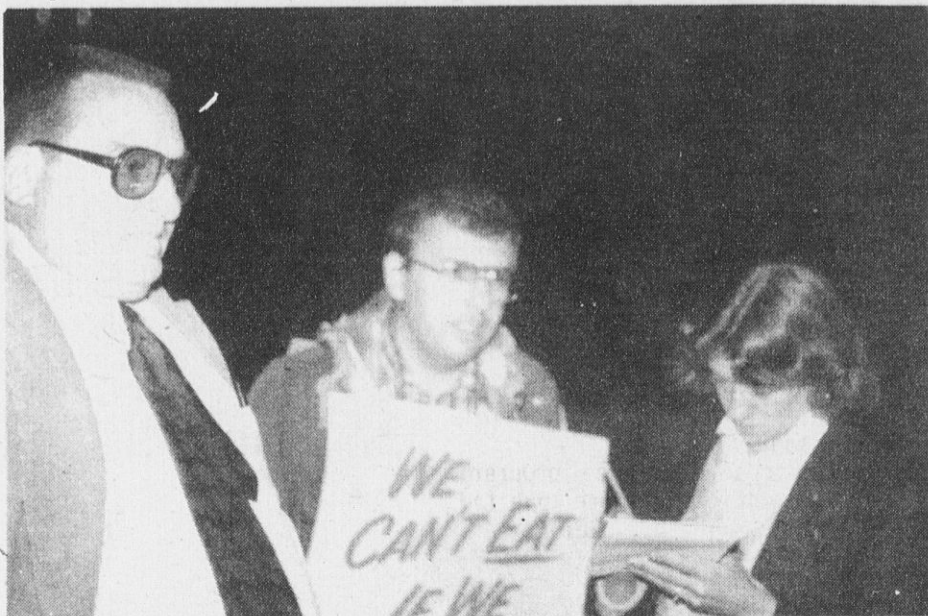
A NUMBER OF MANHATTAN DEVELOPMENTAL CENTER LOCAL 443 members were honored recently at a recognition banquet. Among those who were honored are, from left standing, Ruth Sweeting, Lue Wright, Virginia Copeland, Donna Fisher and Dorothy DeSousa. Others pictured are, from left, Local 443 Second Vice President Joseph Michaels, CSEA Field Representative Bart Brier, Local 443 President Margaret Meaders, CSEA Field Representative Andrew Collins and Local 443 Treasurer Walter Nash.



Workers protest county's no-tell policy

By Tom Foster

WAMPSVILLE — More than 75 members of Madison County Local 827 staged an informational picket in front of county offices recently to protest the



CENTRAL REGION V PRESIDENT James Moore, center, and CSEA Communications Associate Charles McGeary, left, are interviewed by a reporter for the Oneida Dispatch newspaper about the demonstration protesting rumors over the closing of the Madison County Laboratories.

continued refusal of county supervisors to dispel or confirm rumors that county-owned laboratories will be sold.

Two meetings between CSEA representatives and the county committee studying the deficit-ridden lab operation failed to produce any solid information on the future of the facilities.

The labs, in the City of Oneida and Hamilton Community Memorial hospitals, employ 42 CSEA members.

Maureen Malone, a lab employee and president of Local 827, said the supervisors explained neither the county's intentions for the laboratories nor what changes might be in store for employees if ownership changes hands.

Richard Wood, chairman of the laboratory committee, avoided specifics by saying the committee "will continue reviewing the options which are in the best interest of the citizens of the county."

The county committee is studying a report submitted by the City of Oneida that indicates the labs have been losing money since 1976.

Another report, by the Central New York Health Systems Agency, recommended the county get out of the laboratory business and turn the facilities over to the hospitals by 1982.

Miss Malone said, "Feelers have gone out to private labs" that might be interested in the facilities.

Theodore Modrzejewski, CSEA field representative, said respondents included Upjohn Laboratories of Pennsylvania, Centrix of Utica, Crouse-Irving Memorial Hospital of Syracuse and Syracuse Clinical and Reference Labs.

Russell Lidauer, lab director; and Valerie Loock, lab manager; also are considering purchasing the facilities, according to the employees.

The employees have charged that the laboratories could be breaking even if not for mismanagement.

Grievance results in increased salary

LOWVILLE — A contract grievance filed by CSEA on behalf of 25 employees of the Lewis County General Hospital, members of the Hospital Unit of Lewis County Local 825, has resulted in an increased salary adjustment.

According to CSEA Regional Attorney, Richard Hunt of Watertown, the grievance was filed in June, 1980, after learning the County of Lewis, in making promotions in 1979 and 1980, had applied an incorrect salary schedule to employees hired prior to December 25, 1978. The current 2-year contract between CSEA and the hospital began on July 16, 1979, and included two salary structures — one for those hired prior to December 25, 1978, and another applying to those hired after that date.

The agreement provided, in part, that there would be a new pay schedule for employees hired after December 25, 1978, and would include a lower pay scale both in steps and in ultimate scale.

The CSEA grievance contended that during the effective dates of the contract, Lewis County had not complied with terms and conditions of the contract by promoting employees who were working for the hospital prior to December 24, 1978, into new positions at the new and lower pay scale.

Since the grievance procedure under the contract did not provide an adequate remedy, CSEA Attorney Hunt filed a lawsuit with Supreme Court that sought a return to the old pay scale for all employees hired before December 25, 1978. The suit also stipulated any promotions for those employees would be based upon the old salary scale.

In a stipulation dated October 8, 1980, CSEA and Lewis County Hospital representatives agreed to return all employees hired prior to December 25, 1978 — with the exception of a group of head nurses — to the former higher pay rate, effective with the August 4-17, 1980, pay period. The group of nurses will continue at the new scale.

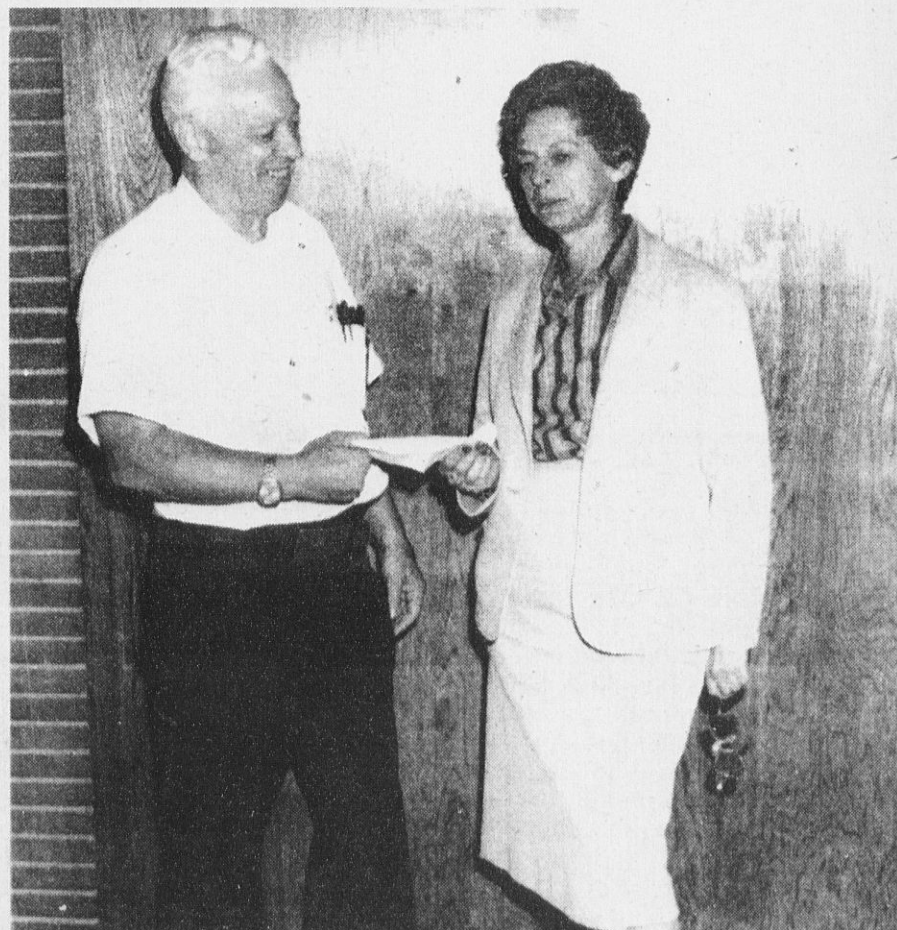
Calendar of EVENTS

November

- 12—Westchester County Local 860 Executive Committee meeting, 196 Maple Avenue, White Plains.
- 14—EnCon Local 655 social night, Sheraton-Airport Inn, 200 Wolf Rd., Albany. Buffet 6 p.m., entertainment.
- 15—Long Island Region I election procedures workshop, 9 a.m., Holiday Inn, Hauppauge.
- 17—Long Island Region I Executive Board meeting, 7 p.m., Musicaros, Melville.
- 18—Special Committee on CSEA-AFSCME Affiliation meeting, 7 p.m., Howard Johnson's, Plainview.
- 19—Nassau County Local 830 Executive Committee meeting, 5:30 p.m., Salisbury Inn, Eisenlower Park, East Meadow.
- 19—Hudson Valley Armory Local 252, meeting, Newburgh Armory, 355 South William Street, Newburgh, 1 p.m.
- 19—Buffalo Local 003 executive committee dinner meeting, Plaza Suite, 5:30 p.m. dinner, 6:30 p.m. meeting.
- 21-23—Southern Region III workshop, Thayer Hotel, West Point.
- 25—Joint membership meeting of Long Island State Parks Local 102, Department of Transportation Local 508, SUNY Farmingdale Local 606 and SUNY Old Westbury Local 618, 7 p.m., Machinists Hall, Melville.

