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Vol. 2 / No. 11

NOVEMBER 1999

# THE WORK FORCE

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

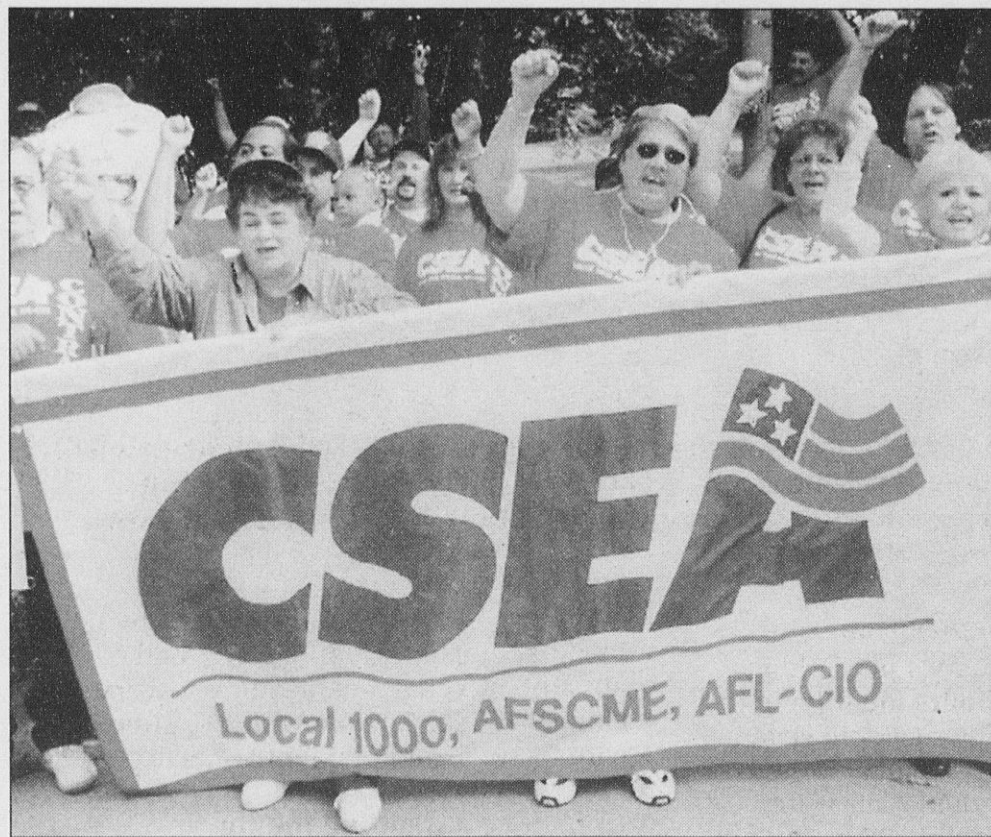
## Taking it to the streets!



The fight for fair contracts hits Main Street from Buffalo to Brooklyn

See Pages 2, 14, 15

## Photo of the Month



Led by CSEA Executive Vice President Mary Sullivan, in the center wearing sunglasses, a large and vocal throng of hundreds of union members show their support for the labor movement during the recent Albany labor parade.

More photos of the huge Albany labor parade and state contract protests are on Pages 14 and 15.

## Messy Floyd visits, CSEA helps with clean up along Long Island

LONG ISLAND — He was no Gloria or even Bob, but Hurricane Floyd kept Long Islanders and others hopping last month with emergency plans.

The storm lashed the East Coast and dumped record amounts of rain on Long Island and the mid-Hudson Valley as CSEA members prepared for the worst.

The storm left some flooding and minor damage as its calling card.

CSEA members on Long Island who work in fire communications doubled their staff to handle the influx of calls.

"We went from five to 10 dispatchers the day of the storm," said 17-year fire communications technician Charles Albers. "It was not as bad as anticipated but we still had our share of flooding, auto accidents and burning wires," he said.

"The quantity of calls increased five-fold during the storm," Albers added.

CSEA member Michael Ramirez, a dispatcher with the Smithtown Fire District for nine years, echoed Albers.

"We had constant flooding and a lot of people who couldn't get out because of falling trees," he said.

— Sheryl C. Jenks

## CSEA-backed bills advance in Senate

The state Senate's recent return to Albany included passage of two pieces of legislation already passed by the Assembly.

Both bills are currently awaiting delivery to the governor. The Clinic Access and Anti-Stalking Act of 1999 (A.9036A/S.6146) creates a separate crime of stalking, creates sanctions for various stalking offenses and increases penalties for repeat offenders.

The bill also creates a new crime of "criminal interference" for various types of assault or harassment of individuals seeking reproductive health services or religious worship.

CSEA's lobbying ensured that language to protect labor activities such as peaceful picketing was included in the final bill.

The Senate also passed a CSEA-supported bill, A.9308A/A.6144, which makes it a Class E felony for making a false bomb threat to a school or placing a false bomb on school property.

Individuals under the age of 19 would also face a mandatory one-year revocation of their driver's license for doing so.

## Speaking from the heart about contract issues, hardships at Long Island Speakout

Anger, frustration, embarrassment and sadness were vividly displayed during a recent worker's Speakout held on Long Island to give CSEA state workers the opportunity to have their voices heard by their elected officials.

More than 200 CSEA members came out to support their union brothers and sisters who, one by one, told their stories of personal and professional hardship to 20 elected officials who came to listen.

"When my child needs a new pair of sneakers I can't just say 'yes.' I have to think about that money and if I can spend it right now. I'm embarrassed to say that sometimes sneakers have to wait," said CSEA member and state transportation department worker George

Bux. "This issue of a contract and raises isn't just about me. It's about her," said CSEA member and state motor vehicles department worker Timara Imperiale as she pulled her 7-year-old daughter, Giana, closer to her.

CSEA Suffolk Retiree Local President Barbara Reynolds's message to politicians was blunt.

"I am retired from state service but I still work. Why? Because I could never live on my pension." Reynolds told the applauding crowd.

After CSEA members spoke, the elected officials pledged their support to help get the word to Gov. George Pataki.

All speakers were urged to send copies of their speeches to the governor and to the media.

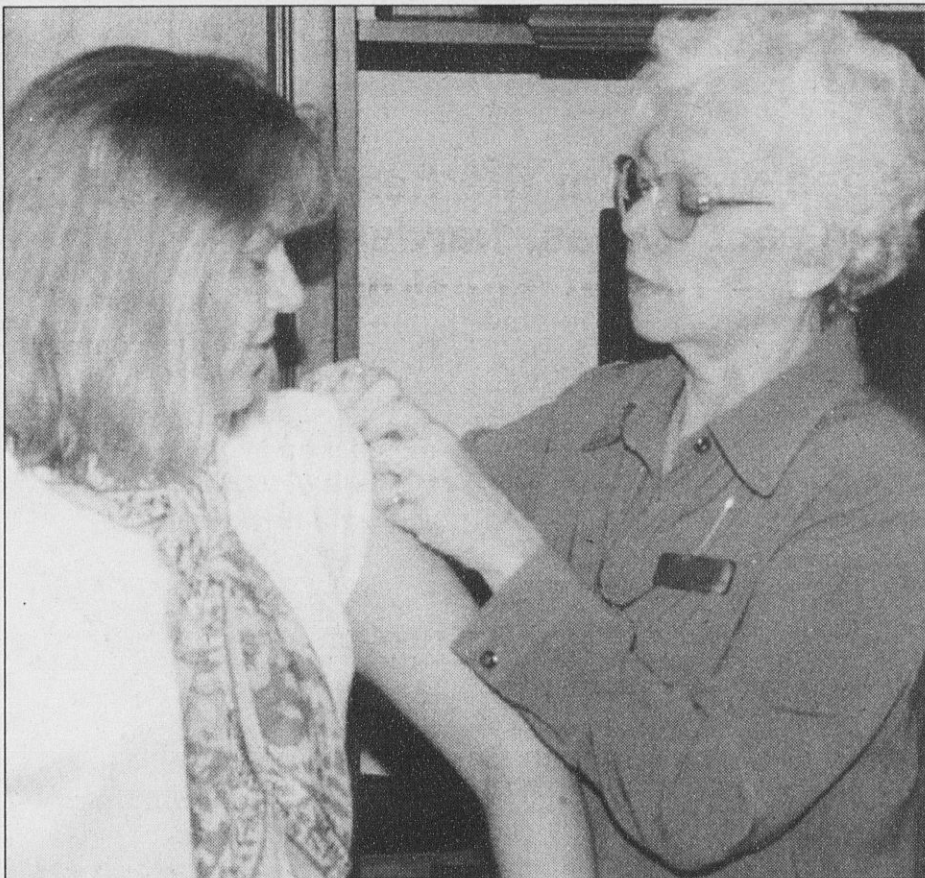
— Sheryl C. Jenks

# CSEA's public health watchdogs battle E.coli outbreak, prepare for flu

The largest outbreak of E.coli bacteria contamination in the nation's history landed on the doorstep of CSEA members who worked non-stop recently to identify and track the deadly strain of germs.

For weeks, CSEA members at the world-famous, state-run Wadsworth Lab in Albany prepared hundreds of bacteria cultures.

Members at the state Health Department lab also expertly handled the details of a full-scale investigation into the contamination which killed two and sickened more than 1,100 Capital District residents.



**TV station WRGB's Darlene Hyme receives a flu shot from CSEA member Cindy Schulte, a Schenectady County supervising community health nurse. WRGB was promoting a statewide vaccination program aimed at senior citizens.**

And while the lab was reeling with the E.coli outbreak caused by tainted water at a county fair, other CSEA members in the department continued to help prevent public health crises.

Scores of union members across the

state who work for the state and county health departments are tackling the upcoming flu season by dispensing advice, information and shots to senior citizens and others susceptible to the virus.

## Lab workers strained

As the E.coli crisis unfolded, CSEA Wadsworth Lab Local President John O'Keefe and his colleagues put in long hours identifying the microscopic strain that plagued the county fair water supply from among thousands of strains of bacteria.

"This is a great example of how the system does work in a crisis situation," O'Keefe said.

Union members and lab employees Bill McDaniels, Dawn Grock, Dennis Raciot, I. Ling Blot, Helen Kosinski and Doris Fedorowicz prepared hundreds of the small agar plates which were used in the tests.

Normally, there are a few hundred petri dishes with an agar base available in the lab.

When hundreds of stool or blood samples have to be cultured immediately, however, thousands of petri

dishes have to be prepared and numerous reports have to be typed, reviewed and rewritten.

Members at the lab went into overdrive.

Water samples from the county fair were received and tested by CSEA members,



**CSEA members from the state's Wadsworth Lab helped battle a recent E. coli breakout. From left, Dawn Grock, Bill McDaniels, Helen Kosinski, Dorie Fedorowicz, and Larisa Stephansky.**

and all test results were recorded by union members. "This strain of E.coli had already proven it was deadly so every clinical step was taken with the utmost care," said local President O'Keefe.

## Battling the flu

Away from the hectic Wadsworth lab, CSEA members are battling this year's version of the flu and pneumonia with a statewide vaccination program aimed at senior citizens.

The national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention predict 20 million Americans will get the flu this season and 20,000 will die.

CSEA member Cindy Schulte, a Schenectady County supervising community health nurse, recently publicized the availability of both flu and pneumonia shots by giving flu shots to various Capital District television and radio personalities and politicians.

"The more we put the message out the better the response," Schulte said, referring to last year's numbers and this year's projected targets.

Boosting participation in the vaccination program has fostered greater cooperation between the state and local government health departments. It also has meant state CSEA members are working closely with their union counterparts in local government.

"Now, because we're networking, using the media and every single community outlet, more seniors should be getting their flu and pneumonia shots," Schulte said.

— Dan Campbell

# THE WORK FORCE

ISSN 1522-1091

Official publication of  
CSEA Local 1000, AFSCME, AFL-CIO  
143 Washington Ave.  
Albany, NY 12210-2303  
Danny Donohue, President

STEPHEN A. MADARASZ  
Communications Director & Publisher  
STANLEY HORNAK  
Asst. Director of Communications  
RONALD S. KERMANI, Editor  
LOU HMIELESKI, Assistant Editor  
CATHLEEN HORTON  
Graphic Design & Support Services  
RALPH DISTIN, Graphic Artist  
JANICE NUSBAUM  
Communications Production Coordinator  
BETH McINTYRE  
Communications Secretary

*The Work Force* (USPS 0445-010) is published monthly by The CSEA Publication Office: 143 Washington Ave., Albany, NY 12210. Periodical Mail Postage paid at Post Office, Albany, New York 12288.

Postmaster: Send address changes to:  
CSEA, Attn: Membership Department,  
143 Washington Ave., Albany, NY 12210.  
CSEA on-line: The CSEA web site  
can be accessed at [www.cseainc.org](http://www.cseainc.org)

#### Readers:

Send any comments, complaints, suggestions or ideas to:  
Publisher, *The Work Force*, 143 Washington Avenue,  
Albany, NY 12210-2303.

## COMMUNICATIONS ASSOCIATES

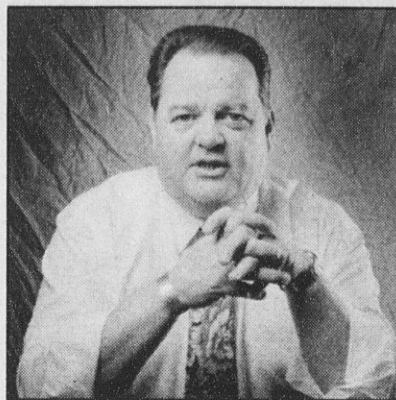
SHERYL C. JENKS	Long Island Region (516) 462-0030
ANN CARROLL	Metropolitan Region (212) 406-2156
ANITA MANLEY	Southern Region (914) 831-1000
DAN CAMPBELL	Capital Region (518) 785-4400
MARK M. KOTZIN	Central Region (315) 433-0050
RON WOFFORD	Western Region (716) 886-0391
ED MOLITOR	Headquarters (518) 257-1272

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## In Touch with the WORK FORCE



CSEA President Danny Donohue

Many members have voiced complaints recently that the news media seem to ignore large-scale CSEA demonstrations and other labor activities.

It's a point well taken.

CSEA actually generates a significant amount of media attention statewide. We do the job right when it comes to communicating our point of view to the media and framing issues in ways that make sense for news reporting.

That does not guarantee coverage at all times or enough of it. It also does not mean reporters will get the facts right or tell the whole story.

But there is a more fundamental concern that issues affecting labor and working people are receiving only superficial attention. Too often they are ignored in favor of political scorekeeping or show-business gossip.

That's one reason why we have a union newspaper. It helps ensure you get a fair presentation of CSEA activities and the issues we care about as a union.