December

- 5—Upstate Medical Center Local 615 annual Christmas party, Holiday Inn West, Route 690 & Farrell Road, Syracuse, 6:30 p.m.
- 5—Local 442 Rome Developmental Center annual Christmas Party, 6:30 p.m., Massoud's Restaurant, Washington Mills.
- 12—Long Island Region I holiday party, 7 p.m., Huntington Towne House, Huntington.
- 12—Broome Developmental Center Local 449 annual Christmas party, E & T Royal House of Banquets, Wayne Road, Endwell, 6:30 p.m.
- 19—Pilgrim Psychiatric Center Local 418 season's greetings party, 4-10 p.m., Pilgrim Psychiatric Center, West Brentwood.



NASSAU COUNTY LOCAL 830 Motor Vehicle Unit President Marilyn Crespi is congratulated by Local 830 Blood Committee Co-Chairman Dudley Kinsley on her joining the Gallon Club as a volunteer blood donor.

The Public Sector

Official publication of
The Civil Service Employees Association
33 Elk Street, Albany, New York 12224

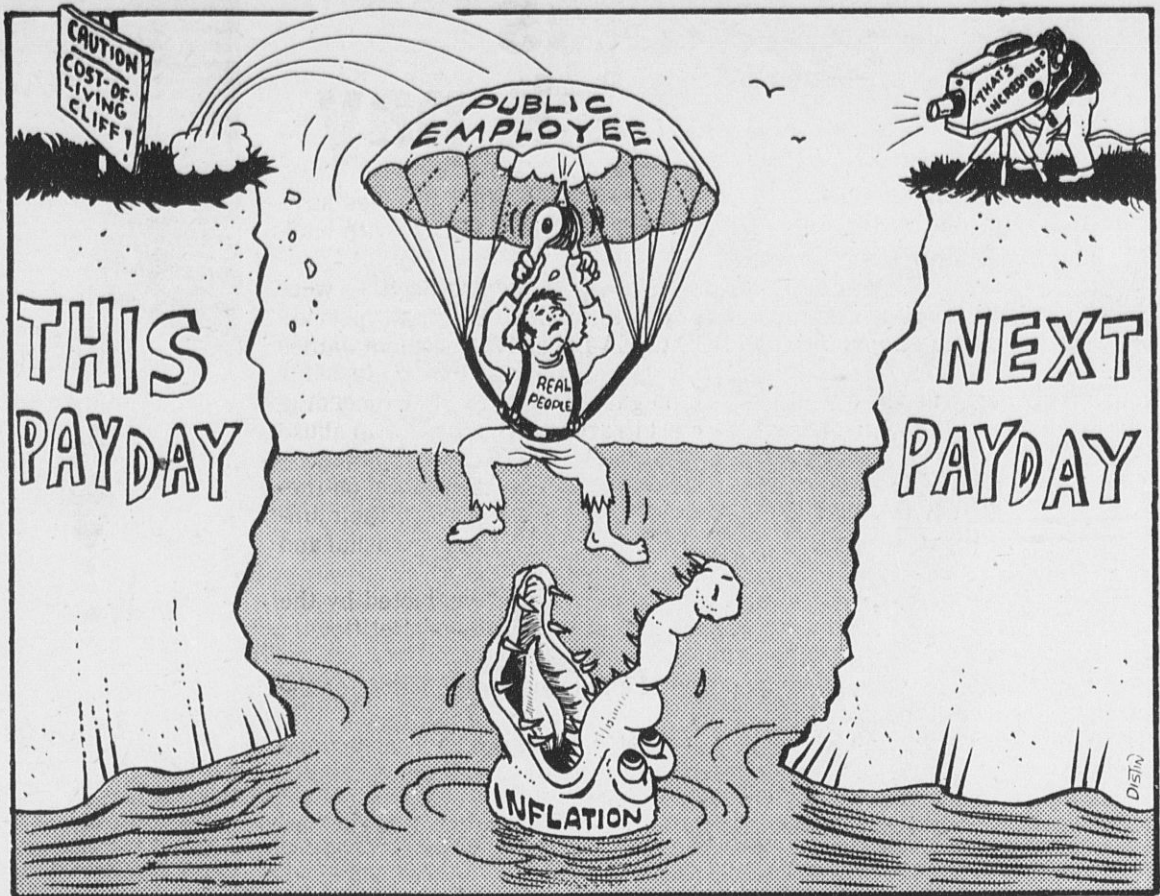
The Public Sector (445010) is published every Wednesday weekly except for Wednesdays after New Years, Memorial Day, Fourth of July and Labor Day for \$5 by the Civil Service Employees Association, 33 Elk Street, Albany, New York 12224.

Second Class Postage paid at Post Office, Albany, New York. Send address changes to The Public Sector, 33 Elk Street, Albany, New York 12224. Publication office, 75 Champlain Street, Albany, New York 12204. Single copy Price 25¢

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Published every Wednesday by Clarity Publishing, Inc. Publication Office, 75 Champlain Street, Albany, N.Y. 12204 (518) 465-4591



Nine state employees win cash for suggestions

Nine State employees received a total of \$550 in cash awards in October for money-saving ideas submitted to the New York State Employee Suggestion Program. This program is administered by the New York State Department of Civil Service. Estimated first-year savings from these suggestions total more than \$1,900.

Award recipients:

\$150 — Bernice B. O'Neill, Senior Stenographer, Department of Law, Albany.

\$100 — Cindy Radliff, Dictating Machine Transcriber, Department of Taxation and Finance, Albany, and Joseph B. Antanavage, Trooper, Division of State Police, Norwich.

\$50 — Arnold Kaufman, Law, New York City, and Frank Bogarski, Tax, Albany.

\$25 — George VanDee, Department of Transportation, Cortland; Herbert Kraut, Tax, Brooklyn, and Karen Buchholz and James Krakat, both of Tax, Albany.

Cash awards recipients also received Certificates of Merit.



INTRODUCING CSEA RETIREMENT COUNSELING — CSEA Executive Director Joseph J. Dolan Jr., right, confers with Robert J. Cory, Director of TerBush & Powell's Retirement Counseling Service for CSEA during the recent statewide convention at Niagara Falls. Mr. Cory addressed CSEA members on the subject of planning for retirement and how to select a proper option. The main purpose of this FREE Retirement Counseling Service is to give those who are preparing for retirement an opportunity to investigate alternative options which could maximize their retirement income and give greater benefits to the retiree and his beneficiary.



FORMER NASSAU EDUCATION LOCAL 865 President Edward Perrot, left, is honored upon his retirement at a dinner by, from left, Suffolk Education Local 870 President Walter Weeks and Long Island Region I President Danny Donohue.

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Court reinstates aides with back pay

NEW YORK CITY — Three mental hygiene therapy aide trainees have been ordered reinstated at Brooklyn Developmental Center (BDC) with back pay by a State Supreme Court justice.

The three — Patrick Sargeant, Anthony Cain and Ermadine Scott — were terminated at BDC in April 1978 for failing to pass their probationary period.

Following the terminations, the then BCD CSEA Local 447 President James Gripper and CSEA Field Representative Larry Sparber initiated steps for Regional Attorney Theodore Ruthizer to begin an Article 78 Proceeding against BCD, charging the dismissals were arbitrary, capricious and an abuse of discretion.

The Court determined: "That the Respondent's (BCD) orientation, on-the-job training and instruction to the Trainees, Grade 7, in regard to their important duties and responsibilities to severely retarded patients was casual and cursory.

"The content and character of the training procedures conducted by the Center officials for the Trainees failed to reasonably prepare Petitioners (Sargeant, Cain and Scott) in the disciplines of promptness, attention to duties and regular attendance which were required of employees responsible for the direct care of severely retarded patients."

The Court also determined that the lack of a traineeship program and traineeship council violated the policy of the State Department of Mental Hygiene and the Consent Judgement of the Federal District Court.

Gripper said that at that time (1978), he, as local president, was pushing for the implementation of the mandated training. He said that training is now in effect at BDC.

The Court ruled: "The petitioners shall be afforded the supervision and benefit of the Traineeship Council, which has now been inaugurated by the Respondents in the Center, in respect of their on-the-job performance during the new probationary periods."



METROPOLITAN REGION II President James Gripper, left, speaks with Ermadine Scott and Patrick Sargeant following State Supreme Court ordering them and Anthony Cain reinstated to their positions at Brooklyn Developmental Center.