It's also why CSEA uses television and radio advertising to make sure we can get our important message to the public about the valuable work you perform.

We continue, of course, to focus news media attention on what matters to you and your family. You can help.

Newspapers, radio and TV stations are businesses that have to be responsive to their audience. Let them know when they miss the story. Keep after them and get your co-workers involved, too.

Like everything in our union, our collective action is greater than the sum of its parts. This is just as important when it comes to media attention. The pressure you create in your local community for reporters to follow our story will help us in our contract and legislative battles.

## Manhattan Psych at the crossroads:

# Reaching outside the walls for help to survive

CSEA members working at the Manhattan Psychiatric Center (MPC) are trying to save their facility by reaching out to the community.

Ravaged by budget cuts and the scheduled loss of 20 percent of staff by March, union members at this large downstate facility have watched an endless parade of unprepared clients being released onto the streets.

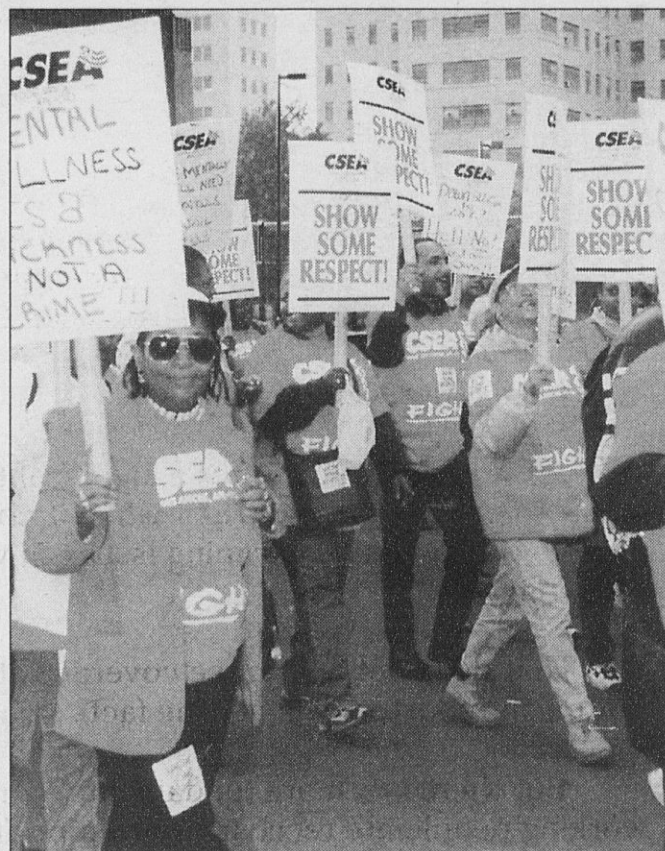
Now, union members are finding strength and support in the community for their struggle to survive.

More than 250 CSEA members at MPC took their message to the streets recently to inform the

surrounding communities about these and other workplace problems.

They enlisted the help of area community leaders, church leaders, and politicians, led by the Rev. Al Sharpton of the National Action Network and Ollie B. Wells of the New York Conference of Ministers, to get their message out.

Participants marched from the psychiatric center on Wards Island through the heart of Harlem to the State Office Building. They chanted and blew whistles to bring attention to what union leaders called New York State's darkest secret — the disgraceful actions of the state Office of Mental Health.



CSEA Manhattan Psychiatric Center workers take their message of workplace problems to the streets.

### Issue affects all

"At its heart, this is a community issue. These cuts affect the entire community," said CSEA Metropolitan Region President George Boncoraglio.

"The mentally ill of Manhattan can no longer receive mental health care locally, and they suffer. A large number of jobs will be lost, which has long-term economic

effects on the community. And it puts the entire community in danger," Boncoraglio added. Potentially violent patients are forced out of MPC and released to the streets because of the drastic shortage of state-financed supervised housing and outpatient services, employees said.

Every morning on their way to work and school, Harlem residents must step over former MPC patients who are now living on the streets.

"The mentally ill deserve better and the people of Harlem deserve better," Boncoraglio said.

"These shameful cuts are a recipe for disaster. If another tragedy like that of Kendra Webdale occurs as a result, the state will have blood on its hands," the region president said.

Webdale was pushed to her death on New York City subway tracks by a former state mental health client.

### Reaching out for strength

"By reaching out to community and religious leaders, we are broadening our fight to include others that will be affected by these cuts," said MPC local President Maxine Rice.

"We must stop the early releases and nonexistent after-care to have safe environments, workplaces, and homes. Residents of this community must be made aware of the danger these cuts present," Rice said.

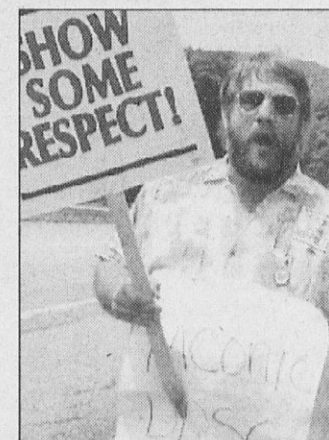
— Ann Carroll

See related story on Page 16

## Voices of the Work Force

**“**We don't have enough staff. Last year, a client nearly choked to death. At that time, we had one staff person for 10 residents. Now they want us to work three night shifts and two day shifts in one week so they can cover the overtime. And they've taken away all weekend passes. I don't mind working 40 hours, but it should be the same shift all week. Some of our employees are taking care of elderly parents or children and they tell us it's just too bad that they are disrupting our lives.**”**

Steve Muller, developmental aide — Taconic DDSO



# Poll shows public doesn't want private prisons

The union movement's dislike for privately run prisons is echoing in the public.

A year after CSEA and its international affiliate, the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), began a fight to defeat a scheme to build a private federal prison in Sullivan County, a national poll shows Americans also distrust and dislike the concept of prisons for hire.

A survey commissioned by AFSCME found a majority of the public (51 percent opposed, 34 percent strongly)

is opposed to contracting out prisons. "It's clear that profit and prisons don't mix," said CSEA President Danny Donohue.

"All over the country we have heard state and local officials lament their earlier decisions to support for-profit prisons," said Gerald McEntee, president of AFSCME.

"These decision makers come to resent and regret these money-making enterprises because they have learned the hard way that these companies are accountable only to their stockholders, not the taxpayers," McEntee added.

CSEA lobbied state lawmakers the last few years to pass a law that prohibits for-profit state prisons.

On the federal level, CSEA and AFSCME are supporting legislation

that would make it more difficult to contract out correctional services.

This move to prohibit the contracting out of federal corrections facilities is gaining widespread bipartisan support, union leaders said.

The for-profit prisons operating in some states have had serious security problems.

More than 40 assaults, including 20 stabbings and two inmate homicides, occurred in an Ohio for-profit prison.

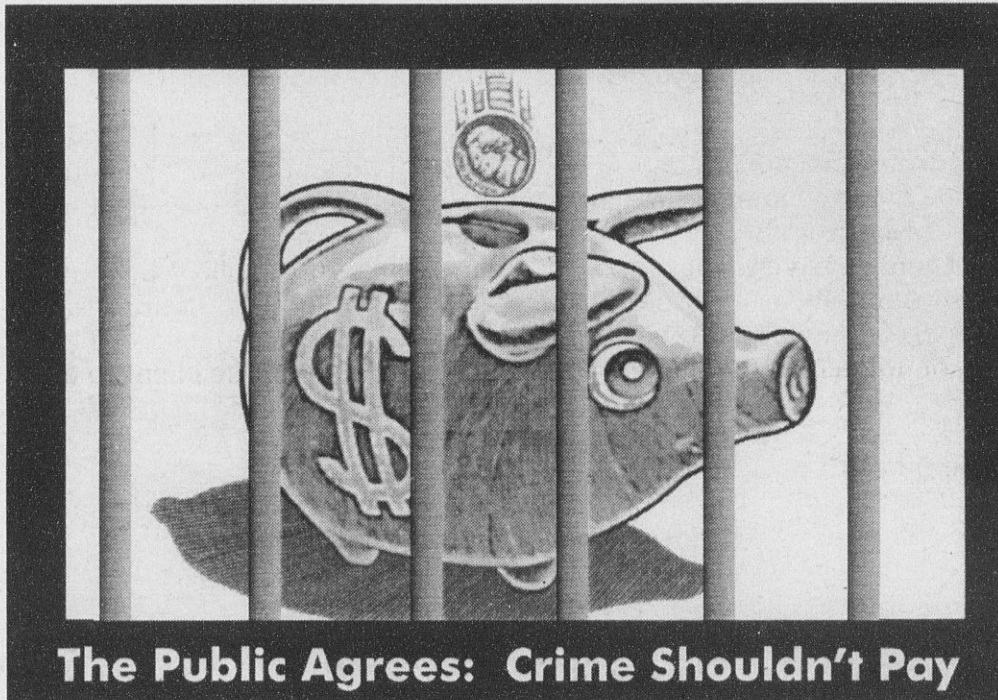
New Mexico's for-profit lockups saw four inmate deaths and a guard murdered the last year.

The poll also showed voters believe government-run prisons are better equipped than private companies to handle violent criminals.

Poll respondents also said they believe government-run prisons are more accountable, are harder to escape from, and do a better job protecting the public.

"It is the job of government — and not the lowest bidder — to maintain the prison system and protect the public," Donohue said.

CSEA REPRESENTS  
**Corrections  
and Law  
Enforcement**  
15,000 WORKERS IN THIS INDUSTRY



## Voices of the Work Force

**T**he cost of living in this area keeps rising and our salary isn't going up. Our pay doesn't keep up, and it's imperative that we keep what we have with our medical and dental coverage. What the state offered us, we feel we're worth more than that."

Carol Mitrzyk, keyboard specialist — guidance department, Marcy Correctional Facility



# CSEA members in Adult Protective Services make a difference

GOSHEN — Yvonne Sturm likes the idea she's helping adults maintain their independence.

And that's important, especially when she thinks of her widowed mother.

"Most of us can relate to that," she said. "It's the way you'd want to see your own family."

Sturm, a case supervisor with the Adult Protective Services Division of the Orange County Department of Social Services, sees to it that her clients get the services

they need to remain independent or, if needed, helps her clients with placement in an appropriate facility.

The focus of Adult Protective Services, said Sturm, is helping disabled individuals take care of their needs, whether the disability is mental or physical.

Clients range in age from 18-year-old young adults to elderly. Their problems may include substance abuse, or they may be former mental health patients, developmentally disabled or elderly persons physically unable to care for themselves.

Once a referral is made, the caseworker does an assessment of the person's condition and determines the person's needs.

Sturm said a client may refuse help — and it is his or her right to refuse.

"Then we have to make a decision," she said. "Does the person understand the risk of not accepting help? Then it's up to the caseworker to call in a mental health professional to make a determination."

In some cases, a client may be appointed a guardian by the court to oversee the client's affairs.

"We had a woman who was leaving her stove on

and she would wander into the road after her cat," said Sturm.

"She wanted to stay in her home, so the judge ordered that someone should live with the woman and take care of her needs. Eventually, she had a stroke and ended up in a nursing home," Sturm said.

Sturm said caseworkers have performed services such as managing a client's money for them — paying their bills, shopping or setting up a budget.

## Stopping elder abuse

Sturm's department also investigates reports of elder abuse.

"Most abuse comes from the person's own family," she said.

In these cases, the caseworker will help the client obtain an order of protection from the court or get services for the relative.

"We may suggest the client be moved into a supervised living situation," said Sturm, "or we'll provide the caregiver with part-time help or send the client to an adult day care situation for a couple of hours a day."

Protective services for adults are free to all adults regardless of income. For more information, contact the county Department of Social Services or call 1-800-342-3009.

— Anita Manley



Frank Alteio, Yvonne Sturm and Victoria Caruso of the Orange County Department of Social Services discuss an Adult Protective Services case.

## Voices of the Work Force

**"T**he hardest part of my job is trying to calm angry complainants. Some of the stories I hear from them are really very sad."

Barbara Maniscalco, law stenographer — CSEA Courts Local, Long Island



# Tugboat roundup propels canal system into spotlight

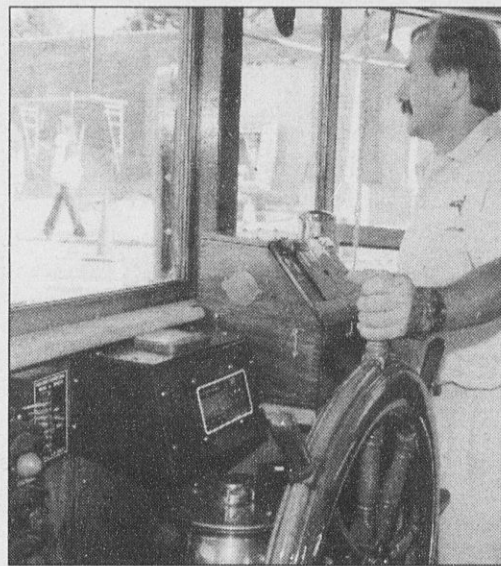
WATERFORD — CSEA members John Callaghan and Tom Doin eased tons of floating metal and growling diesels toward shore on a recent sun-splattered day, part of a display of union pride and state heritage that is becoming the backbone of the state barge canal system.

Union members, including tugboat captains, maintenance workers and others, are playing an increasingly bigger role in operating and maintaining the watery highway of commerce and tourism that bisects the state.

Callaghan and Doin and former tugboat captain Steve Wunder developed the state's first tugboat roundup on the shores of this river city to give residents a snapshot view of the canal system.

The event, the first for Waterford, was a fitting showcase for the state's floating workhorses — blue and yellow tugboats that shepherd the annual flotillas of commercial and pleasure boats from New York City to Buffalo.

"Events that celebrate the history and heritage of our canal communities in general are desirable, as they represent the best of the past and hopefully the future," Callaghan said.



Thousands of visitors learned more about the importance of the Barge Canal to the state's early development and industrial economy during the daylong event.

**Tugboat captain and CSEA member Tom Doin, at left, maneuvers a tugboat to the Waterford dock. Member Nancy Kakule, above right, secures the tug's mooring lines during a tugboat roundup which showcased the state's Barge Canal.**



Not content with a one-year success, Doin and Callaghan are planning a three-day tugboat rendezvous next summer, also in Waterford.

"We are not only reviving our history with events like this, but also inventing a brighter future as we look forward to a continuing increase in recreational and commercial use of the canal system," Callaghan said.

This year's success and their plans for next year have attracted considerable attention.

"CSEA members like Doin, Wunder and our CSEA Local President Ed Suprenant are committed to excellence in the workplace but also to improving our communities through civic involvement," said CSEA Capital Region President Carmen Bagnoli.

"We hope that when the boating public learns to appreciate the canal they will support our demands at the bargaining table," said CSEA President Danny Donohue.

Contract negotiations for CSEA members who work at the state Canal Corporation began in March. Negotiators for both sides have been meeting regularly.

Some union members who work for the state Canal Corp. see the waterway as a historic treasure and a link to the state's future.

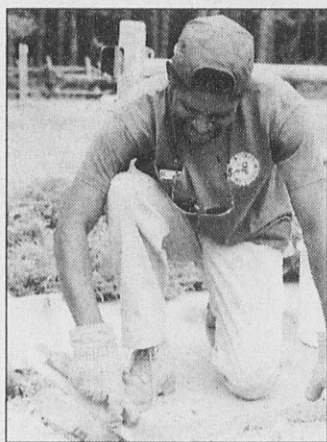
"It's a great way to build bridges into the future of the local community for the Canal Corporation and the canal workers. It's our past and our future," Suprenant said.

CSEA leaders who work along the Barge Canal can get more information about hosting similar tugboat roundups by writing CSEA Eastern Barge Canal Local, Waterford Canal Shop, 200 Davis Ave., Waterford N.Y. 12188.

— Daniel X. Campbell



## Voices of the Work Force



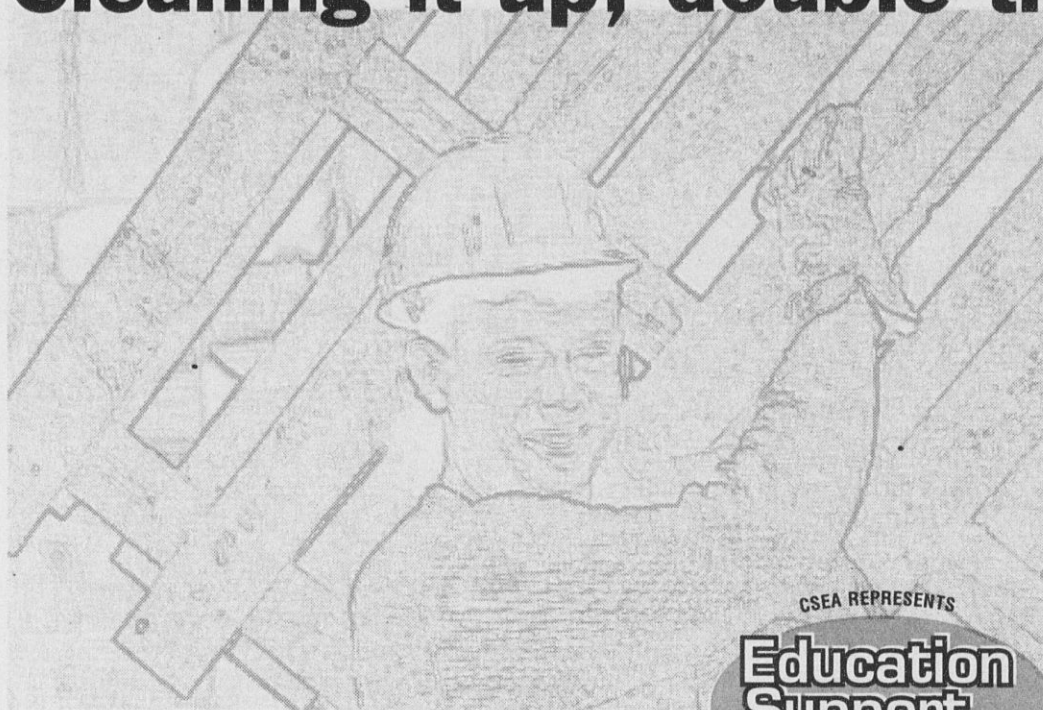
**"W**e've got seven locks in our section and a bunch of reservoirs. We're really busy in the summer, cutting a lot of grass, cutting fallen trees, putting in bike paths. I like the summer work we do, but I hate the winters — it's too cold for me."

**Keith Frazier, maintenance assistant — state Canal Corp. Lock 20, Marcy**



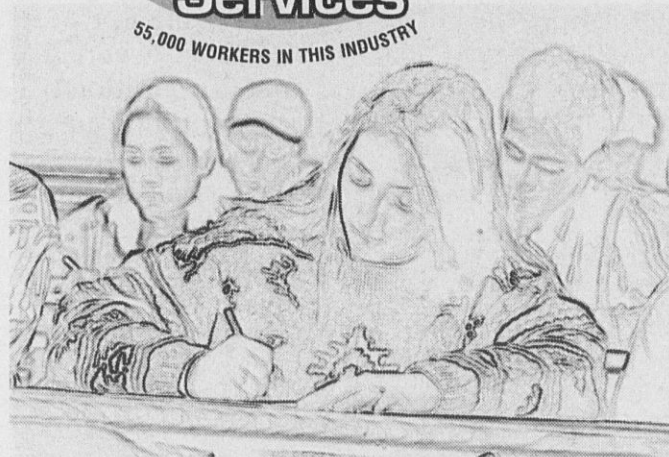
**Reading, writing and renovation:**

# Cleaning it up, double time, in Rockland Co.



CSEA REPRESENTS  
**Education  
Support  
Services**  
55,000 WORKERS IN THIS INDUSTRY

*“You know, school districts are so teacher oriented that we forget the custodial staff, without whom we couldn’t open our doors.”*



NANUET — They had only one month because of delays in state funding, but Nanuet School District grounds and custodial employees hustled mightily to prepare a newly renovated school building for the first day of school.

This effort is one of several examples of CSEA members saving taxpayers hundreds of thousands of dollars by doing school renovations and classroom maintenance instead of private contractors.

“Our guys assembled all the furniture,” said Unit President Joe Zippilli.

“They also cleaned the windows and the rooms, moving furniture between buildings. Meanwhile, they were still doing their regular jobs. Many of them worked weekends to get the job done,” he added.

After letting the Rockland County Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) use the elementary school for 12 years, growing enrollments forced the district to reclaim the building.

District officials applied for state aid to renovate the 80-year-old building, and work started only weeks before school began.

“We had a lot of cooperation from everybody,” said school district Business Manager Phil Sions.

“You know, school districts are so teacher oriented that we forget the custodial staff, without whom we couldn’t open our doors.”

“Everyone pitched in,” added school Superintendent Mark McNeill.

“It was great to have that cooperation. Opening day went very well. It was an extraordinary effort,” McNeill said.

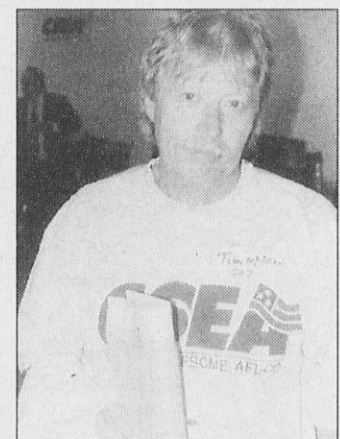
— Anita Manley

## **Voices** of the Work Force

*“We want a fair contract, something we can live on. My Local is mobilized ... we’re writing letters, making calls, doing demos. That’s what we should all be doing.*

*I’m upset with a lack of promotional opportunities for support staff. Management ignores the real issues. They never address a problem.”*

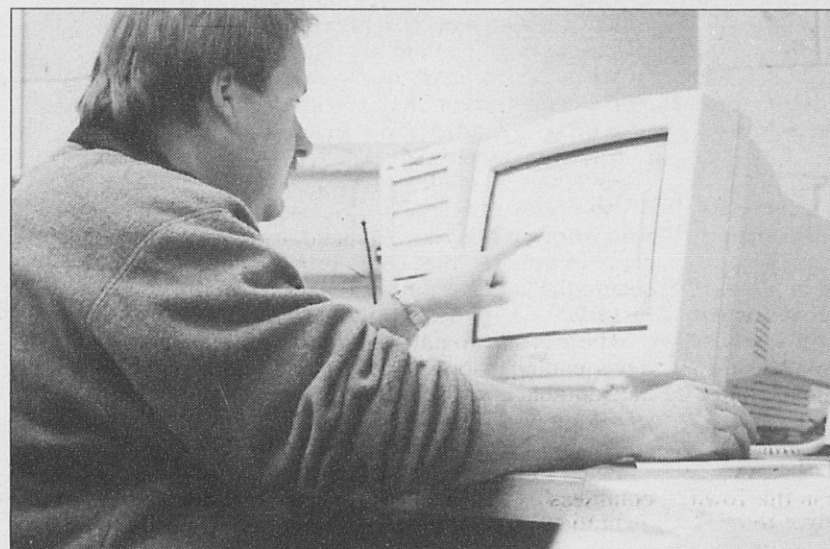
**Tim McGraw, licensed practical nurse — SUNY Fredonia**



# THE WORK FORCE

## CSEA keeps SUNY humming, day and night

Jim Bennett works at Ground Zero. If it's too hot, too cold, too icy, too stuffy or maybe just too wet from water overflowing clogged dormitory toilets — Bennett, hunkered down in the plant utility nerve



SUNY Binghamton's Jim Bennett monitors utility systems campus-wide from his station in the plant utility nerve center.

center of Binghamton's sprawling state university campus — hears about it first.

His counterparts, thousands of CSEA members, witness the daily ebb and flow of student and university life because they are the backbone of the bricks and mortar that are home to New York's higher public education.

For Bennett, working the hectic eight-hour shift that starts at 3 p.m. may mean chasing a bat around a library office or fixing a balky air conditioning unit.

"It's different every day," he chuckled.

Hundreds of miles away, as day faded into night, CSEA member Sylvia Mayberry gingerly dusted the high-tech dental school lab equipment at the University of Buffalo.

A janitor for 19 years, Mayberry said, "It's peaceful working at night." The lab to herself, the CSEA activist said she isn't afraid to work alone in the large offices and labs, "but I had to get used to it."

The silence that greeted Mayberry on her shift casts a different aura in the confines of a crowded hospital winding down for the night.

While the secretaries and administrative staff have left for the night, the important business of helping and healing continues.

CSEA member Debbie Guarino, a nurse's aide



CSEA member Sylvia Mayberry keeps sensitive dental lab equipment clean at the University of Buffalo.



Linda Ginter, secretary at Trademarks and Licensing at SUNY Buffalo, helps keep the office running smoothly.

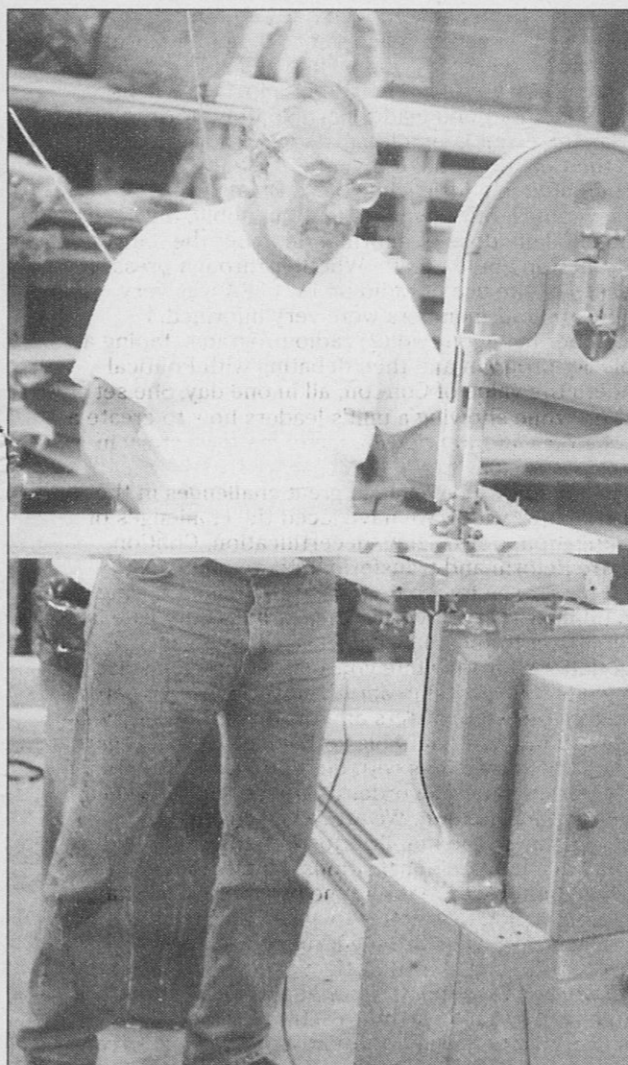
working in the pediatric intensive care unit at SUNY Stony Brook Hospital, sees the real drama of life and death which no television show can adequately portray.

"I love what I do, but it's very hard, very stressful work" Guarino said as she checked a child's condition on a computer.

"I am really tired. It's hard to flip back and forth for weekends or vacations when you are used to functioning at night," Guarino said.

Dayside has its pressures, too.

Secretaries keep university offices across the state running smoothly, calming anxious students and handling paperwork.



Maintenance Supervisor Bill Dandrea takes care of leaks, masonry repairs and carpentry at SUNY Purchase. Dandrea is also the local's health and safety chairman. "I argue with the bosses sometimes, and I go tooth and nail to make sure my guys have the equipment they need."

"The most challenging part of my job is working with the students and trying to be helpful, especially when they're new," said CSEA member Carol Slavetskis, a secretary in the SUNY Binghamton geology department.

"They're just totally lost and have a million questions," she said. "I'll do whatever I can to help them."

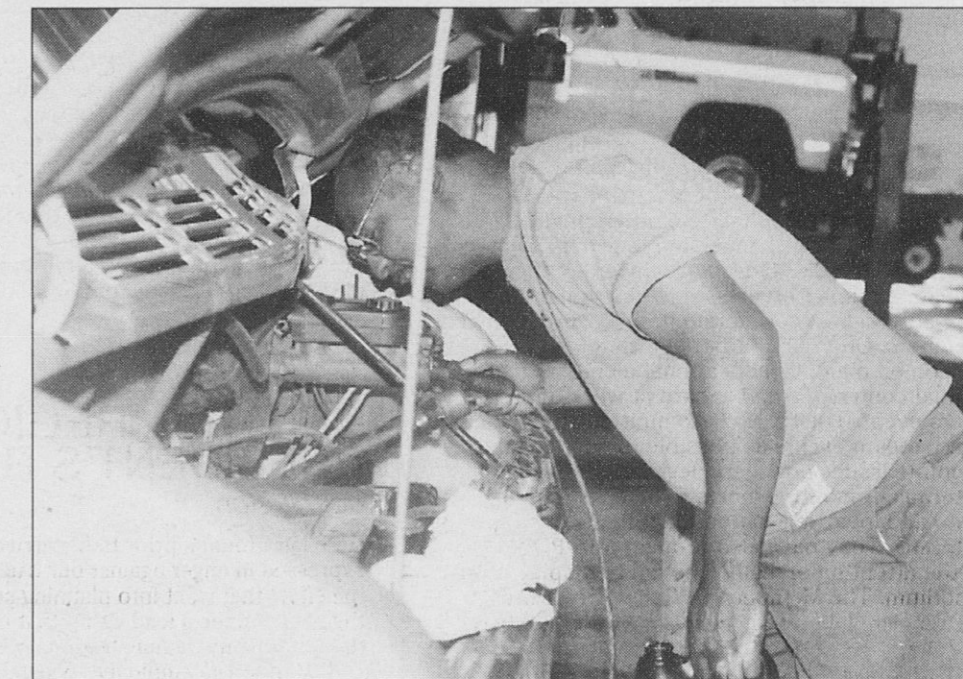
Help is always nearby at SUNY Purchase, where maintenance assistant Harvie Henderson can tear apart the engine of a university van or plow snow as part of his job.