National Safety Council honors CSEA

CHICAGO, ILL. — The National Safety Council has presented its 1980 Citations for Meritorious Service to the Civil Service Employees Association and CSEA President William L. McGowan for the union's leadership in enactment of a public sector occupational safety and health law in New York State.

President McGowan accepted the awards at a ceremony at the National Safety Council's headquarters in Chicago. James Featherstonhaugh, partner in the law firm of Roemer and Featherstonhaugh and the union's chief lobbyist, participated in the ceremony with Nels Carlson, a union collective bargaining specialist and co-ordinator of CSEA's safety program.

The awards were made in recognition of the union's effort in researching the poor public employee safety record in New York State and its efforts to conduct a public information program to highlight the problem and create the climate for a legislative resolution. The award is for the union's activities in 1979, prior to the enactment of the state's public employee OSHA law in the early summer months of 1980.

President McGowan was recognized for his leadership in the pursuit of a public employee occupational safety and health law. The CSEA Safety Hotline, statewide responses to safety complaints, compilation of a cost-benefit analysis of the OSHA issue in New York State and a statewide series of press conferences to alert the public to the costs of the state's failure to enact adequate safety protection for public employees, were all part of the union's activities in the safety area during 1979.

CSEA is a member of the National Safety Council and has participated in its training and education programs to improve occupational safety.



NATIONAL SAFETY AWARDS — The CSEA and President William L. McGowan, has been awarded Citations of Meritorious Service by the National Safety Council for the union's work in enacting occupational safety and health protection for public employees in New York State. Presentation of the individual and organizational awards was made recently in Chicago by Vincent L. Tofany, president of the National Safety Council, left, to CSEA President William L. McGowan. With Mr. McGowan to accept the awards were Nels Carlson, CSEA's Safety Coordinator, right, and James Featherstonhaugh, the union's chief lobbyist.

President Carter appoints McGowan to key advisory committee on MR

WASHINGTON, D.C. — President Jimmy Carter has appointed CSEA President William L. McGowan to a three-year term on the President's Committee on Mental Retardation. Reporting to Health and Human Services Secretary Patricia Harris, the group advises the President on policies affecting the nation's mentally retarded.

President McGowan's appointment marks the first time that a labor leader representing workers who care for the mentally retarded will serve on the committee. The position is unsalaried.

The appointment gives CSEA and AFSCME direct access to the policy-making process in a

field affecting hundreds of thousands of their members. It also gives the union a voice on such important issues as contracting out, community-based services, and health care delivery systems for the mentally retarded.

Prior to the appointment, AFSCME President Jerry Wurf had blasted Secretary Harris concerning the committee's report on deinstitutionalization, which branded AFSCME as an enemy of programs for the mentally retarded. The International has complained that direct-care workers were not represented on the committee, comprised largely of academics, professionals and representatives of private voluntary agencies.

The Yonkers Sewage Treatment Plant

'our goal is to make this plant what it was supposed to be when it opened — the showcase of the East Coast'

By Stanley P. Hornak

YONKERS — There has to be a lot going right with a sewage treatment facility that can dispose of 120 million gallons of raw sewage every day. And there can be some things wrong, too.

The Yonkers Sewage Treatment Plant is a case in point.

The facilities treat sewage for approximately two-thirds of Westchester County, an area with a population of 900,000 people. The treatment process, in fact, produces wastewater which is purer than the Hudson River water into which it is deposited; the other end product, processed sludge, is put on a barge and dumped deep into the Atlantic Ocean. Nevertheless, many of the union members who work there have some real concerns, both for their own well-being and for overall operations. They raised these issues with State President Bill McGowan during his recent swing through Region III. This is their story.

- It's a matter of record that during the 1960s and 1970s, thousands of gallons of low-level radioactive water were discharged into the county's sanitary sewers. Even today, a company that uses tritium to make signs glow still does the same, and there's an unattended dumping ground in Hawthorne where just about anything can be dumped, usually is, to later turn up in sanitary sewers. Chief Shop Steward Jim Abbatiello concedes that the county certainly can't control everything that is dumped into sewers, but he does believe that because of it Westchester County should pay for annual physicals for the 90 plus employees there as one way of trying to protect them from potential health hazards.

- There are a number of housekeeping problems at the plant, which the union's Health and Safety Committee has looked into, such as excessive noise levels, asbestos that breaks off, lack of equipment and tools, not enough boots, protective gear, etc. Shop Steward Steve Wilgermein notes that as far as shortages go, the county keeps saying, "they're on order," but seldom is anything ever received. Some of that may just be the "penny wise, pound foolish" mentality affecting today's public administrators. Example: a nine page order for equipment and supplies is reduced to three pages . . .

- During the warm months, chlorine is required for disinfection. Ninety-ton tanks of liquid chlorine (later converted to gas) are used. But, there's a real concern here, as Westchester Unit President Ray O'Connor notes, and that's because there's no back-up system to shut off the chlorine if there's a leak. In fact, until the union insisted, there wasn't even any security around the tanks. Now there's a guard, and he's told that if he smells chlorine, call for help! Usually, two ninety-ton cars are stored at the old South Yonkers Building which just happens to be on the other side of the tracks, literally. To get to the building from the main plant, you have to go 1.3 miles — part of the trip involves leaving the waterfront compound and driving through sections of downtown Yonkers. In other words, if a problem developed in the distribution system, you have to go on a circuitous route to cut off the chlorine. Accordingly, both Abbatiello and Wilgermein believe that a "fail safe" system should be constructed to permit chlorine turn-off either by remote control or at some other point along the line.

- Part of the secondary sewage treatment process includes "aeration" and "secondary clarification." Organic materials in the waste stream decompose in the presence of oxygen and

bacteria. Oxygen is transferred to the waste water by means of aerators. The presence of oxygen and the bacteria in the sewage form a biological growth known as activated sludge. A recent article in a professional journal (Applied and Environmental Microbiology, January 1980) noted, "there has been sufficient field studies demonstrating the dispersal of bacteria-laden aerosols from aerobic sewage treatment plants to assume that such facilities might be hazardous to plant workers or others exposed to the aerosols." The key words are "might be," and the medical condition that could result is called "nocardia"; in fact, some consideration is being given to enclosing the aerators because of public pressure from a nearby neighborhood, Ludlow Village. At the same time, county Commissioner of Health, Anita Curran, at CSEA's request, is preparing to study the potential health hazards and possible impact of occupational exposure to nocardia at the Yonkers Plant. Some concerns have been raised, however, at the objectivity of the study since the county will be "looking at its own house," and at the length of time such study may take. Employees are worried, now, and they believe the study should be expedited, and appropriate protective measures taken. They also feel that because of the nature of much of the work that they do, they should gain "hazardous duty" pay, but for the county to do so would be for the county to admit that something might be "hazardous."

- When the new treatment facilities were opened in 1978, employees were to be upgraded because the operation was more sophisticated and required greater skills. According to Local 860 President Pat Mascioli, an engineer with the department himself,

the union, "is strongly pushing upgrading." He notes delays have created problems with morale and resulted in the loss of experienced employees.

- The shop stewards express concern, too, because of understaffing. They say that according to accepted professional guidelines, 125 people are required for optimal operations; currently there are approximately 95 people on line, most of whom rotate shifts in seven-week cycles. Unit President O'Connor adds that he's been fighting layoffs in Westchester for the past several years so all county departments would have realistic staff levels.

- Abbatiello and Wilgermein also argue that employees should each have, as a health precaution, two separate lockers: one for "street" clothes, and the other for "work" clothes.

- O'Connor complains that the position of safety engineer in the Department of Environmental Facilities, which he fought to keep in the budget, remains unfilled and he notes that the department has a higher accident rate than in comparable private industry.

One interesting aspect of the system is that the plant is operated on methane gas produced there. In fact, some 600,000 cubic feet of it are produced daily, and whatever isn't used is burned off much to the chagrin of union leaders who feel it should be sold off to private industry as a money-making proposition.

Chief Plant Operator Tom Conroy, who rose through the ranks and who remains a CSEA member, admits that the plant has had, "its share of start-up problems." He adds, "we've come a long way, we have a long way to go" to which Shop Steward Jim Abbatiello adds, "our goal is to make this plant what it was supposed to be when it opened — the showcase of the East Coast."

A warning sign at the old South Yonkers Building where . . .



. . . Chlorine is



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- It's a matter of record that during the 1960s and 1970s, thousands of gallons of low-level radioactive water were discharged into the county's sanitary sewers. Even today, a company that uses tritium to make signs glow still does the same, and there's an unattended dumping ground in Hawthorne where just about anything can be dumped, usually is, to later turn up in sanitary sewers. Chief Shop Steward Jim Abbatiello concedes that the county certainly can't control everything that is dumped into sewers, but he does believe that because of it Westchester County should pay for annual physicals for the 90 plus employees there as one way of trying to protect them from potential health hazards.