"I like my job," he said, immersed up to his elbows in the guts of an engine. "I'd have to be here 15 years!"

Love of the job has kept Andrew Menard at SUNY Plattsburgh, where he takes care of animals, and not the fraternity kind.

A laboratory animal caretaker, Menard makes sure the chinchillas kept in the school's auditory research lab are well cared for.

As Menard makes one last check on the cages, cleaners Peggy LaFountain and Mary Mahan peek inside the university's day care center before pulling out the



Safe and reliable transportation is what SUNY Purchase CSEA member Harvie Henderson provides when he turns a wrench as a maintenance assistant.

mops and brooms.

"It's always so bright," LaFountain said about her favorite university room to clean.

"And it's so filled with the energy of the little ones who spend their day there," Mahan chimed in.



SUNY Purchase grounds supervisor George Halliday keeps the grass green and the snow plowed.

## Breathe easier in your workplace: **Air Quality Day** **coming in November**

This November, make it a point to take a breath of fresh air. If you can't, make it a point to let your employer know about stale air in your workplace.

Occupational safety and health experts said there is growing recognition that air quality is one of the most significant health issues in the workplace.

Recognition will come Nov. 10 on New York State Indoor Air Quality Day, which came about through a coalition of labor groups and support from the state Legislature.

But CSEA members don't need a special day to raise their awareness of bad air. Take, for instance, members of the Oswego County Local.

Clerical workers in the Local were subjected to exhaust fumes from the highway garage.

An investigation by CSEA's Occupational Safety and Health team resulted in increased ventilation, which helped for awhile.

Recently, new concerns were raised, and CSEA is working to fix the problem.

CSEA's clerical unit workers in general are most likely to be exposed to bad air because of the hours they spend indoors and the types of buildings they work in.

Air-quality issues are among the most common complaints and require ongoing monitoring.

Sometimes it's hard to tell if the air you breathe is good or bad. Excessive buildup of carbon dioxide, for instance, would be hard to detect without monitoring equipment.

There are a few things you can do to help determine whether your building has good airflow. For starters, check with your maintenance crew.

Your building's engineering crew more than likely adjusts dampers on air intakes as the seasons change, regulating the amount of fresh air coming into the building, depending in part on heating and cooling demand.

Your maintenance workers should be able to tell you how well your building breathes.

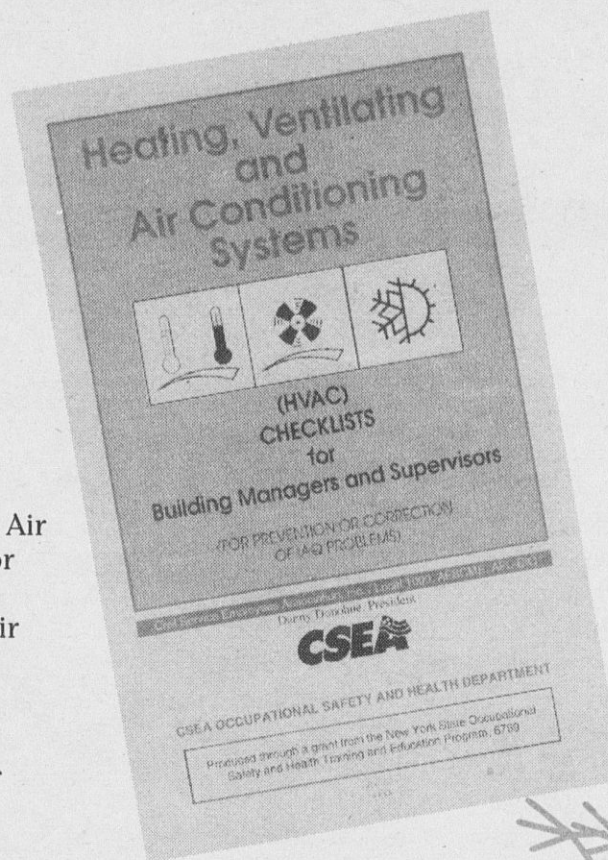
You can also purchase a wall-mounted thermometer and humidity gauge.

Wide swings in temperature and humidity indicate poorly managed ventilation.

If you suspect an air-quality problem in your building, contact CSEA's Occupational Safety and Health staff in your region office, who can inspect the site with proper equipment.

You can also make a point on Nov. 10 by holding a "breathe-in." Take a few minutes to go outside and take a breath of fresh air with your co-workers.

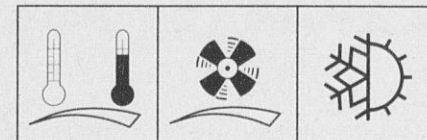
Bring a plant to work. Plants soak up carbon dioxide and give off life-nurturing oxygen, helping clean the air.



S A F E T Y & H E A L T H

### **Indoor Air Pollution**

SOURCES AND IN-HOUSE CORRECTION



Civil Service Employees Association, Inc. / Local 1000, AFSCME, AFL-CIO

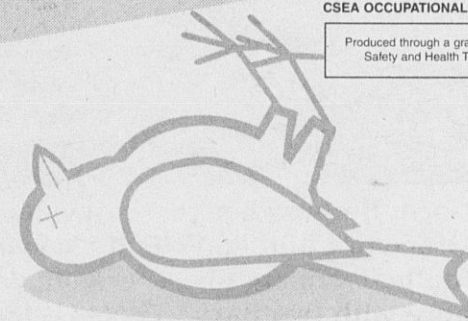
Danny Donohue, President



CSEA OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Produced through a grant from the New York State Occupational Safety and Health Training and Education Program, 6789

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(Revised 4/98)



Two of CSEA's publications, *Heating, Ventilating and Air Conditioning Systems*, and *Indoor Air Pollution*, aim to help workers police air quality in their workplace. Many CSEA members have worn the "dead canary" pin, above, to bring attention to poor air quality in the workplace.

## **CSEA, AFL-CIO slate safety conferences**

More than 700 occupational safety and health activists from CSEA will meet in November in Lake Placid to discuss worker safety.

The efforts of organized labor to improve conditions in the workplace have made a significant difference in workers' lives and have helped make unions stronger.

But much work remains to be done — and the job of protecting workers' safety and health is becoming more difficult.

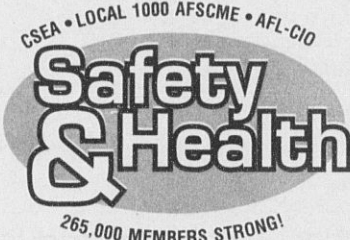
Political attacks on workers' safety and unions have intensified. Meanwhile, many employers are trying to shift responsibility for worker safety to the workers.

The AFL-CIO National Safety and Health Conference in December will bring together union safety and health representatives from across the union movement.

There is still time to register for the AFL-CIO National Safety and Health Conference, to be held Dec. 12-15 in New Orleans.

In plenary sessions and workshops, participants will learn about current safety and health problems and how to tackle them.

For more information, call (202) 637-5367.





## DANNY DONOHUE

### STATEWIDE PRESIDENT

It has been a remarkable year for CSEA at the end of a remarkable century.

It is only right that we begin the new millennium with an energized membership that is moving forward with CSEA's agenda to become an even greater force for working people.

We are fighting for better contracts; we are organizing

to become stronger and get our members more active; and we are building our political muscle to gain better budgets and laws.

CSEA is proud of who we are and what we do and we must make sure every one of our members feels the same way. CSEA's accomplishments are great, but our success must be measured again and again — each time we stand up for fairness and fight to make sure every person is treated with the respect he or she deserves.

#### CSEA's Accomplishments

There are so many benefits of belonging to CSEA. We have fought hard over the decades to gain the right to be a union and negotiate our wages and benefits. We have fought in the capitol and in the courts to gain and protect our pension coverage. We succeeded in establishing safety and health protections for our members and have vigorously pursued improvements and enforcement.

CSEA has championed the issue of pay equity and sought protections against discrimination of any kind.

CSEA is second to none in securing education and training opportunities for our members that open the door to career advancement. And we are unrivaled in the range of member benefits, insurance programs, and representation services of every kind.

As much as we have gained, nothing should ever be taken for granted. It is up to all of us, every day, to keep us moving forward. No matter what we have accomplished, there is still so much more to be done.

#### Fighting for Better Contracts

For the past several years, we have worked hard in CSEA to transform ourselves into an even stronger, more effective force.

CSEA has demonstrated the undeniable spirit of unionism throughout our history but it has been especially strong and vital in the past year and has taken



hold in our membership through actions, not words.

It has been present in the thousands of state members who have dogged the governor in every part of the state, letting him know you won't work for peanuts and that he should put his money where his mouth is when he says we are the best workers anywhere.

From Buffalo to Brooklyn, from Cortland to Commack, CSEA members came together to pester Pataki. In White Plains and Plattsburgh and Binghamton, CSEA turned out in force and would not be denied. Outside the Capitol in Albany and on the grounds of the State Fair in Syracuse, CSEA members have been relentless.

The true strength of CSEA is in our ability to stand up for what's right whether the issue affects seven or 77,000 members. CSEA provides our members with whatever support and confidence they need to succeed, no matter who you are or where you work.

CSEA demonstrated that spirit of unionism in the Village of Webster, near Rochester, where 15 members stood together to face down unacceptable management demands. We did the job right and we won.

CSEA demonstrated that spirit of unionism in places like the Ichabod Crane School District near Albany, where members stood firm for three years, learned the lessons of solidarity and built community support to make sure we got a good contract. Once again, we did the job and we won.

#### Organizing for a Stronger CSEA

CSEA demonstrated the spirit of unionism in the Town of Dewitt, where workers rallied around the right to organize, chose CSEA and stood firm until management was forced to recognize the union.

But the spirit of unionism could not be greater than in the 450 courageous Long Beach Hospital workers who endured continued management harassment and intimidation and still voted to join CSEA. They truly demonstrated what unionism is all about and we are so very proud to represent them.

The Long Beach workers clearly understood it is only through your union membership that workers can protect their rights, ensure respect and fair pay and

**These are the officers' reports presented at CSEA's 89th Annual Delegates Meeting held in Washington, D.C. from Oct. 18-22.**

*Complete coverage of the convention will be featured in the December issue of The Work Force.*

benefits. They should serve as an example for all of us about what it means to stand up for what you believe in — especially in the face of determined opposition.

#### Flexing our Political Muscle

One of the most important aspects of CSEA's strength as a union is our effectiveness as a political force. The power of the vote should never be underestimated because it protects our interests in so many ways. That's why it is a continuing priority to register people to vote and encourage active participation in the political process at every level, from school boards to the state Capitol to Congress and the White House.

We must continue to make our presence felt at every level of government. In the past year, these efforts have paid off with solid victories in areas such as tier reinstatement legislation which protects previously earned pension credit.

We've also strengthened the future for our members who work with the developmentally disabled through a share of the New York Cares program, and we worked to secure the largest school aid package in the state's history.

There is still so much more to be done and it is a never-ending responsibility to hold public officials accountable for their actions.

#### Strength of the CSEA Membership

Every day, in every part of the state, there are countless examples of CSEA's spirit at work.

In the course of the past year, I have traveled to every corner of our magnificent state and have met with thousands of members, individually and in groups.

Seeing your spirit and commitment to do the job right makes me proud to lead this great union and gives me tremendous encouragement about our future.

CSEA is growing. Our member involvement is growing. Our strength is growing. And if we all continue our efforts, we will be more prepared than ever before to meet the challenges that lie ahead.



## MARY E. SULLIVAN

### EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

If you put in a productive 40-hour week, you should expect to receive a wage that would allow you to afford food, shelter, medical care, clothing and transportation.

But the sad fact is that millions of Americans are working harder and longer and still don't take home enough money to escape poverty.

New York has one of the highest per capita incomes of any state in the nation, yet more than 3 million of us live in poverty.

One out of every four children in New York is growing up in poverty. Even more shocking is the fact that more than a third of the state's poor families with children are poor despite having a parent who works full-time, year round.

Over the last 20 years, an enormous gap has grown

between the richest Americans and the rest of us.

While Wall Street is booming, Main Street is crumbling. While CEO salaries are skyrocketing, working people are taking it on the chin.

If the salary of the average worker had risen at the same rate as the CEOs, they would be making \$139,000 a year.

Today, Bill Gates of Microsoft makes more money before lunch than most people will earn in a lifetime.

At the root of this massive rise in CEO pay and stagnation of worker wages is the decline in workers' bargaining power.

It is not a surprise to anyone that our nation's 20-year decline in worker wages has coincided with the decline in the power and effectiveness of the labor movement.

But those days are over. That may have been the past, but it's not our present and it isn't our future!

We are pressing politicians for fair contracts, rallying and protesting on streets across New York to call attention to our issues, and informing the public of the valuable work we perform.

Our demands are basic and we deserve nothing less. We want fairness and respect from our employers. We want a voice in what happens in the workplace, and sufficient compensation for the contributions we make every day.

We want benefits that protect our health and that of our families and security in our retirement years.

And we're going to continue to achieve all of these things and more because we're CSEA.

We're proud of who we are and what we do. We're standing up for what we want and demanding what we deserve. Those who take us for granted do so at their own risk.

We're getting stronger every day because members and leaders believe that, together, we can make a real difference; that we all have a part to play in the struggle; that, together, we do have the power to take care of each other.

That is what unions do.

**BARBARA  
REEVES  
STATEWIDE  
SECRETARY**



The Wall Street titans were wrong earlier this decade: The nation's working poor received a wage hike and the economy took off.

Despite gloom and doom reports to the contrary, paying American workers more helps the nation's economy.

But the disparity in income between rich and poor continues to grow at an alarming rate. Had the status quo arguments against minimum wage hikes in the early 1990s succeeded, the income gap would be even worse.

Even skilled workers are losing ground.

Corporate earnings are up 5.2 percent. While real wages grew 2.2 percent for the second year in a row, they are barely keeping pace with inflation, and are hardly commensurate with this decade's corporate successes.

Meanwhile, proposed congressional tax cuts would boost benefits to the richest taxpayers while cutting funding to domestic programs — such as education and Medicare — vital to American workers.

Financier J. P. Morgan had a rule: he never let his CEOs earn more than 20 times what his workers earned. CEOs in 1998 earned an average 419 times greater than average blue-collar wages in the United States.

In an era when social justices were few, Morgan's rule now seems downright generous. But unions do have the means to fight for more wage equality.

A strong economy provides bargaining leverage for unions. Good times make it harder for employers to justify job cuts, smaller wage increases or benefit reductions. And unions are showing the strength needed to fight for America's workers.

Last year, "paycheck protection" bills and initiatives were defeated in 32 states. The attempt to silence the political voice of working families instead brought new strength and momentum to union political action.

A labor poll this year shows 56 percent of American voters believe unions have a positive effect on our country, while more than half believe unions are strong.

As we move into the new millennium, let's not overlook the incredible achievements organized labor has brought working men and women the last 100 years.

- \*Unions raise wages.
- \*Unions provide benefits and pensions.
- \*Unions protect safety.
- \*Unions provide security and stability.

We need to continue to fight and organize, to ensure the American worker does not lose more ground to the income disparity plaguing our nation and instead shares in the economic prosperity labor has helped create.

CSEA, through our mobilization campaign, is leading the way.

Our goal is to make sure CSEA's working families get a share of the prosperity surrounding us.

**MAUREEN  
S. MALONE  
STATEWIDE  
TREASURER**



As I write this article, it's right after I watched the recent Ryder Cup matches. For those of you who do not follow sporting events, this is a bi-annual golf match between the best professional golfers in the United States vs. the best professional European golfers. At stake is a trophy for the group amassing 14 or more points. There is a lot of money involved, but not for the players. Some saw this as an exhibition, some thought they should be paid, some voiced upset at the selection process. All these gripes took place before the actual event.

What occurred during the 72 hours of actual competition? The United States team could not have done much worse the first 48 hours. Shots went into the rough, putts would not fall, in general, things did not look good. The captain of the team got the players together, reminded them of the meaning of the match, reminded them of the American spirit, reminded them of the common goal and the need to focus on the end result.

What happened the last 24 hours of competition was the greatest comeback by any team in Ryder Cup history. Each U.S.A. team member put aside his individual complaints/gripes and did the very best job for the good of the team. Tears of joy and American pride flowed from these golfers because by working together they accomplished what most people had given up on, a victory, made sweeter by the hard work involved in making it happen.

CSEA reminds me a lot of this recent sporting event. Many individuals only see the pessimistic side of life. Many individuals do not see the need for a union, a need for political involvement, or any good accomplished through working together. As a union, CSEA sees things differently.

CSEA is actively involved in today's labor movement in New York State - a union rebirth where individuals have put personal issues and apathy aside to be involved in CSEA. Look at the dramatic results. The first Albany Labor Parade in over 10 years. A New York City demonstration spanning the Brooklyn Bridge. Workers speaking out in Long Island and the Hudson Valley about deteriorating working conditions. Buffalo area unionists following their employer demanding fair wages. Hundreds of CSEA members in Central New York letting New York State fairgoers know New York works because CSEA members work.

Putting aside individual complaints, setting our sights on our most important goals and working as a team, CSEA will remain the force for public sector workers in the State, County, City, Town, Villages and School Districts. In the private sector, CSEA is growing in numbers, as well as reputation. **Every day we prove that together we can make a difference.**

**NICK LAMORTE**

**LONG ISLAND REGION PRESIDENT**



Greetings from Region One! I can't believe a year has passed by so quickly. By now you should be tired of hearing about the new millennium, Y2K and the like. I've always been optimistic and I'm sure all will be OK by the time the new year comes around. Thank God for public employees! Because I know some of you have to work New Years Eve and are directly responsible for handling any problems when we hit the double zeroes. Maybe that's when we will be appreciated, but don't count on it. The average citizen never realizes the work of public employees until there is a problem that affects them, like their garbage wasn't picked up, or a storm drain is filled, or maybe their child forgot their lunch, or when they have to return to a building for a book for homework and the list goes on. Funny how we become important so quickly. We do our jobs everyday and so many take it for granted. We do make government work and we should be proud to take the credit for the fine work we do. As we all look into the future, we think about the work ahead and the way our jobs will change. Will technology help us or hurt us? Think back a hundred years, the horse was replaced by the automobile. We lost most of our blacksmiths, but they were replaced by mechanics. You can trace alot of jobs lost and then again alot of jobs created. I guess it's like an evolving cycle that continues, but with a different generation of workers. Where will the work take us?

Region One continues to move forward. To recap the year, we again held a wonderful Festival of Lights celebrating our diversity by honoring Chanukah, Christmas, Kwanzaa and the Feast of the Three Kings. Our Human Rights Committee attended Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. ceremonies,

*continued on page 4*

**GEORGE BONCORAGLIO**

**METROPOLITAN REGION PRESIDENT**



Gov. George Pataki raises his salary by \$49,000, and then offers those who actually do the work of the state zero pay increases for four years.

In New York City, a woman is pushed to her death in front of a subway train by a mentally ill man repeatedly turned away from state mental institutions. Gov. Pataki releases plans to drastically cut patient beds and staff positions at state mental health facilities.

We, as citizens of New York State, have reached a crossroad.

At this juncture, our elected officials are steering the apparatus of state government away from serving the people, and toward their political ambitions. We need look no further than our own state contract negotiations and the state mental health system to see state policies that hurt all New Yorkers.

We can choose one of two paths. We can throw up our hands in disgust and declare there is nothing we, as individuals, can do; or we can take the road less traveled and stand up and fight back. The road less traveled is a long, bumpy, often lonely path, lined with naysayers.

"What can one person do?" they ask. "You can't change the system," they chant. "You're just wasting your time," they yell.

Though the road is long and the battle tough, we must win, because the future of New York State depends on us. We have seen by the governor's reckless acts of essentially throwing the mentally ill onto the streets that he does not care about our future.

For if he truly cared about New Yorkers, he would not show such disregard for the mentally ill, the people who care for them, and our communities.

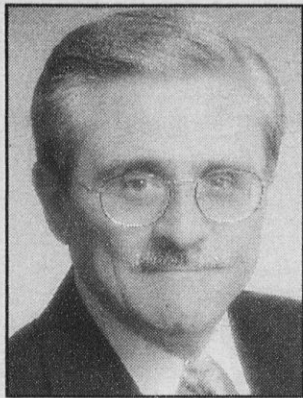
It is up to us to fight for the future of New York State. We are fighting for respect for doing demanding jobs with little resources, we are fighting for our families' livelihoods, we are fighting for justice, we are fighting for those who cannot fight for themselves. We are fighting for the future of New York State, because the future of New York State depends on treating all people with respect.

Each of us, every day, does the business of making New York State a better place to live. We do it at work every day, and we do it when we

*continued on page 4*

## CARMINE DiBATTISTA

SOUTHERN REGION PRESIDENT



It seems only yesterday that I was preparing my statement for our 1998 Annual Convention. The old adage must be true, time flies when you are busy.

The preceding year has been one filled with much activity and achievement. Through it all, the leaders, including

new and established, in our Region, were responsible. They, with the aid and direction of our talented and capable staff, have provided increased participation in education and training programs, Regional Committees and meetings. Communications between the Region and Units are at a very high level.

It goes without saying that the lifeblood of our organization is the activists that participate on a daily basis to represent the membership. As I reported to you last year, since July of 1998 there has been an increase in the number of new activists. These people need to be educated and informed about how to represent the membership. Accordingly, the Region Committees, working with the Statewide Organization, have increased the number and type of training sessions (Shop steward, Disciplinary, etc.) to meet that need. We have also increased the number of sites where the training is provided (i.e.: Middletown, New City). In addition, we have also increased the type of training. For example, last Fall we held our first Region III Health and Safety Conference. This spring, we held our first Women's Conference and our first Political Action Training. We are looking forward to holding all these events again. The respective Region Committees, working with our Region III Education and Programs Committee, created these programs. They should be very proud of their achievements; the programs that were presented received rave reviews from participants. Interestingly, we are looking forward to an even more ambitious training program once the Region Membership Committee hits their stride. Yes, that's right the Membership Committee. They have set their designs on creating and holding training programs by industry. From the preliminary discussion we know it will not be easy, but Region III has always stood up to a challenge. I am quite sure that the members of the Membership Committee, working in conjunction with the Education and Program Committee, as well as the CSEA Education and Training Department, will do a great job!

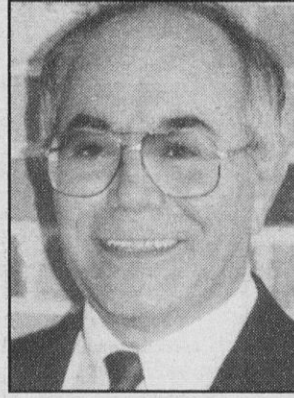
Speaking of committees, all Region III committees have been appointed and the members are very actively participating. Chief among these committees, as you would expect, is the Region PAC, which contains approximately 90 members. This fall they will be participating in or providing leadership to campaigns in each county. They are a highly motivated group. Of special note, are the representatives from our Dutchess County Local. This fall they will be working in some very difficult campaigns. As Region President, I am very fortunate to be working with such dedicated leaders.

Another committee, one that was just created this

*continued on page 4*

## CARMEN BAGNOLI

CAPITAL REGION PRESIDENT



Let's turn the clock back and imagine our lives without CSEA.

A typical day — ten hours on the job — might start by rising at dawn and finding our own way to overcrowded worksites with minimal facilities..

We can't afford to own a car. They're too expensive when you're only making \$1.25 hourly even though we work 70 hours a week.

There's no such thing as overtime in our world without unions. For some, Saturdays are 6-hour days. We get a "break" on Sundays. It's only a 4-hour day.

No sick leave. No vacations. No personal leave.

In winter, offices open in the dark and close in the dark.

Sick workers don't get paid. If they are seriously ill, they just get fired. There's always somebody waiting in the wings for a job.

You do whatever the boss says. No questions asked. Or allowed.

There's no such thing as Civil Service tests. If you got your job through political connections, you're a little better off. The winner gets the spoils. But you better be on the winning side.

No Social Security either. Or pensions.

You carry your own weight or become a burden on your family.

Children work, too. There's no public education. You don't want to give them any ideas.

While this may sound like "make believe," it really could have happened without unions. Solidarity was — and is — the engine that guarantees those of us not born rich security and prosperity.

The basics that we take for granted — from living wages and health insurance to leave time and pensions — were not gifts from benevolent employers. Workers had to organize. Workers had to get power. Workers had to protect each other.

Very often, people ask "What has CSEA done for me?" The answer is "a lot."

The union makes us strong.

Get involved.



## JIM MOORE

CENTRAL REGION PRESIDENT

Other years when I have done this report, I have tried to capture into words the feelings I have had in regards to this union and the labor movement in general. This year has been an exceptional year. Although the frustration we have had with the state and the lack of a contract has taken up many hours of staff and

activist time, a reflection of the past 12 months still shows that CSEA has grown in strength and in member involvement.

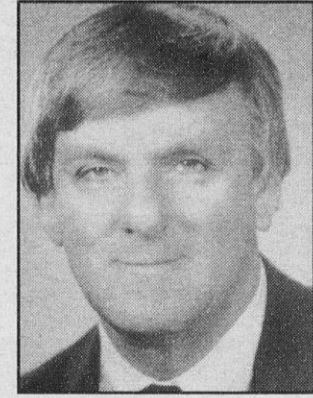
Our region has hosted two very successful job related workshops. The Region Probation committee spent many evenings planning an exciting all day program and were rewarded with great attendance from all over the region. Prior approval was sought and received for training credits and everyone attending rated the program most worthwhile.

There was great pride in watching the school buses roll into Syracuse for the second time as the Region Schools Committee presented its second conference that was open to members that work within our vast region at one of over 210 schools. Every job title was represented, and the committee has already begun planning for their next workshop. These conferences would not have been possible without the local and unit donations that were provided to the region. I thank the leaders of those units for their cooperation.

After 29 years of union activism I am very aware of the tremendous asset our staff can be to solving local problems. One unit however must be given credit for helping out literally seven

## ROBERT L. LATTIMER

WESTERN REGION PRESIDENT



Over the years I've been privileged to know and work with numerous talented and dedicated members who were courageous (or foolhardy) enough to run for office in their locals, units or region.

Those who made a difference shared a common denominator — each one reflected the lofty ideals embodied in the official oath of office.

Being an effective leader is a matter of trust ... trust that the individual will not be swayed by expediency or popularity, but will stand up and face the tough issues.

Responsible officers put the concerns and needs of the members first. They remember that one of their duties is to promote merit and efficiency in public service and to protect the members' rights impartially.

Sometimes, it means having to say "no." This is not an easy task, given the union politics which are ever present.

As another election cycle looms, you should carefully scrutinize the record and character of the candidates to determine who would best represent you.

It is not simply a matter of "power and prestige" as someone told me years ago. There is real work to be done, tough decisions to be made, and constant obstacles to overcome.

Integrity, credibility, dedication, selflessness and energy are all necessary ingredients to succeed. Be sure the candidate you support has these qualities.

Finally, as my term comes to an end, I'd like to thank and recognize CSEA members, officers, and staff in the Western Region and throughout New York State, as well as those in AFSCME, who were there when I needed you.

You supported me, criticized me, disagreed with me, and challenged me to go the distance for a cause which continues to be formidable — safe-guarding and improving the lives and livelihoods of CSEA/AFSCME members.

It has been an honor to serve you.

days a week and at all hours of the day. Our member benefits staff from H.Q.'s have been present at 5 a.m. to greet a Highway Unit as well as joining the night crew of a Psy. Ct. to bring union services to their work location.

It's important that the union be in the worksite and this department has been a nice addition to the local and union leadership as well as the L.R.S.

President Donohue's commitment to expanding the health and safety department has been a big help in our region. Hundreds of on site inspections have been conducted after the local union has requested our help.

My job has been made much easier by the tremendous support I have received from six people who have taken their position as region officers to heart. They each have served as advisors to our many region committees and truly have been there for the members each and every time I have called upon them to help out. Thank you each so very much, I am proud to call you leaders.

Although each day is usually filled with something exciting or maybe just frustrating, there were several highlights that stand out in my mind as memorable moments.

For three complete days I worked with many of the officers of Local 414 in conducting Labor-Management meetings with their director in coming to agreement on over 25 MOU's that had been outstanding for over a year as a result of a consolidation of two facilities.