- There are a number of housekeeping problems at the plant, which the union's Health and Safety Committee has looked into, such as excessive noise levels, asbestos that breaks off, lack of equipment and tools, not enough boots, protective gear, etc. Shop Steward Steve Wilgermein notes that as far as shortages go, the county keeps saying, "they're on order," but seldom is anything ever received. Some of that may just be the "penny wise, pound foolish" mentality affecting today's public administrators. Example: a nine page order for equipment and supplies is reduced to three pages . . .

- During the warm months, chlorine is required for disinfection. Ninety-ton tanks of liquid chlorine (later converted to gas) are used. But, there's a real concern here, as Westchester Unit President Ray O'Connor notes, and that's because there's no back-up system to shut off the chlorine if there's a leak. In fact, until the union insisted, there wasn't even any security around the tanks. Now there's a guard, and he's told that if he smells chlorine, call for help! Usually, two ninety-ton cars are stored at the old South Yonkers Building which just happens to be on the other side of the tracks, literally. To get to the building from the main plant, you have to go 1.3 miles — part of the trip involves leaving the waterfront compound and driving through sections of downtown Yonkers. In other words, if a problem developed in the distribution system, you have to go on a circuitous route to cut off the chlorine. Accordingly, both Abbatiello and Wilgermein believe that a "fail safe" system should be constructed to permit chlorine turn-off either by remote control or at some other point along the line.

- Part of the secondary sewage treatment process includes "aeration" and "secondary clarification." Organic materials in the waste stream decompose in the presence of oxygen and

bacteria. Oxygen is transferred to the waste water by means of aerators. The presence of oxygen and the bacteria in the sewage form a biological growth known as activated sludge. A recent article in a professional journal (Applied and Environmental Microbiology, January 1980) noted, "there has been sufficient field studies demonstrating the dispersal of bacteria-laden aerosols from aerobic sewage treatment plants to assume that such facilities might be hazardous to plant workers or others exposed to the aerosols." The key words are "might be," and the medical condition that could result is called "nocardia"; in fact, some consideration is being given to enclosing the aerators because of public pressure from a nearby neighborhood, Ludlow Village. At the same time, county Commissioner of Health, Anita Curran, at CSEA's request, is preparing to study the potential health hazards and possible impact of occupational exposure to nocardia at the Yonkers Plant. Some concerns have been raised, however, at the objectivity of the study since the county will be "looking at its own house," and at the length of time such study may take. Employees are worried, now, and they believe the study should be expedited, and appropriate protective measures taken. They also feel that because of the nature of much of the work that they do, they should gain "hazardous duty" pay, but for the county to do so would be for the county to admit that something might be "hazardous."

- When the new treatment facilities were opened in 1978, employees were to be upgraded because the operation was more sophisticated and required greater skills. According to Local 860 President Pat Mascioli, an engineer with the department himself,

"is strongly pushing upgrading." He notes delays have created problems with morale and resulted in the loss of experienced employees.

- The shop stewards express concern, too, because of understaffing. They say that according to accepted professional guidelines, 125 people are required for optimal operations; currently there are approximately 95 people on line, most of whom rotate shifts in seven-week cycles. Unit President O'Connor adds that he's been fighting layoffs in Westchester for the past several years so all county departments would have realistic staff levels.

- Abbatiello and Wilgermein also argue that employees should each have, as a health precaution, two separate lockers: one for "street" clothes, and the other for "work" clothes.

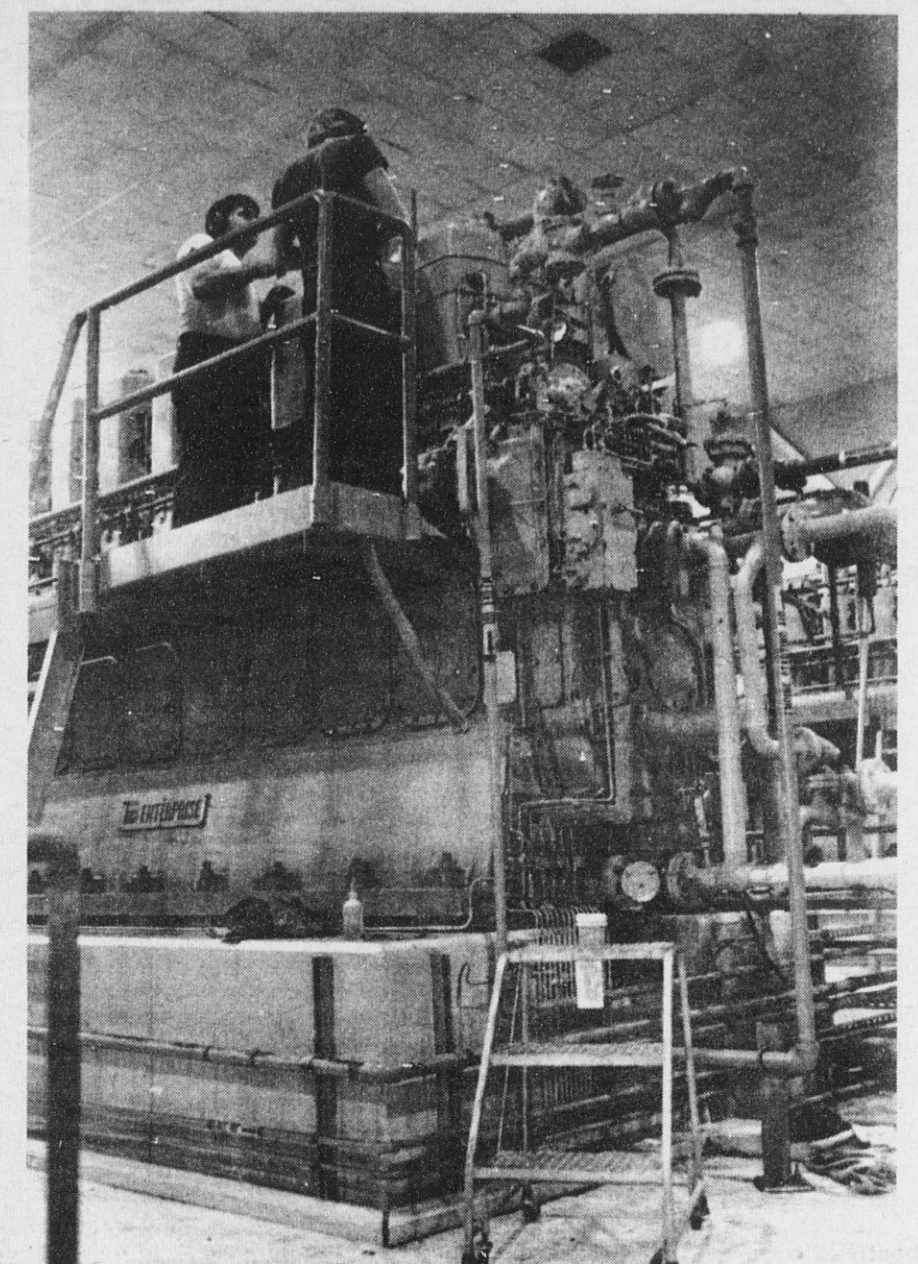
- O'Connor complains that the position of safety engineer in the Department of Environmental Facilities, which he fought to keep in the budget, remains unfilled and he notes that the department has a higher accident rate than in comparable private industry.

One interesting aspect of the system is that the plant is operated on methane gas produced there. In fact, some 600,000 cubic feet of it are produced daily, and whatever isn't used is burned off much to the chagrin of union leaders who feel it should be sold off to private industry as a money-making proposition.

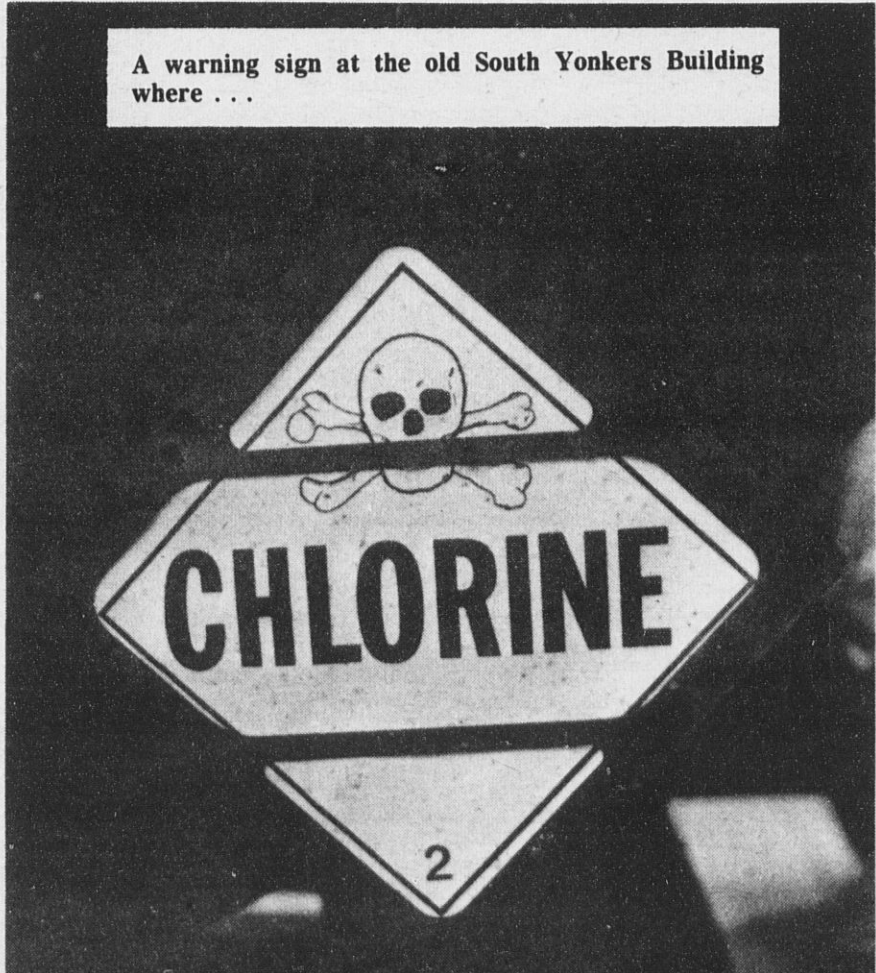
Chief Plant Operator Tom Conroy, who rose through the ranks and who remains a CSEA member, admits that the plant has had, "its share of start-up problems." He adds, "we've come a long way, we have a long way to go" to which Shop Steward Jim Abbatiello adds, "our goal is to make this plant what it was supposed to be when it opened — the showcase of the East Coast."