Words can not express the pride I felt looking at the sea of red shirts that were present at the state fair demonstration against the governor this August. To see our members driving onto the

*continued on page 4*

## LONG ISLAND REGION PRESIDENT'S REPORT

### conclusion

held our International Day and is working to promote other ethnic events. The Safety and Health Committee attended Workers Memorial events and played a part in establishing a permanent memorial at a State Office Building. The Social Committee sponsored popular Atlantic City trips, planned our Region One & Three Workshop, while the Education and Training Committee set the program and continued defensive driving seminars throughout the region. A very active PAC interviewed candidates for office, made recommendations for or against endorsement and was active in political campaigns. Our Public Relations Committee took a giant step in sponsoring the CSEA Challenge, a walk/run event to promote CSEA by helping raise the consciousness of those with handicaps and disabilities. The Audit Committee met regularly to review the books, made recommendations and questioned spending. Our Constitution/By-Law Committee recommended the creation of an Executive Vice President position and revised language to conform to the State Constitution. The Health and Hospital Committee developed a survey and polled the membership. The Womens' Committee made strides and walked for Breast Cancer, attended breakfast meetings and sponsored guest speakers to talk to our members. Our School District Committee welcomed over 500 educational members to an annual conference and is hard at work on next years event. The PEOPLE Committee attends as many region events as possible to educate and promote issues on federal legislation. Our Veterans Committee meets to discuss federal, state and local, legislation that affects our veterans. They have also brought MIA/POW Flag to the attention of many who fail to display it on a podium. The Membership Committee works with our membership department continuously updating agency fee lists and helping to straighten out membership problems.

Thank you for reading the report, as you can see, Region One is quite busy and now you can appreciate how the year went by so quickly. Lastly, I'd like to thank two Region Officers who have served this union on state, region, local and unit levels. Barbara J. Jones, formerly third Vice President, retired in August. Barbara chaired the Human Rights Committee and was instrumental in bringing diversity to us. With her warm heart and open mind, she help me plan events that brought people of different ethnic backgrounds together. Her open and frank discussions on a variety of subjects will always be near my heart. Catherine L. Green, second Vice President, will be retiring in December. Cathy and I have been friends for more years than I can remember and certainly was instrumental in my becoming region president. Cathy chaired and vice chaired our PAC. I could always call upon Cathy to stick out her chin and tell me like it is, or is not! Her upfront style and honesty will be missed by all. The region will be honoring them at our annual Holiday party in December, all are welcome to attend.



## METROPOLITAN REGION PRESIDENT'S REPORT

### conclusion

come home from work and give our time and energy to our communities. We take pride in the jobs we do which make New York State such a great place to live. It is a shame our elected officials don't seem to care as much about our state as we do.

The time has come for us to stand up and fight back. For New York to remain a great state, it is necessary for all public employees to be treated with the respect and dignity they so clearly deserve. Show respect and dignity, not with meaningless words, but with a fair and just contract - one that rewards our commitment to excellence, willingness to do more with less, and our willingness to do whatever it takes to make this state great.

The only thing that can defeat us in this fight is ourselves. The swiftest path to defeat lies in sitting back and saying, "The union will take care of it." Each of us is the union.

Our power lies in 265,000 individuals joining to form one glorious, strong, unified voice. By leaving it to others to speak out, our voice becomes a whisper.

In this contract battle, the unified voice of CSEA is being heard chanting "show some respect" in every city, town and village from Plattsburgh to Montauk.

It is up to us to continue this fight and mobilize even more voices until we walk back into our workplaces with our heads held high and a fair contract in our hands.

The future of New York State depends on us.

## CENTRAL REGION PRESIDENT'S REPORT

### conclusion

state fair grounds prior to his arrival and then the solidarity expressed in anger against our true opponent was worth all of the effort that went into planning such an event. Again I thank the staff and local leadership that made this event as well as the other many demonstrations possible.

I attended an employee recognition dinner at the Binghamton Psychiatric Center that stands out in my mind as an exceptional evening. Sometimes I hear management say all the good things about their employees yet the words ring shallow. I felt that the employees present also sensed that they were important and that their contributions to their patients were appreciated. It's just a shame more supervisors and management people don't take the time to say thank you for a job well done.

My involvement with the Central Labor Council has been a good experience for me and for CSEA. As the council president I have learned the value of all unions supporting each other for issues that are important to one union. Other union activist have walked with us on our picket lines to help get a contract and we have walked with them to prevent downsizing and layoffs.

Our mobilization efforts have been met with cooperation within the region. I am confident that rank and file members made thousands of phone calls and we sure produced our share of yellow card messages for the governor. This union must reach out to every member and give them an opportunity to participate by allowing them a voice in their destiny.

Over the course of the last 12 months, there have been countless events within the region and among the locals and units that I could single out. Involved in many of these events by giving professional support have been our region staff that is led by our Office Manager Catie Smith which I have had the pleasure of working with for over 25 years, and our Region Director Ron Smith which has never said no to any task that has arisen.

So in closing, let me thank the over 1450 local and unit activist that make up our great region. We stretch from Canada to Pennsylvania but what really makes this region is the 42,000 plus members that belong to CSEA.

## SOUTHERN REGION PRESIDENT'S REPORT

### conclusion

year, our Community Action Committee, is very actively participating in fundraising for many worthy causes (i.e., American Cancer Society). Their charge also includes an assessment of membership participation in community activities. The ultimate goal of the committee is to establish a program that will provide financial assistance to worthy organizations in the region. Usually, committees start out slowly. Not this committee, from the beginning, they have been operating at full speed.

In our region, we sometimes take communications for granted. By that I mean we, as leaders, constantly reach out to each other. Whether at a meeting or a training session, a Region III leader is in the midst of the discussion. In addition, we go out of our way to create and to disseminate information to other leaders and members. An informed leader or member is a supportive person. The more we educate and inform our members, the smaller the problem of dissension. In this regard, we are very fortunate in our region to have a Communications Specialist who loves her job; Anita Manley is that person. In a way, our leaders have come to take her for granted. Whenever we need to reach out to the public or other members, she is ready and willing and able to show our members how. She, in fact, on most occasions, solicits member and leader participation prior to or just as the event is unfolding. As an example, I give you the Constitutional Convention Debate that we participated in a little while back. Due to her perseverance, our members and the public received almost a daily dose of information about the damage that ConCon could create. Whether through press releases or the use of radio or TV, CSEA was very visible and our members were very informed. I remember being on two (2) radio programs, taping a cable TV program and then debating with Political Leaders the value of ConCon, all in one day. She set that up while showing a unit's leaders how to create a newsletter and interviewing members for a story in the *Public Sector*.

As a union we have faced great challenges in the last three (3) years. We have faced the challenges of privatization, downsizing, decertification, ConCon, Welfare Reform and transformation, to name just a few. I have been fortunate to lead the region during this difficult time. However, these issues may pale in comparison to the challenge we face involving negotiations for the state contract. To say the least, the region officers, staff and I are working very hard to assure our state sisters and brothers that they will achieve a fair and equitable settlement. In that regard, we have held meetings with our state local leaders and their members, in order to advise and to obtain member participation. We are very actively participating in the mobilization initiative. Our state locals have held demonstrations. Many more will be holding demonstrations as time progresses. We have created a region newsletter to assist in informing the mobilizers. We will continue to meet with the membership. In order to do so we, members and staff have worked together. It looks like we have a long road ahead of us. If we are to achieve the contract that our members want, more work is needed. Greater involvement by our members is needed. More communication is needed. As a team we can get the job done. I know that the officers of the region and I believe that we, and you, are up to the challenge. No group however can do it alone. In this regard, we must all pull together. In this fight, we will also need the assistance of our local government and private sector brothers and sisters. **That which injures one of us, injures us all!**

On behalf of the regional officers, I thank you for taking the time to read my thoughts. I hope that we have a very successful convention and I look forward to working with you in the future.

## On and off the job, volunteer tackles important jobs with gusto

BUFFALO — "I'm just giving back to my community, because without my receiving the same kind of help in my youth, I might have ended up on the streets," said Norm Bineyard.

For Bineyard, a father who works two jobs, helping and advising young people is part of his daily routine on and off the job.

When he's not at his 12-year full-time job as a youth developmental aide for the state Office of Child and Family Services, Bineyard works part-time as a court escort for Erie County's youth services division.

Then he squeezes into his already crammed day the jobs of assistant high school football coach and a coaching assistant and activist for the Buffalo Vets Little League football program.

"I work the night shift at Industry (the state-run facility for troubled youth) and two days a week for the county," said Bineyard.

"So thanks to my understanding wife, I have most of my evenings to devote to coaching and helping out at the two football programs, at Turner Carroll High as defensive coordinator and at the Buffalo Vets as league vice president (and past president).

"I help out wherever I can be useful. On practice days, I help out with defense, and I also like to break down and analyze videotape of opposing team offenses. On game days, I'm on the sidelines helping the coaches keep up with everything, or wherever I'm needed."

Like many of the parents involved with kids and football, Bineyard got his start 12 years ago when his son first suited up.

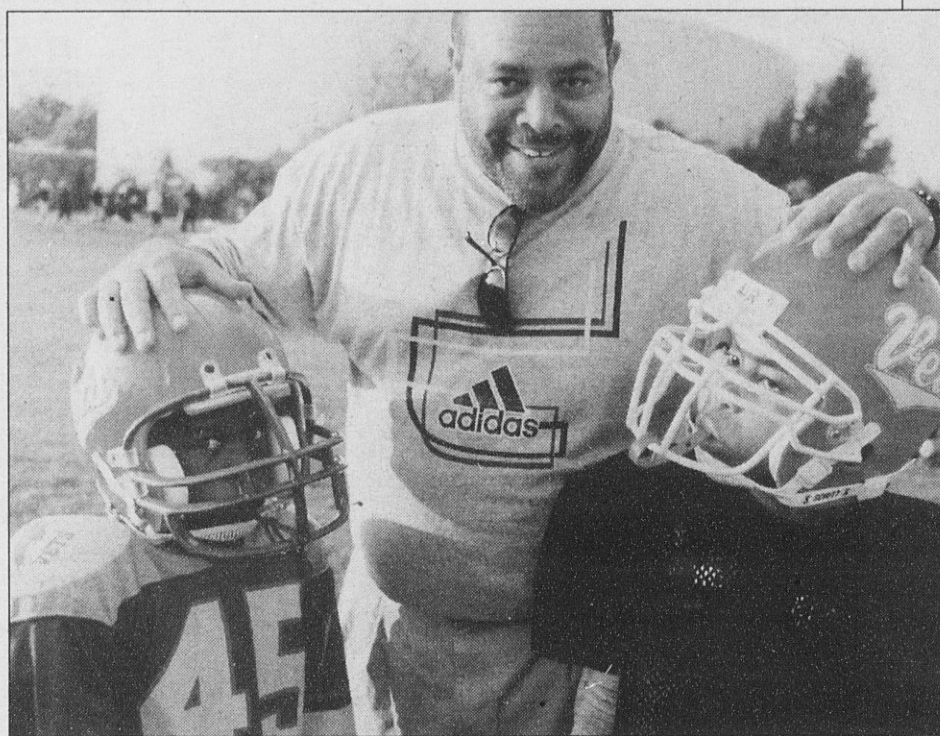
"We've lobbied city hall to keep our field mowed and installed scoreboards, lighting, fencing and a parking lot," said Bineyard.

The benefits of helping young people grow into responsible citizens can be a heartwarming experience, said Bineyard, who is also a steward for the CSEA Local at his worksite.

"The kids call me 'Coach Norm' and I've even had the experience of young adults coming up to me, who I might not recognize at first, but when I hear that 'Coach Norm' I know where we first became acquainted," Bineyard said.

"It's great to see them growing up with a positive outlook," he added.

— Ron Wofford



**Norm Bineyard, a youth developmental aide for the state Office of Child and Family Services, finds time to coach football among his other volunteer activities. He's shown here with two Buffalo Vets Little Leaguers.**

CSEA • LOCAL 1000 AFSCME • AFL-CIO  
**Family,  
 Friends and  
 Neighbors**  
 265,000 MEMBERS STRONG!

## At 80, he's on the job and loving it

NYACK — Jim Frisbie may have just celebrated his 80th birthday, but (1) he doesn't look it and (2) he has no intention of retiring.

A cleaner for the State Police since 1974, Frisbie was formerly a New York City sanitation worker.

His father-in-law had the cleaner job before he did.

"He asked me if I was interested in applying for the job when he left," Frisbie said.

"I like it here," he added. "I get out and I meet people. I know a lot of people here."

Frisbie is part of a small, select group of five dedicated union members who have stayed on the job for decades and have celebrated their 80th birthdays.

While rank has its privilege in the State Police, age has extended certain privileges to Frisbie.

Indeed, Frisbie has the respect of all the young state troopers who work in the Nyack barracks.

"I like to listen to their stories," he said.

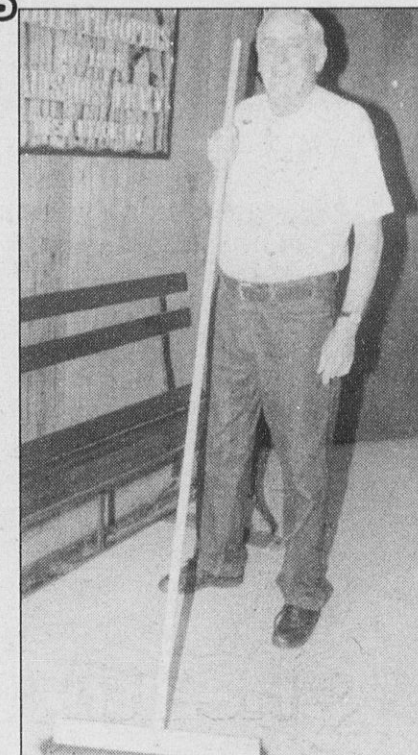
September's surprise Hurricane Floyd caused some problems for the barracks, said Frisbie, who had his work cut out for him the day of the storm.

"The place was flooded," he said. "We were soaked."

Regardless of the hurricane and other problems big and small, Frisbie has no immediate plans to retire.

"I intend to stick around," he said.