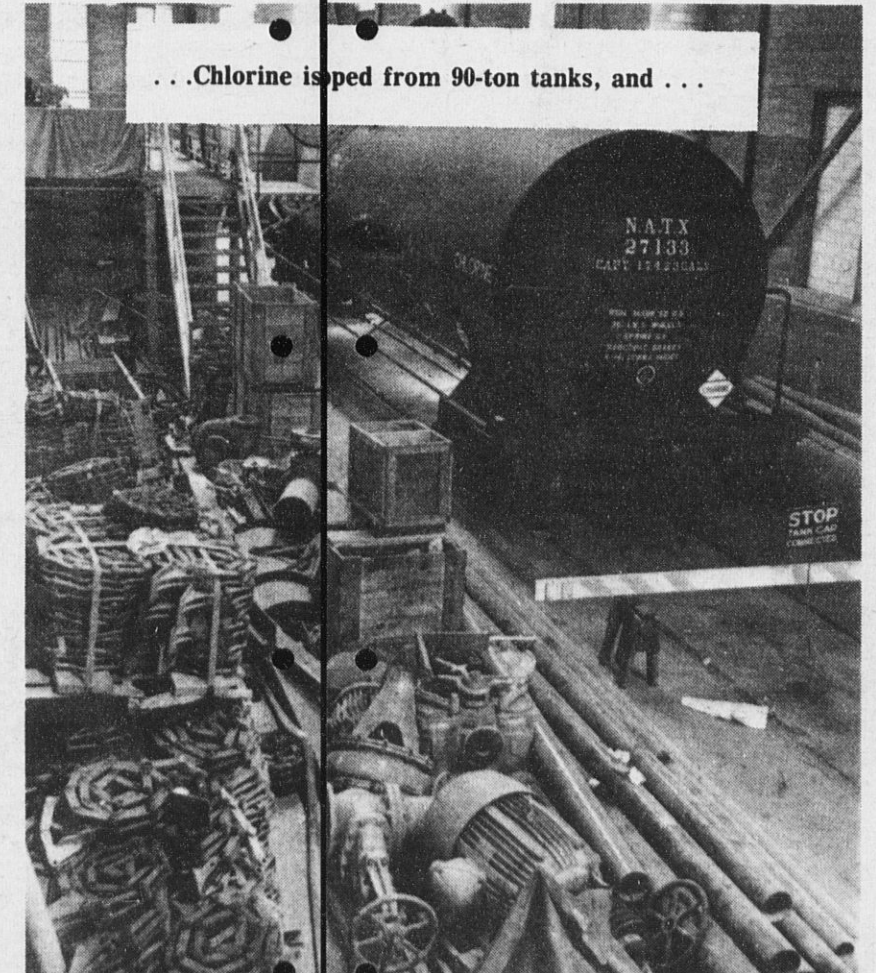
THE FACILITIES MAY HAVE COST in excess of \$100 million, but a design error requires Shop Steward Jim Abbatiello to use an old-fashioned paddle to move grease.



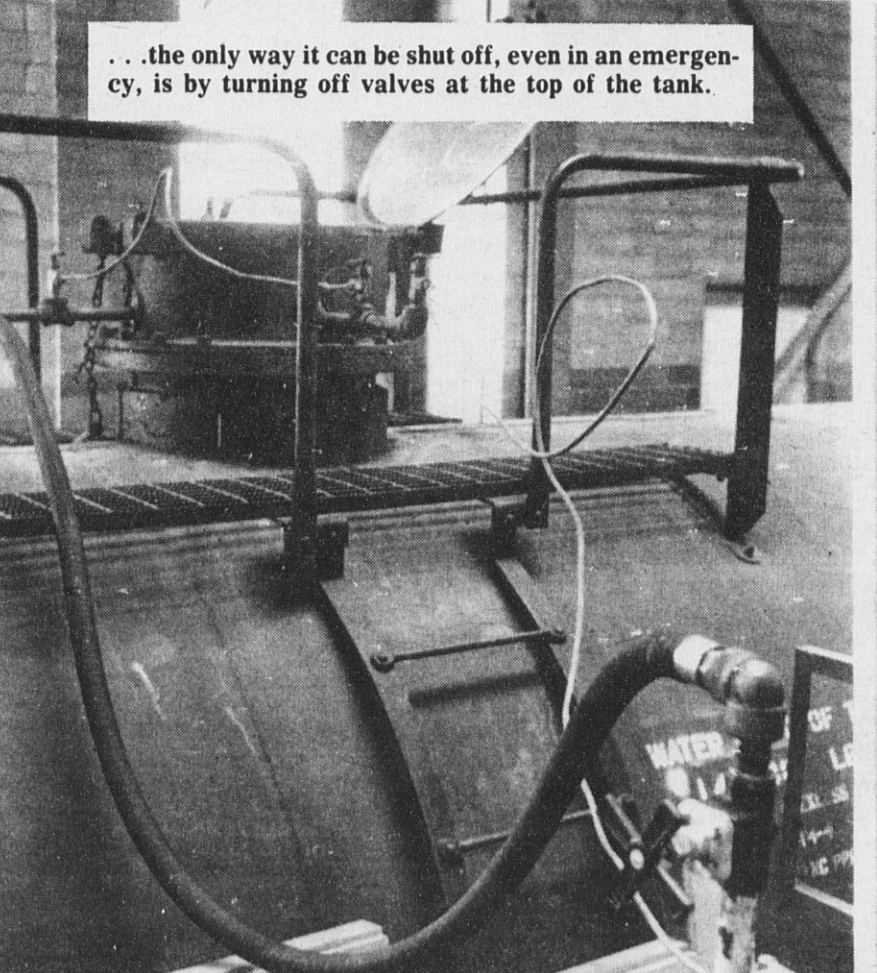
EXCESSIVE NOISE LEVELS worry employees who are sometimes required to work long hours near and around massive diesel engines like the one above. Employees also complain they don't have enough tools to make proper repairs.



A warning sign at the old South Yonkers Building where . . .



. . . Chlorine is piped from 90-ton tanks, and . . .



. . . the only way it can be shut off, even in an emergency, is by turning off valves at the top of the tank.

The Yonkers facility is a mechanical marvel, but it has a lot of problems as well that cause worry for workers and their union

Area infirmaries drastically understaffed

By Deborah Cassidy

SARATOGA — At a time when most government-run institutions are plagued by a shortage of workers, county infirmaries and health related centers are no exception. Chronic understaffing in local facilities, in fact, places a unique set of demands on the employees; demands that affect even their personal lives.

Changing vacation plans, coming into work on a day or weekend normally scheduled off, taking on the workload of someone who is out sick with no replacement — these are the kinds of sacrifices health care and service personnel are used to making.

As William Lochner, a field representative for the Capital Region of the Civil Service Employees Assn. puts it: "Local run institutions are smaller than their state counterpart, and with an already limited staff, one or two workers missing can have a profound effect on patient services. Infirmiry employees know that if they do not cover for one another the patients will suffer. Because of the kind of people they are to work in this field in the first place, they cannot turn their backs on someone who needs them."

Lochner says the situation is the same in all the institutions at one time included in his territory, among them the Saratoga County Infirmiry, the Warren County Infirmiry and the Adirondack Regional Hospital.

"When you look at the contribution infirmiry and health related facility workers make on a day to day basis, you could say that, perhaps, they are the most overworked of all public employees," he said.

But how long these employees can keep up this frantic pace is another question.

They are beginning to feel that they are taken for granted by management, that they are caught in a vicious cycle which must be halted before it is too late.

This issue has become a top priority for the union, Lochner says. "We cannot force management at these places to hire more workers, but we can demand changes in the working conditions. We want management to plan scheduling more carefully to allow for replacements, without infringing on those who are off. We want stricter regulations governing scheduled time off and pay for overtime."

A striking example of this situation exists in the Saratoga County Infirmiry, where union shop stewards Cheryl Sheller, Sue Briggs and Walter Davignon recently volunteered to tell the Public Sector what it is like for them.

Since 1973, the infirmiry has been a skilled nursing facility, where patients receive total 24-hour care. In the fall of 1979 the Saratoga County Board of Legislators voted to close down a nearby health related facility and admit its patients to the infirmiry. These patients did not need the total 24-hour care, but required constant attention to medication and diets. In addition, due to the closing of mental facilities around the state, the Saratoga County Infirmiry, like many others, began taking on these patients. In all

this time, reports Sheller, no additional employees were hired. The county has recently admitted to operating on state mandated minimum staffing, according to Briggs.

The matter is complicated by the fact that infirmiry employees are not trained to care for the confused, disoriented patients from the mental hospitals, Sheller said.

The usual work period in an infirmiry is two weeks, a total of 75 hours, customarily split into 37½ hours per week. It doesn't always work out that way, however, says Briggs. She, for example, has worked 48 hours the first week and 27 the second, with no overtime pay for the first week, because it balances out the second week. This flexibility in the work schedule has cost a number of employees overtime pay, which is sorely needed in today's economy, they say.

All employees are scheduled to work one weekend a month, and are told in the beginning of the month which weekend it will be. However, according to Sheller, when one worker can't make it in another is called in. "It doesn't matter if you have already made plans. You're told the state mandates a set number of employees in a given period of time and that you are needed to meet that mandate," Sheller explained. "What can you do?"

Because of the mandates, employees are often forced to cancel vacation plans, no matter how far in advance the dates were requested. Rarely can vacations be granted as requested.

The Saratoga County contract, which covers infirmiry workers, calls for 12 sick days, 11 paid holidays and three weeks vacation per year. But 80 percent of this time goes unused, says Davignon, "because the workers cannot be spared."

"What management is actually doing is dumping the responsibility for staffing on the workers," he charged. "If we don't fill in when we're needed, we're told we're violating state mandates. But it's really up to the county to hire the personnel to fill in."

Davignon has also expressed concern about workers who must do the work of others. "You find hospital aides helping out in the laundry room and kitchen; you find kitchen help wheeling patients to different areas of the building and tending to some of their personal needs."

Doing work for which they are not certified is another sore point with the aides. Briggs recounted a case where she was feeding a patient who began to choke. Because she knew there was no LPN immediately available to help the patient, she used suctioning equipment, which she was not certified to use, but was familiar with. The patient survived, but when Briggs noted the incident in her weekly report, her actions were questioned by a supervisor. She was told that she should have sought out and waited for the LPN. "I couldn't do that, because I knew the patient would die."

The union, says Sheller would like to see the hospital aides upgraded to nurse's assistant, because the tasks they are doing come under the latter title. The upgrading, she said, would automatically certify the employees for the work they are now doing.

PERB orders county not to judge grieving employees

WHITE PLAINS — A Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) hearing officer has ordered Westchester County "not to interfere with, restrain, coerce or discriminate against its employees" for filing grievances in a decision which Westchester County Unit President Raymond J. O'Connor believes has statewide significance.

The decision by PERB Hearing Officer Kenneth J. Toomey involved the transferring and shift change of a Westchester County employee, Joseph Carey, after he filed a grievance. Toomey ordered Westchester County to:

- "Rescind its October 1979 transfer of Carey.
- "Reinstate Carey to the position and work schedule he had prior to that transfer.
- "Cease and desist from interfering with, restraining, coercing or discriminating against its employees for the exercise of rights protected by the (New York State Public Employees' Fair Employment) Act.
- "Conspicuously post a notice in the form attached at all locations throughout the County ordinarily used to communicate information to unit employees." (See accompanying notice.)

O'Connor said: "This decision is important because it gives reassurance to those members statewide that retaliation by management for filing a grievance will lead to CSEA defending their rights under the Civil Service laws which have been upheld by PERB.

"I feel this is a significant victory for employees of the State and of all political subdivisions.

In April, 1979, Carey and other weekend shift employees at the County Office Building Complex in White Plains filed a grievance alleging harassment, favoritism and discriminatory treatment by some supervisors.

According to Toomey's report, at the Step II hearing, a management official asked: "What's the matter, don't you like your job down in the heating plant? There are openings in Grasslands. (Grasslands is the county facilities complex in Valhalla.)

In September 1979, Carey sought arbitration to settle the grievance.

On Oct. 11, 1979, Carey received notice that he was being transferred to Valhalla and given a different shift.

Toomey wrote: "I find that it (the transfer) reflects a veiled plan by the County to put Carey and other unit employees on notice that if they pursued

grievances over their employer's objection, it could be detrimental to their work status."

Carey was initially represented by Westchester County Unit Business Agent Carmine DiBattista and was represented before PERB by Regional Attorney James Rose.



THE LONG ISLAND REGION I SAFETY COMMITTEE is working to correct many safety and health problems at worksites in the region. At a recent meeting of the committee are, from left sitting, Ralph Spagnolo, Nassau County Local 830; Nicholas Avella, Suffolk Education Local 870, David Flaumenbaum, Local 830; and Theodore Ringeisen, SUNY Stony Brook Local 614; and CSEA Field Representative Nat Zummo.

New era in labor relations

NEW YORK CITY — "A new era in State Department of Labor labor relations may be upon us," CSEA Department of Labor Local 350 President George Caloumeno said following a "summit meeting" between the union and top department management.

Metropolitan Region II Director George Bispham said he "perceives a substantial change in the attitude of top management in the Department of Labor. I expect that attitude will filter down throughout the management of the department."

"I am pleased to see (Industrial Commissioner Philip) Ross and other top management of the department responding to the problems of the union."

Attending the meeting for CSEA were Caloumeno, Bispham, CSEA Field Representatives Bart Brier, Al Sundmark and Andrew Collins and Collective Bargaining Specialist Paul Burch.

Among the large group of management personnel attending the meeting were Ross, Executive Deputy Industrial Commissioner (IC) William O'Toole, Deputy IC Fred Purcell, former Deputy IC John Flynn, Unemployment



LINING UP BEHIND Department of Labor Local 350 President George Caloumeno, sitting, are, from left, Metropolitan Region II Director George Bispham, CSEA Field Representatives Andrew Collins and Bart Brier, Local 350 Treasurer John Gianguercio, CSEA Field Representative Al Sundmark and Collective Bargaining Specialist Paul Burch.

Insurance Director Harold Kasper, Manpower Services Director Al Musso and Employee Relations Specialist Joseph Kearney.

Caloumeno said Ross told the meeting he wants the Department of Labor to be in the forefront of labor relations.

Commissioner Purcell was assigned to meet with CSEA Local 350 to attempt to resolve many of the labor-management problems which now exist.

"I am confident Commissioner Purcell and I will be able to meet constructively to solve the labor-management problems of our department," Caloumeno said.

He said some of those problems are alleged racism in disciplinarys, the physical condition of many Unemployment insurance offices, uniform standards for applying discipline, affirmative action and flex time.



SPECIAL FUND ESTABLISHED: Local 412 President Vince Covati signs the agreement as Personnel Director Joseph Anginoli awaits his turn. Looking on were, seated to right, Regional President James J. Lennon and, standing, Letchworth Village Director Ed Jennings and Local Vice President Lorraine Scott.

Buffalo rallies against rash of senseless murders

BUFFALO — A city wracked by the senseless murders of six black men in four weeks came to the steps of city hall recently in a "Buffalo Unity Day" mass rally and expressed sympathy and support for the victims' families and "outrage for crimes which are against the total community."

CSEA was represented as over 5,000 citizens gathered in Buffalo's Niagara Square to hear civic, religious, labor, and community leaders decry racism in all forms and call for solidarity against "the obviously sick mentality that is present in the actions of a very small portion of our populace", and a call for calm as the police and other investigative agencies attempt to apprehend the person or persons responsible.

The rally represented a coalition of over 200 supporting organizations. A joint proclamation by mayor Jim Griffin and Erie County Executive Ed Rutkowski declared Sunday, October 19, "Buffalo Unity Day" and also decreed 21 days of mourning for the victims, with the American flag at all public offices to be flown at half-mast. Buffalo Assemblyman Arthur O. Eve read a message of support from Gov. Carey, and an interdenominational choir sang several inspirational anthems.

Many of the CSEA members present in the crowd were responding to Regional President Robert Lattimer's call for support of the rally, which included every major labor union in the area.

Local 412 creates back-up payroll fund

STONY POINT — Letchworth Village CSEA Local 412 is making history. They have just signed an agreement with the developmental center's management that establishes a \$3,000 petty cash fund to pay employees who, through no fault of their own, fail to get paid.

Local President Vince Covati spelled out the details which are precedent setting in New York State. The union, he explains, has put up the money which will be placed in an interest bearing bank account and tapped by the personnel office when employees miss a paycheck because of a bureaucratic entanglement. Workers will be required to sign waivers releasing the missed paycheck directly to the special fund so it can be replenished. Covati will also receive monthly accounting reports.