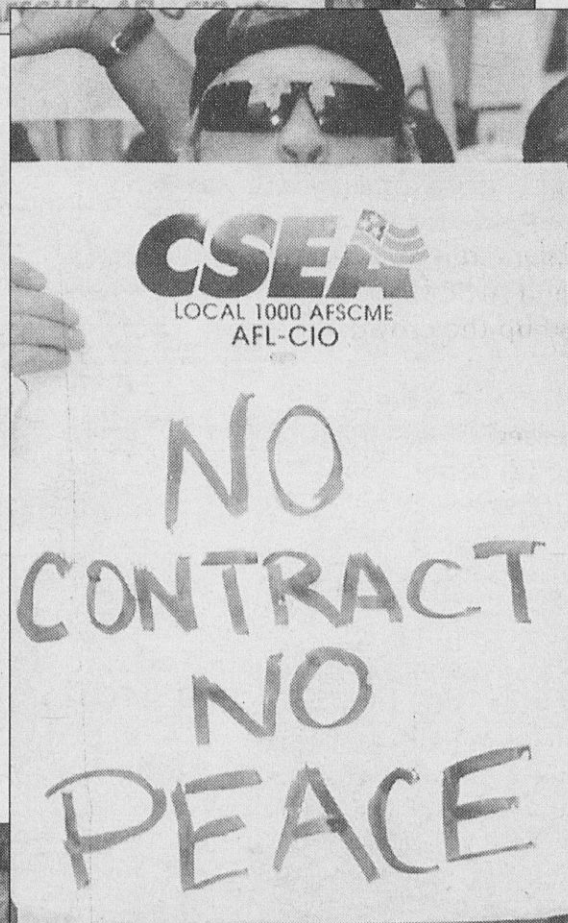
— Anita Manley



**Eighty-year-old Jim Frisbie, a cleaner for the State Police, has no immediate plans to retire.**



# Rallying for a contract Metro style ...



CSEA intensified its ground attack against Gov. George Pataki for a fair contract and launched a unique air assault in Buffalo — one of dozens of contract protests around the state the last few weeks.

Looking up, down, or all around, Pataki was confronted by a sea of angry CSEA members as he traipsed across the state squiring Texas Gov. George W. Bush on a fund-raising spree.

In Buffalo, an airplane pulling a huge banner which implored "Settle the CSEA contract now!" streamed over tens of thousands of football fans as Pataki rededicated the stadium.

In New York City, more than 2,500 activists shouting contract slogans marched across the Brooklyn Bridge to call attention to the union's fight.

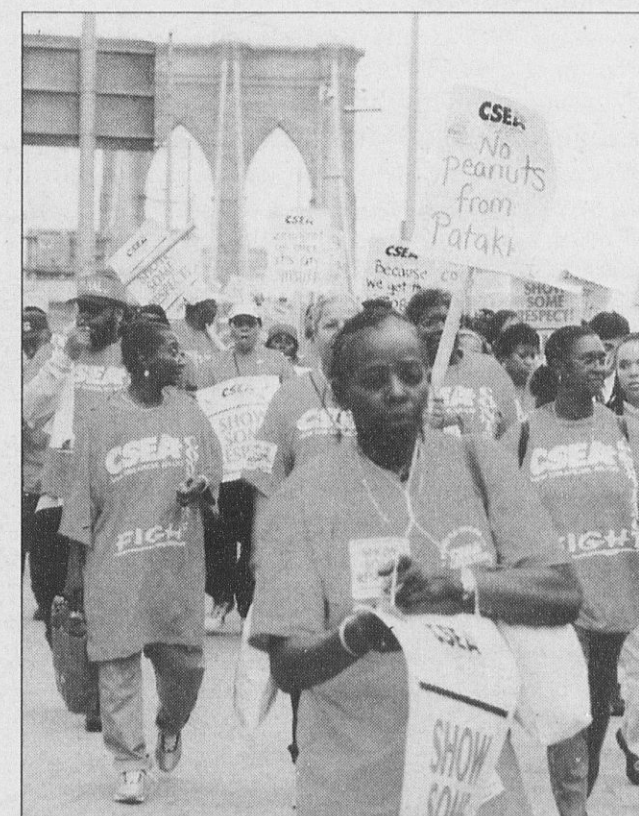
## The pressure is working

This pressure from thousands of members is working, CSEA contract negotiators said.

In Albany, both sides continue to meet several times a week.

Significant progress has been made on a wide range of issues and is being reported weekly in updates sent to Local officials and activists.

Continued on Page 15

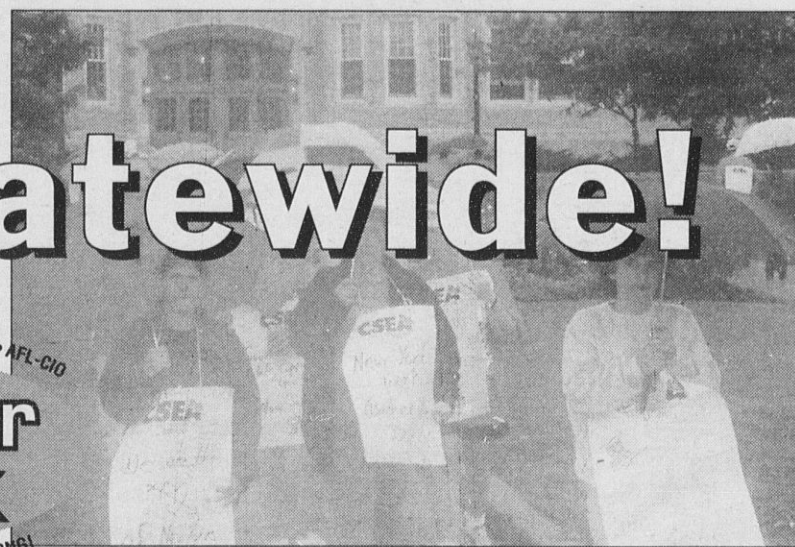




# ... and statewide!

## Labor Link

265,000 MEMBERS STRONG!



Continued from Page 14

The major issues of raises and benefits must be resolved.

"We won't stop until we have a contract that gives us the respect we deserve," CSEA President Danny Donohue pledged.

### A bridge to contract justice

The Brooklyn Bridge carried more than 2,500 union activists on their way to contract justice recently.

The rally, led by Donohue and other union officials, filled the landmark bridge and streets of Manhattan recently.

Gerald McEntee, president of CSEA's international affiliate, the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, and AFSCME Secretary-Treasurer Bill Lucy, joined the march and fired up the crowd.



Clockwise, from top left, downtown Rochester hosted one of several Pataki protests recently. Scores of CSEA members dressed in red contract T-shirts marched the streets as Pataki and political pal Texas Gov. George Bush Jr. collected tens of thousands of dollars on a fund-raising jaunt.

Torrential rain didn't bother this contingent of diehard union activists as they picketed for a fair contract at SUNY Plattsburgh.

Here, there, everywhere — Gov. George Pataki is confronted by CSEA members at SUNY Cortland. Central Region Director Ron Smith demands Pataki show some respect at the contract table.

Peanut Man, symbol of the union's contract fight, leads picketers in Syracuse.



## CELEBRATING LABOR'S SOLIDARITY

CSEA showcased its strength with a massive turnout of union members and a float at the first labor solidarity parade held in Albany in years.

Hundreds of CSEA members wearing red T-shirts marched with representatives of more than 40 other public employee and trade unions.

"We're a potent force in the Capital District labor community and always ready to support our brothers and sisters in the labor movement," said CSEA Capital Region President Carmen Bagnoli.

"This exceptional turnout at the parade shows labor's clout and reach is growing," he added.

# Battling for jobs, union rights in Nassau County

**The CSEA Nassau County Work Force Didn't Create Nassau's Fiscal Crisis**

In good times and in bad, you can count on the CSEA Nassau County Work Force. Every day, we're using our experience, know-how and resourcefulness to keep our children, our sick and elderly and all our residents safe and healthy. We provide the vital services you depend on. We certainly do our part.

We won't be made scapegoats - especially for political purposes. We have a stake in Nassau's future because we are residents and taxpayers too.

Instead of hurting the people who do the work, there are many things the county leaders must do, like stop contracting out work that the county Work Force can do better and cheaper.

**In these difficult times for Nassau, CSEA is doing the job, and doing it right!**

**CSEA**  
The Work Force

CSEA/NASSAU LOCAL 930

At press time, CSEA was standing firm against proposed furloughs to deal with the Nassau County fiscal crisis.

A welcome announcement from county legislative leaders Bruce Blakeman and Peter Schmitt indicated they would not pursue the county executive's ill-conceived plan.

"This proposal to furlough workers is not acceptable to CSEA," said CSEA Nassau Local President Tony Giustino.

"It does not solve Nassau County's problems and I applaud the legislative leaders for their decisive action," he added.

As CSEA battles the county on the budget mess, the union continues its prolonged fight to represent the Nassau County case management workers.

In June, the state Public Employment Relations Board ruled CSEA was the

**The ad at left has run in *Newsday* and is part of Nassau County Local's effort to fight attacks on county employees.**

*Not only are these people dealing with an incredibly stressful job, they have the added uncertainty of their future employment. CSEA will fight for these workers every step of the way.*

certified bargaining agent for these workers, who do case management for the mentally ill in Nassau County.

The county is appealing the decision.

CSEA sent the county a written demand to start negotiations, but county officials said they are waiting for the results of the appeal.

"An appeal is not a stay on negotiations. The county must negotiate. If they don't we will file an improper practice charge," CSEA Labor Relations Specialist Larry Borst said.

This summer the 95 caseworkers were told they would be laid off.

After pressure was brought by CSEA and the media, the county extended the caseworkers' contract until Dec. 31.

The caseworkers are responsible for handling 2,000 cases — more than double the state guidelines.

CSEA has appointed interim officers and a negotiating committee for the group.

"Not only are these people dealing with an incredibly stressful job, they have the added uncertainty of their future employment. CSEA will fight for these workers every step of the way," said Giustino.

— Sheryl C. Jenks

## Donohue receives prestigious mental health advocacy award

CSEA President Danny Donohue has received a prestigious award from a statewide mental health advocacy group for his years of work to improve the state's mental health system.

Donohue immediately used the occasion to blast the shortsighted policies of the state Office of Mental Health.

The state Mental Health Association lauded Donohue as the "recognized leader of a strong and competent work force, including thousands of state and local government workers serving the needs of many New Yorkers living with mental illnesses."

CSEA and the advocacy group have consistently said the promise of deinstitutionalization for people living with mental illness has been undermined because state and local governments do not adequately fund vital community services.

"The last 40 years, New York has systematically undermined and shut down its

network of psychiatric centers without adequately ensuring a comprehensive or consistent replacement," Donohue said.

"The cries of individuals living with mental illnesses, their advocates and the dedicated employees who care for them have largely fallen on deaf ears in Albany," Donohue added.

Mental health association President Joseph Glazer said advocacy groups and unions have the same goals of serving people living with mental illness and promoting their efforts toward recovery.

"It's an honor to receive this award because for decades CSEA has been fighting for a better mental health system and too few people in this state have noticed," Donohue said.



**CSEA President Danny Donohue, seated at left, talks with reporters about problems in the state's mental health system. Donohue is flanked by Joseph Glazer, president of the New York State Mental Health Association and Fred Fusco, head of the Mental Health Association in Onondaga County. Standing behind Donohue are CSEA mental health activists, from left, Hank Wagoner, Kathy Button and Joel Schwartz.**

## **A U.S. Senate race primer**

# **Hillary Rodham Clinton, NYC Mayor Rudolph Giuliani aim for the Senate**

*They haven't formally declared their candidacy, but first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton and New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani are squaring off in the race for New York's Senate seat in Washington.*

*CSEA encourages all its members to seek information and learn as much as possible about all of the major candidates.*

*Here are some facts you should review about these two front-runners.*

### **Hillary Rodham Clinton Democrat**

- Has been an advocate for significant increases in safe and affordable childcare and after school care;
- Doesn't support school vouchers, saying they will harm the public education system;
- Has pressed for higher standards in public education, quality teachers, school construction, smaller class sizes and safe schools;
- Has worked to increase access to quality health care and increase health insurance for children of working families. Has called for more funding for breast cancer research;
- Supports using a smaller portion of the nation's budget surplus for cutting taxes. Would use more of the budget surplus to shore up the Social Security system and Medicare;
- Supports increasing the minimum wage;
- Has called for religious tolerance, human rights and strengthening democracy during her trips abroad;
- Supports the Family and Medical Leave Act, the need to ensure equal pay for equal work, and strengthening Social Security and Medicare;
- Has led a special committee to study the Gulf War Syndrome, resulting in improved health care for veterans and their families.



### **Rudolph Giuliani New York City mayor Republican**

- Favors school vouchers;
- Supports using the nation's budget surplus for tax cuts;
- Opposes legislation passed by the House to regulate health maintenance organizations;
- Lowered the New York City crime rate by 50 percent;
- Enacted tax cuts worth more than \$2.3 billion;
- Lowered the welfare rolls by 440,000 people;
- Tried to contract out the work of public hospitals and the Brooklyn Central Laundry;
- Used welfare workers to displace city employees;
- Formed the mayor's Charter Revision Committee;
- Didn't endorse raising the minimum wage.



## **Consider switching your health plan this month**

November is the annual option transfer period when state employees may change their health insurance plan and pre-tax contribution status.

Employees who wish to change health plans must do so during this transfer period by contacting their health benefit administrator in their agency's personnel office.

### **Rates not set yet**

As this article went to press, the year 2000 New York State Health Insurance Program premium rates had not been approved by the state Insurance Department.

As soon as the 2000 rates are approved, a Rates and Deadlines Guide will be sent to enrollees' homes so an informed decision can be made about health insurance choices for the coming year.

Enrollees will have 30 days from the date the rate information is released to change plans. Employees who want to change plans must submit a signed Health Insurance Transaction Form PS-404 to their agency's health benefits administrator by the deadline listed in the Rates & Deadlines Guide.

Enrollees who are not changing health insurance plans should not take any action.

### **Health insurance choices for 2000**

The health insurance "Choices" for 2000 publication is scheduled to be mailed to agency health benefits administrators' offices in early November.

The publication describes the Empire Plan and the New York State Health Insurance Program (NYSHIP) approved HMOs in specific geographic regions and is an important resource to use when contemplating changing health insurance options.

Enrollees and their families who participate in the HMO "Healthsource HMO of New York" should review the "Choices" publication and choose a different health carrier as Healthsource is not being offered to state employees effective Jan. 1, 2000.

Members enrolled in the HMO "Kaiser Permanente/CHP" should review the options available in the "Choices" guide since Capital District Physicians' Health Plan (CDPHP) will be acquiring Kaiser's New York business by Dec. 31, 1999 and Kaiser will no longer be a viable option.

### **Pre-tax Contribution Program (PTCP)**

The Pre-tax Contribution Program (PTCP) allows members to have health insurance premiums deducted from their pay before taxes are taken out.

This may lower a member's taxable income and provide more spendable income.

Under Internal Revenue Service rules, by participating in the PTCP members may change their health insurance deduction during the tax year only after a qualifying event.

The PTCP is explained in the NYSHIP Health Insurance "Choices" publication and is automatically applied unless members sign a waiver indicating they do not want to change their tax status for the year 2000 health insurance premiums.

Members should see their health benefits administrator by Nov. 30, which is the IRS deadline.

No action is needed if members want to keep their current pre-tax option.