Personnel Director Joseph Anginoli hailed the spirit of cooperation that resulted in the pay plan, and called it an example of, "labor and management working together for the common good." The center issues approximately 3,200 checks bi-weekly, 2,500 of which go to CSEA members. Meanwhile, Letchworth Village Director Ed Jennings described it as, "a very exciting event," and said he was grateful to Local 412 for, "making available a resource that will alleviate the hardship of people, through no fault of their own, having to go a month without a salary." CSEA Regional President James J. Lennon perhaps best summed up the feelings of everyone involved when he called the agreement, "a milestone . . . an example of how the union works on behalf of its members."



A LARGE CONTINGENT of CSEA members joined with some 5,000 Buffalo area residents to mark "Buffalo Unity Day" recently.



MEMBERS OF THE Central Islip School District Clerical Unit, from left, Dorothy Chiaffone, June Reilly and Catherine Macie join Long Island Region I Director William Griffin, standing, and Suffolk Education Local 870 President Walter Weeks at the Region I School Clerical Employees Workshop.



CONNETQUOT SCHOOL DISTRICT CLERICAL UNIT members, from left, Arlene Ehrlich, Mary Riday and Jean Snowden speak with Suffolk Education Local 870 Executive Vice President Robert Conlon at the Region I school clerical employees workshop.

First school clerical workshop is conducted

RONKONKOMA — The first CSEA school clerical employees workshop was held recently in Long Island Region I for members of Nassau Education Local 865 and Suffolk Education Local 870.

Leading the day-long program were CSEA Attorney Marge Karowe; CSEA Education Director Thomas Quimby; CSEA School Employees Coordinator Larry Scanlon; AFSCME International Assistant Education Director John Dowling; and Steward Trainer Carol Craig, a member of Local 870.

In addition to members of Locals 870 and 865, attending the meeting were Region I President Danny Donohue, Region I Director William Griffin and members of the statewide Non-Teaching Committee.

Ms. Karowe spoke on the topic of pay equity and comparable worth. She called it "the issue of the 80s."

She said 60 percent of women are working and by 1990, 80 percent of the women are predicted to be working.

"Women are not working for pin money. A two-income family is almost a necessity," Ms. Karowe said.

Ms. Karowe pointed out the great disparity in pay between men and women doing the same work. She said for every dollar a man earns, a woman earns 59 cents.

The need for the comparable worth

The first workshop for school clerical employees represented by CSEA recently was held in Long Island Region I. Region I Director William Griffin said: "This workshop is a landmark for school district clerical employees. It demonstrates the commitment CSEA has to these clerical employees."

"CSEA recognizes the special needs of school clerical employees. Through this workshop and the everyday representation of the school clerical employees, this union addresses the real on-the-job problems of these CSEA members."

concept comes in because most jobs are predominantly male or predominantly female, she said. When men dominate a profession, the pay tends to be greater, she said.

She explained the concept of comparable worth is when various aspects of a job — education, physical environment, physical characteristics, responsibility, stress, etc. — are given a point value to permit a comparison of different and dissimilar jobs.

Ms. Karowe said such studies have been done in the private sector.

She said: "The only way to change the wage structure of women's work and men's work is with comparable worth."

"You need a union to work for that aim. With a large union behind you, you have collective strength in

bargaining, political clout, education and resources.

"A comparable worth study for public employees in New York State would cost hundreds of thousands of dollars.

"CSEA delegates in Niagara Falls endorsed comparable worth.

"For it (comparable worth) to become a reality, you need a union — this union. Our collective strength through the union's resources and political clout are needed if such a change is to occur.

"Women have been willing to settle for less for decades. Women historically have not been strong union members. A woman's place is in her union."

Quimby and Dowling pointed out that for a comparable worth study to ever become a reality, the union members must show courage, and

unit leadership must convince their members.

"If change is needed, the organized union is the place to do it. We play into the boss' hands when we fight among ourselves."

Quimby said: "Unions bring different groups together to work together. We all need each others support."

"President Carter came to the CSEA delegates meeting not because he likes us but because he recognizes power when he sees it."

Dowling reminded the women attending the workshop: "The saying 'We've come a long way' is misleading. You have a long way to go."

The speakers agreed that women have to become more assertive. However, assertiveness in the workplace can bring repercussions.

"The more employees who join together, the farther out you can step without repercussions," Ms. Karowe said.

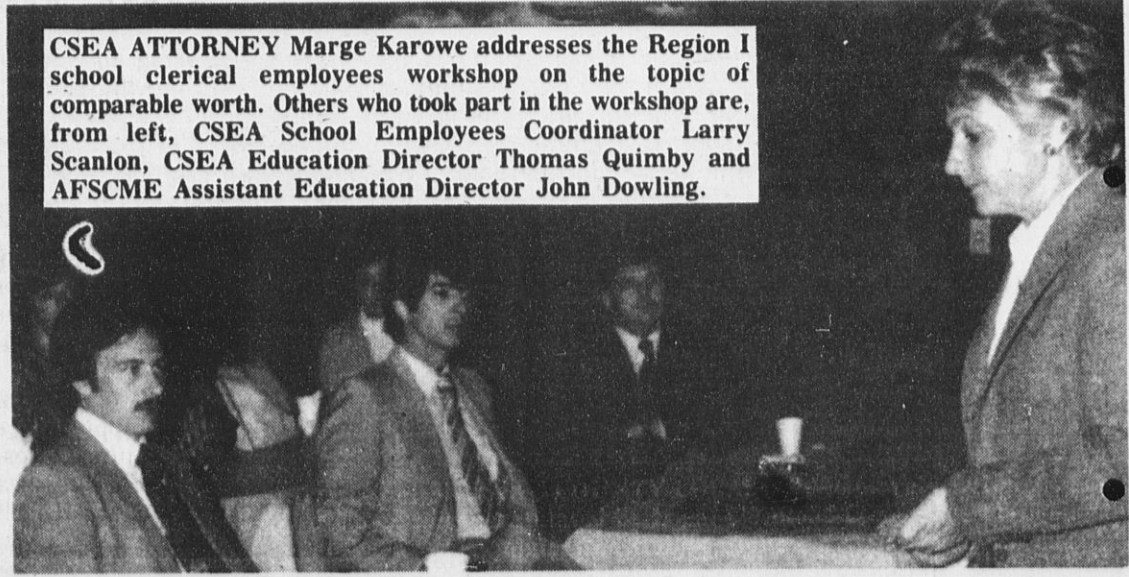
The members attending the workshop identified a number of major job-related problems including pay, promotional opportunities, job security and professional recognition.

In discussion, it was pointed out that apathy contributes to many of the problems.

Dowling said: "The reverse apathy is organization. The solution to many problems is to get organized and utilize your union's resources."



RIISING TO MAKE A POINT is Carol Craig. Both Ms. Craig and Connie Wunderlich, left, are from the Copiague School District Unit.



CSEA ATTORNEY Marge Karowe addresses the Region I school clerical employees workshop on the topic of comparable worth. Others who took part in the workshop are, from left, CSEA School Employees Coordinator Larry Scanlon, CSEA Education Director Thomas Quimby and AFSCME Assistant Education Director John Dowling.

Hundreds turn out to honor Carmine LaMagna

NEW ROCHELLE — More than 400 persons attended the Westchester County Local 860 annual dinner dance to honor retired Local 860 First Vice President Carmine LaMagna and his family.

Master of ceremonies for the night-long "thank you" to LaMagna was Local 860 President Pat Mascioli.

LaMagna retired as a Westchester County employee in August 1980, thereby also relinquishing his elected union position.

He received many presents and awards at the dinner dance, including from Local 860, his own county unit of which he is a past president and from other units of Local 860.

LaMagna also received presents and awards from CSEA Executive Director Joseph Dolan acting on behalf of CSEA President William L. McGowan; Southern Region III President James Lennon; and proclamations from Westchester County Executive Alfred DeBello, State Senator John Flynn and Assemblyman Nicholas Spano.

LaMagna's wife, Kay, also was recognized at the dinner dance.

Among the hundreds of persons at the event were CSEA statewide Secretary Irene Carr, Long Island Region I President Danny Donohue, Capitol Region IV President Joseph McDermott and Metropolitan Region II Treasurer Clinton Thomas.

A number of CSEA-endorsed candidates of Westchester County attended the dinner dance.

Region III Director Thomas Luposello, members of the regional staff and Performance Evaluation

Training Specialist Marie Romanelli also attended the event.

Many CSEA members from other locals attended the dinner dance including local presidents Nicholas Abbatiello, Nassau County Local 830; Ben Boczkowski, Suffolk County Local 852; Frank Fasano, Nassau Education Local 865; James Forsyth, Central Islip Psychiatric Center Local 404; Eva Katz, Rockland Psychiatric Center Local 421; John Mauro, Rockland County Local 844; and Louis Mannellino, DOT Local 508.