# CSEA's notice of nomination and election

Based on the actions of the delegates at the 1998 CSEA Convention, our election cycle has been changed. Elections for statewide officers and region officers, as well as for the Board of Directors, will be held at the same time. CSEA members are urged to carefully read the election information on this page and related stories in future issues of *The Work Force*.

Elections for the following positions will take place between Jan. 18 - Feb. 8, 2000.

## Statewide Officers:

President, Executive Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer

## Region Officers:

*Region 1:* President, Executive VP, 1st VP, 2nd VP, 3rd VP, Secretary, Treasurer  
*Region 2:* President, Executive Vice President, 1st VP, 2nd VP, Secretary, Treasurer  
*Region 3:* President, Executive VP, 1st VP, 2nd VP, 3rd VP, Secretary, Treasurer  
*Region 4:* President, Executive Vice President, 1st VP, 2nd VP, 3rd VP, Secretary, Treasurer  
*Region 5:* President, Executive VP, 1st VP, 2nd VP, 3rd VP, Recording Secretary, Treasurer  
*Region 6:* President, 1st VP, 2nd VP, 3rd VP, Secretary, Treasurer

## Statewide Board of Directors:

Representatives of the State Executive Committee and the Local Government Executive Committee

**Check the CSEA bulletin boards at your workplace for more election details.**

## CSEA Election Schedule for Statewide Officers, Region Officers, Statewide Board of Directors

**Oct. 15** was the deadline for nominating petitions to be received at CSEA headquarters

**Nov. 16:** Ballot position drawing

**Jan. 18:** Ballots mailed

**Jan. 25:** Replacement ballots available

**Feb. 8:** Deadline for receipt of ballots (8 a.m.). Ballots counted.

Election results will be announced after the ballot count. Candidates will be notified by mail of the results. Election results will be published in the March 2000 edition of *The Work Force*.

## Voting Eligibility Date

Only CSEA members in good standing as of Dec. 1, 1999 will be eligible to vote in the election.

## Terms for

**CSEA Statewide President, Executive Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer:**

The statewide president, executive vice president, secretary and treasurer terms will

start July 1, 2000 and shall be for a single term of three and three-quarter years, ending March 1, 2004.

## Officers for CSEA's Six Regions:

With the election year 2000, region officers will serve four-year terms, commencing March 1, 2000.

## Statewide Board of Directors:

The board of directors terms will begin July 1, 2000 and will run for a single term of three and three-quarter years, ending March 1, 2004.

## Election Oversight

The election process will be overseen by the union's Statewide Election Committee. The balloting will be conducted by an independent election agency approved by the union's statewide Board of Directors.

**Any CSEA member may obtain information about the election process by calling the Election Committee at CSEA headquarters  
1-800-342-4146 ext. 1477**

## AFSCME DELEGATES ELECTION YEAR 2000

In addition to our own elections, the year 2000 also has an AFSCME Delegates election. The approved schedule for that election is as follows:

**Nov. 15 (Mon.)** Declinations deadline  
**Nov. 16 (Tue.)** Local/Unit President mailing labels available  
**Dec. 3 (Fri.)** Campaign Literature deadline  
**Dec. 13 (Mon.)** Voter List Inspection period begins  
**Jan. 18 (Tue.)** Ballots mailed  
**Jan. 25 (Tue.)** Replacement ballots available  
**Feb. 8 (Tue.)** Ballots due/8 a.m.; Tally commences  
**Feb. 18 (Fri.)** End of protest period  
**March** Results published in *The Work Force*

Nomination meetings took place in each region on Saturday, Oct. 30.

Based on the actions of the delegates at the 1998 CSEA Convention, the balloting for the AFSCME Delegates election will take place at the same time and as part of the CSEA elections for statewide officers, region officers and board of directors. Members are urged to carefully read the election information contained in *The Work Force* throughout the year 2000 election cycle as well as the instructions which will accompany each mail ballot.



1999 Inside Albany ([www.insidealbany.com](http://www.insidealbany.com))

## INSIDE ALBANY broadcast schedule

Albany Area	WMHT	Saturday	6:30 p.m.
		Monday	5:30 a.m.
Binghamton	WSKG	Saturday	4 p.m.
Buffalo	WNED	Sunday	10:30 a.m.
Long Island	WLIW	Sunday	11 a.m.
		Monday	12 p.m.
New York City	WNET	Saturday	1:30 p.m.
		Sunday	6:30 a.m.
Plattsburgh	WCFE	Sunday	9 a.m.
Rochester	WXXI	Saturday	5:30 p.m.
Syracuse	WCNY	Saturday	6:30 p.m.
Watertown	WPBS	Saturday	6 p.m.

## SEFA campaign under way with help from CSEA

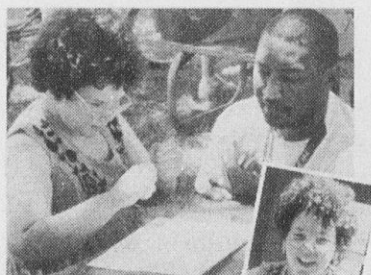
CSEA is again a major supporter of the annual State Employees Federated Appeal (SEFA) which collects and distributes money to a broad range of charities across the state.

Union leaders are encouraging members to participate in this unified fund-raising drive conducted by state employees.

SEFA donations help support a broad range of charities that include services to families, single parents, young children, senior citizens, people with disabilities, the sick, and the homeless, among others.

Members again this year may donate to specific charities. Donations may be made as a one-time gift or spread out during the year through payroll deduction.

For more information, contact your agency SEFA coordinator or visit the SEFA Web site at [www.sefa.state.ny.us](http://www.sefa.state.ny.us).



**Caring  
MEANS  
Sharing**

State employees helping children, families, community.



### CSEA staff brings home the silver in fight against cystic fibrosis

CSEA headquarters staff came away with silver medals recently in the 1999 Bard's Sports Challenge, which raised more than \$32,000 to benefit cystic fibrosis research.

Showing their skills in a variety of athletic events were Kathy Cahalan, Janice Nusbaum, Darin Rowlett, Scott Futia, Steven Keith, Kelly Garceau, Sonia Roberts-Smith and Team Captain Don Kelly. Ross Hanna was teach coach and Lorri Lemme and Marianne Kayser were team alternates.

### ETHICS AND ECONOMICS —

Capital Region CSEA members and activists will want to mark their calendars for the Nov. 8-9 New York State Labor-Religion Coalition conference in Albany. This year's program is titled "Organizing for a Just Economy: The Nuts and Bolts of Ethics and Economics."

Keynote speaker is filmmaker and author Michael Moore. For more information and registration, please call (518) 459-5400, ext. 6294 ... **WORK FORCE GARNERS AWARDS** — CSEA's monthly newspaper, *The Work Force*, received six awards in the 1999 International Labor Communications Association's Journalism Awards Contest. The *Work Force* took second and third awards for best cartoon; first award for non-periodical, special publications, best use of graphics; and honorable mention for non-periodical, special publications, editorial excellence. The awards were for 1998 publications ...

**PEOPLE PERSON** — The PEOPLE recruiter of the month for September is Jackie Edwards of the Capital Region's Local 414. She has recruited 43 new PEOPLE members. PEOPLE is CSEA and AFSCME's Political Action Committee, working to elect supporters of working families to Congress ... **PLAY BALL** — Unhampered by the fact that they have been working without a contract since April 1, some 80 state workers and their families from SUNY New Paltz attended a Hudson Valley Renegades baseball game at Dutchess Stadium in Fishkill. Wearing their T-shirts to show their solidarity, members enjoyed an evening of food and sports while showing support for their local team ... **MULLANEY HONORED** — 19th century labor leader Kate Mullaney's grave in St. Peter's Cemetery, Troy, is now marked with a with a large Celtic cross, purchased by the Troy Labor Council with contributions from area unions ...

**DEGROFF FETED** — Hard-working

CSEA • LOCAL 1000 AFSCME • AFL-CIO

# CSEA Today

265,000 MEMBERS STRONG!

Harnetha DeGroff, president of the Division of Parole Local, received the 1999

President's Award by Capitol Region President Carmen Bagnoli at recent Region Workshop ... **PEANUT WHO?** — CSEA members rallied around "Peanut Woman" at a recent state contract demonstration at SUNY Old Westbury. CSEA SUNY Old Westbury Local President Mary D'Antonio, "Peanut Woman" Laura Gallagher and other CSEA members were interviewed by the media. The noon protest drew approximately 75 members ... **SIGN OF QUALITY** — The self-directed DOT Hamburg Sign Shop crew, the state's first and only, has been rewarded for the quality of their work by a department official who knows whereof he speaks. "This operation is a real success story," said Kevin Ruff, director of the DOT highway maintenance division. The self-directed team concept was developed through meetings and studies by DOT, in conjunction with CSEA and the 12 team members who comprise the sign shop ... **WESTCHESTER COUNTY REFUNDS** — About 300 Westchester County employees are from \$200 to \$20,000 richer because of a union court victory that won them a total of more than \$1.5 million in back pay. "You could hear me all over White Plains," said Judi Corticelli, who received one of the checks. The workers were laid off in 1995, when the county privatized laundry and housekeeping operations at the county hospital. A state Supreme Court judge ruled the CSEA members should get back pay because their jobs were never removed from the county budget by the board of legislators. CSEA attorney James Rose said he has checks for 40 former county employees whom cannot be located. Former workers who believe they are entitled to back pay should contact the Westchester County Unit office at (914) 285-2151.

## Retiree Bonnie Barber honored

# For four decades, a

ITHACA — For CSEA activist Bonnie Barber, retirement hasn't meant slowing down.

These days she does just as much for the union, if not more, than she did when she was working.

For Barber, who proudly announces she's almost 80, that's a lot.

She's been president of the Ithaca Area Retirees Local for the past 15 years.

She's also proud to serve on the Retiree Division Executive Board, as chair of the Conventions and Arrangements Committee.

Last year, she took on the momentous task of setting up the Retiree Convention in her hometown of Ithaca.

"Last year when we had the convention here in Ithaca, I worked my fool head off trying to make sure everything was set up," Barber said.

"I got into some difficulty, but Albany came through for me and everything worked out fine. I worked so hard to get all my ducks in a row — I think that was one of my proudest moments in CSEA," she said.

### Honored for her work

In appreciation of her 40 years of activism, Barber was honored at this year's annual CSEA convention with the union's Donald Webster Memorial Mission Achievement Award.

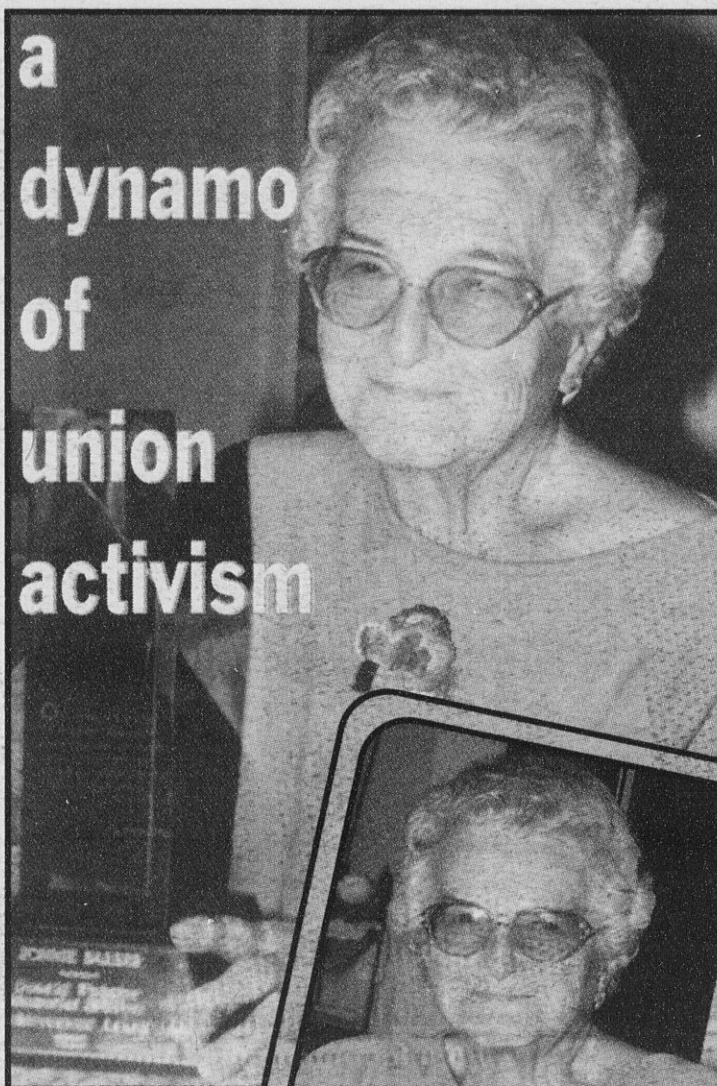
Barber humbly protests that she doesn't deserve the attention.

"Someone told me I had been picked. I didn't understand why. I heard that several people wrote in and felt I deserved the accolade. I didn't. I was embarrassed," Barber said.

Humility aside, Barber admits she was pleased to get the award, mainly because of her long-standing friendship with the late Don Webster, for whom the award is named.

"I was very happy, because I knew Don so well. He was the one who asked me to chair the Conventions and Arrangements Committee, and I'm still on it 15 years later. I must have done something right," she said with a chuckle. "It showed me that they appreciate what I do."

dynamo  
of  
union  
activism



**Top photo, retiree of the year Bonnie Barber proudly displays her Donald Webster Memorial Mission Achievement Award. Below, she shares a quiet moment with her dog Freckles.**

### First day a union member

Barber began her CSEA activism when she started as a secretary/receptionist at the former Tompkins County Hospital, now the Cayuga Medical Center, in 1959.

She joined the union her first day on the job, after being approached by two union organizers.

"I thought it was the thing to do," she noted.

Barber took her pension and became a CSEA Retiree Division member in 1980, following the hospital's privatization by the county, a move she fought hard against.

"I was disappointed when they voted to privatize the hospital. I worked hard to try and keep it public," Barber said.

In the 1980s, her CSEA activism continued. She served for a few years as vice president and then president of the Tompkins County Local.

Barber has also remained deeply involved in local politics, and said she's never missed voting in an election since 1941.

### Never too busy to help

Barber has been married to her husband, Donald, for the past 59 years. Even though they are both retired, they both stay busy.

At 85, he works five days a week at a local supermarket and volunteers one day a week at the hospital.

She serves on several local boards, volunteers at the hospital about six hours a week, and continues her union activity when she's not tending to her flowers, bowling, golfing or doing crafts.

To those who are just entering the work force, Barber has this advice about the union.

"Not only is it a good idea to belong to the union," Barber said, "but if they want security, they need to belong and be active."

— Mark Kotzin