The committee responsible for planning and arrangements included Grace Ann Aloisi, Irene Amaral, Barbara Peters, Roy West and Tony Blasie.



CSEA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Joseph Dolan, right, acting on behalf of CSEA President William L. McGowan, presents award to retired Westchester County Local 860 First Vice President Carmine LaMagna.



CARMINE LaMAGNA, center, receives awards while surrounded by members of the Local 860 Executive Board. From left are Joseph Roche, Janice Schaff, Mike

Morella, Grace Ann Aloisi, Eleanor McDonald, Mr. LaMagna, Carmine DiBattista, President Pat Mascioli, Marlene High, Doris Mikus and Jim Marino.

Western Region communications workshop

BUFFALO — Western Regional President Robert Lattimer has announced a workshop in communications and public speaking, entitled "Communications and You," to be held at the Buffalo Convention Center Saturday, Nov. 15, 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Featured speakers will include Gerry Regan of the New York State School of Labor and Industrial Relations of Cornell University and CSEA's Assistant Director of Communications, Melinda Carr. Ms. Carr will outline the workings of the com-

munications department of CSEA, and offer tips on local and unit newsletters. Mr. Regan will offer pointers on public speaking, formal and informal, and tips on "thinking and speaking on your feet."

Registration will begin at 9:30

and Continental-style breakfast refreshments will be available throughout the day.

Regions I, V affiliation talks set

BUFFALO — Completing its statewide series of meetings, the Committee to Study the AFSCME Affiliation will meet with members in Regions I and V this month.

The Region V session is scheduled for 1 p.m., Saturday, Nov. 15, at the LeMoyne Manor in Liverpool.

Region I members may attend a session beginning at 7 p.m., Tuesday, Nov. 18, at the Howard Johnson Motor Lodge in Plainville.

Region VI President Robert Lattimer, chairman of the affiliation study committee, is organizing the statewide meetings to solicit rank and file, local and regional input on the issue.

CSEA and AFSCME affiliated in 1978, and the three-year affiliation agreement expires in April 1981. The committee will report its findings to a special CSEA Delegates meeting which will decide the question of renewal of the affiliation this winter.

Local 834 to host special treasurers workshop

SYRACUSE — CSEA Local 834 Onondaga County will conduct a special workshop for Unit Treasurers from all 24 county units Wednesday, November 12, at 7 p.m. in Room 523 of the Loew Building, in Syracuse.

Pat Callahan, Treasurer of Local 834, will conduct the session dealing specifically with Accounting Procedures and Financial Reporting.

For unit treasurers unable to attend the first meeting, the workshop will be repeated at 7 p.m. Wednesday, November 19, at the same location.

CSEA Administrative Assistant job open in education field

ALBANY — CSEA is seeking an Administrative Assistant (Education) to assist in development, delivery and monitoring of education programs for members, officials and staff.

Reporting to the Director of Education, the administrative assistant would: answer membership inquiries about the Employee Benefits Training Program; help develop a record-keeping system to track monies negotiated for the program; help evaluate the effectiveness of the program; assist in screening and reviewing agency experimental grant proposals; monitor disbursements from regional education funds; and assist in development and delivery of statewide education programs.

Applicants should possess a bachelor's degree or a high school diploma plus three years of satisfactory responsible business experience. In addition, applicants should have some knowledge of statistics and office procedures.

Resumes and applications should be forwarded to the CSEA Personnel Director, 33 Elk Street, Albany, NY 12207.

The man on 'Bob's Back Porch' says

By Stanley P. Hornak

KINGSTON — "I've got the world by the tail," says Bob Van Kleeck at the end of our conversation. It's supposed to be an interview, but it really turns out to be several fascinating hours with a very contemporary man who has a special gift of making the past come alive.

He shares this gift with the public every week on "Bob's Back Porch," a Sunday morning radio show broadcast on WKNY, and in a newspaper column published in the *Ulster Gazette*. Otherwise, he makes a living as a state employee at the Kingston Armory, home of the 156th Field Artillery, one of the oldest in the United States. He belongs to CSEA Local 252.

The name Van Kleeck marks Bob as belonging to one of the earliest families to settle the Hudson Valley, and he can trace his "new world" origins to 1658. He quickly adds they are, "just people," and admits that they've had "a share of smart ones, and not so smart." He can easily spin off a story, like the one about an ancestor's blue coat used to make one of the earliest American flags, and how the man, years later, was still suing the government for damages. The one Van Kleeck, he laughs, who really "did something," was the one who had five wives, and four daughters by the last wife; he named each of those daughters after a previous wife!

Asked how he came up with the trademark "Bob's Back Porch," he says it was inspired by thoughts of an uncle who used to sit in a rocking chair (on the back porch) rocking constantly, back and forth, back and forth . . . Even the uncle's conversations were punctuated by the creaking of the rocker; so much so, in fact, that Bob readily admits it used to "drive me crazy," but years later it did help inspire him.

When he notes the CSEA Region III office is located in Fishkill, it reminds him of a Mr. Fowler who used to live there and who was one of the founding fathers of phrenology, the "science" of examining personalities by studying "bumps" on the head. Fowler designed an octagon house — in Fishkill — which included something unusual for its time, indoor plumbing. Unfortunately, because of a problem with sewage, Fowler got typhoid and died, along with his "Octagon Way of Life," but there are still houses standing up and down the state that he inspired.

Bob scoffs at the idea that he is doing something extraordinary and says there are "thousands of people like me." The one thing he does take pride in, however, is the fact that everything he says or writes is "just the way it happened. There are no stretches of imagination. Everything is confirmed. I am scrupulous in making sure I get the facts straight." This leads to reflections on the difference between the spoken and written words which have been his trademark in the 14 years he's been on radio, and the many years he's been in print. He muses that "particularly on radio, the spoken word, once said, can't be unsaid," but in print you can always "write your way out." In a more philosophical tone he notes, "one thing I can say about my writing: I don't try to hurt anybody and sometimes, I may even inform."

As to his job in the Armory, Bob thinks it gives

'I've got the world by the tail'



AS A YOUNGSTER, Bob Van Kleeck lived next door to the old Senate House in Uptown Kingstown, which served as New York's first capitol. Here he points out a wall of the old structure, and reminisces about what life was like when he was growing up.

'Unions make democracy work . . . think of what CSEA has gotten for these people. When you retire, you have a pension . . . how many people are walking the streets and if they have a heart attack, all they have to show is their little plastic card and they get all the care they need.'

him "lots of opportunities for materials," especially since it serves as a meeting place for numerous community activities. He remembers the time he once taped the recollections of what eleven different World War I veterans were doing 11:00 a.m. November 11, 1918.

His wife, Lynn, "a little Irish girl," calls the 64-year-old Kingston native, "the darling of the blue rinse set," and wishes her husband had been writing as much when he was 25 or 30 years old, as he does now. Bob confesses that when he was younger he "preferred Danish modern."

A sample from a recent column on wood stoves might be described as vintage Van Kleeck. Here are a few excerpts:

"Sunday supplements of newspapers, magazines, radio and mail box stuffers are advertising stoves to heat your home. They offer all sizes and shapes, with some of their virtues extolled, as though heating with a coal or wood stove was revolutionary . . .

"Fifty Octobers ago, the first sight to greet any kid as he entered the kitchen from out doors was the kitchen stove. This time of year it would be providing warmth to offset the chills of an autumn afternoon." He goes on to talk about how the kitchen stove was the "center of household existence from late fall till spring.

"In each of those houses the stove was controlled only by the lady of the establishment. She would be known as Mrs., Ma, or Mom, but by any title, she was the boss of the stove.

"Said boss issued such orders as to when the wood box was to be replenished, the grates shaken and the ashes removed . . .

"I also suspect that there existed a kind of undeclared war between my mother and her stove. . . ."

Looking to the future, Bob describes the computer, "as a fancy machine that may destroy us. It gets no pay, no bonuses, and needs no benefits. It will result in a new kind of royalty — the highly skilled operator, and the king — the fixit man." He sometimes worries about the impact it will have on public employees. At the same time he is grateful for the union representation he has, and the benefits that result. He says pointedly, "unions make Democracy work."

"Think of what CSEA has gotten for these people. When you retire, you have a pension, and how many people are walking the streets and if they have a heart attack, all they have to show is their little plastic card and they get all the care they need."

The interview is almost over. Bob still has a lot to talk about. His work refinishing antiques. His belief that if you own a genuine antique, "you have a right to it . . . have a copy made, and get the original to a museum." His fascination with automobiles, after all, his father built custom made bodies and chassis, and in fact constructed one of the first, ever, aluminum car bodies. He's still looking to discover the origins of the word "Catskill," and wonders why New Jersey tries to take credit for "Applejack" since it used to be called "Catskill Bomb." He expects to publish "a little book," of his best columns. He's proud the sidewalks of New York came from bluestone quarried out of the Catskill Mountains. He still gets the jitters rehearsing the radio show. He loves giving his generations response to the 1980s.

The interview is over, and Bob Van Kleeck ends it simply enough, "I don't have all of the world's goods. I don't want them, I couldn't use them. I've got the world by the tail."