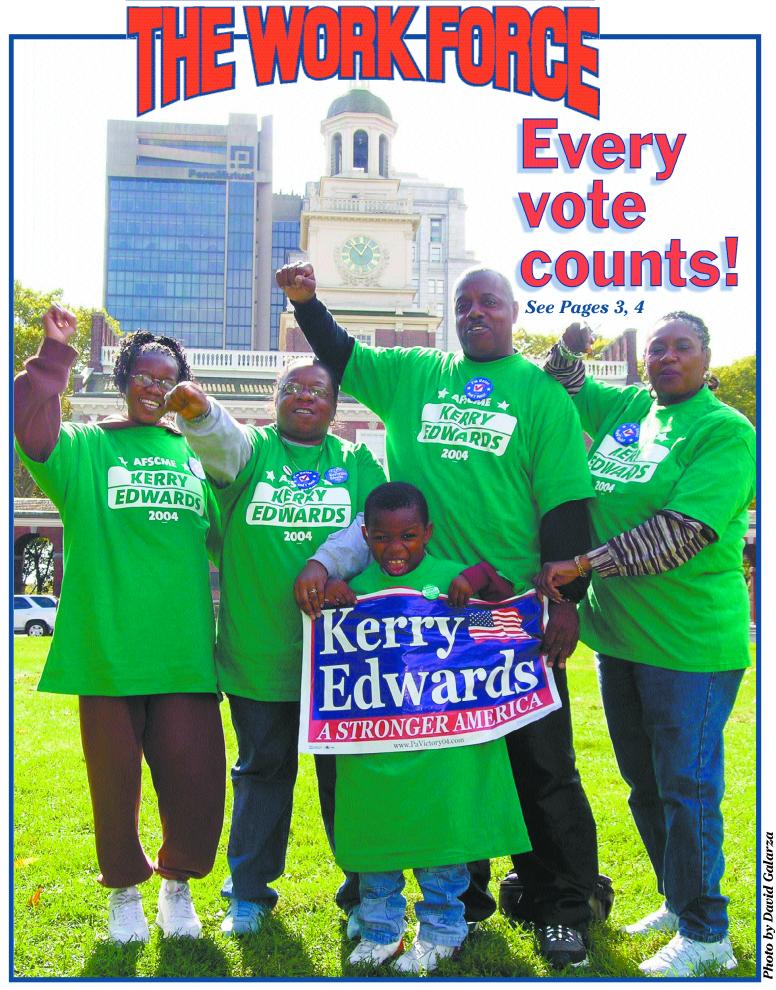
Volume 7 No. 11 November 2004



The Special Supplement, 2004 Statewide Officers' Reports, is enclosed

Photo of the Month



President Danny Donohue fires up CSEA activists in the Capital Region recently while promoting the Kerry-Edwards presidential ticket as the best choice for working families in this year's presidential election. CSEA will be working tirelessly until Election Day to ensure victories for political candidates endorsed by the union. For more information, please see pages 3 and 4.

Betty Collins, CSEA Activist



WATERFORD - CSEA members in the Capital Region are mourning the loss of CSEA retiree and activist Betty Collins. She was 86.

Collins had served as vice president of the New York State Insurance Fund Local 666 in 1975. She served as the local president from 1977 to 1986. She had also served on CSEA's Board of Directors as a

representative of the Insurance department until her retirement in 1987.

After retirement, Collins remained active with CSEA. She served as the treasurer for the Capital District retirees local from 1989 to 1998, and served as the retiree representative on the Standing Insurance Committee for about 16 years. Collins was also a member of the Capital District Region Women's Committee.

In addition to her union activism, Collins was president of the Waterford Senior Citizens and a member of Congregation Berith Sholom in Troy.

"Betty was dedicated to her union, and she could always be counted on to fight for working families," CSEA President Danny Donohue said. 'She was not only a leader, but a warm and wonderful woman who was respected by all who knew her. She will be sorely missed."

SUNY Purchase food service workers win recognition as union

Private sector food service workers at SUNY Purchase are celebrating a victory over forming a union with CSEA.

After a lengthy organizing campaign, the workers recently voted 57 to 12 to join CSEA.

"I am proud of the food service employees at SUNY Purchase who have worked so hard to gain a voice at work," CSEA President Danny Donohue said. "I welcome them to our union."

"I feel very proud that we have so much support for the union from all of my co-workers, students, staff and professors," said Elisa Charcopa, a food service worker at the college.

The election took place after the union was able to broker a neutrality agreement with the food service workers' employer, Chartwells.

The neutrality agreement comes after a long period of intense activism that involved food service workers, CSEA leadership, union staff and SUNY Purchase students and faculty.

"Our next goal is to negotiate a contract with the employer," said Pedro Rivera, a SUNY Purchase food service employee. "As I always say, we can do it."

CSEA files lawsuit to stop Buffalo wage freezes

BUFFALO — CSEA has filed a lawsuit against the Buffalo Fiscal Stability Authority for imposing a wage freeze on members who work at the Buffalo Municipal Housing Authority and the Buffalo Urban Renewal Authority. The union expects that a wage freeze may also be imposed on members of the Buffalo Sewer Authority.

CSEA charged that the wage freeze illegally impairs the union's contracts with the agencies. The teachers' union and other AFSCME locals representing Buffalo municipal workers have also filed suit.

"The Buffalo Fiscal Stability Authority is taking advantage of our working people," said CSEA Western Region President Flo Tripi. "And we are taking every effort to make sure that they stop what they are attempting to do, which is decrease benefits of good negotiated contracts and hard-working people."

CSEA President Danny Donohue to visit Metropolitan Region

CSEA President Danny Donohue will visit the CSEA Metropolitan Region office on Wednesday, November 17 to meet with members.

The meetings will be held in the region office at 40 Fulton Street (22nd floor), Manhattan.

Donohue will meet with union members from 1 to 7 p.m. Please call the Metro Region office at (212) 406-2156 for an appointment and directions.



CSEA activists in the Capital Region recently carried the banner for the Kerry-Edwards ticket at a local campaign rally. From left are Betty Egan, Kim Wallace, Carol Bruno, T.J. O'Donnell, Sue Tarbox, Craig Tarbox, Diane Brunelle and Frank Brady.

Turn out and vote!

CSEA members across New York state are getting fired up for the most important presidential election in recent history.

From Buffalo to
Brookhaven, union
members are volunteering
their time with campaign
activities such as
leafleting and staffing
phonebanks - all to turn
out the vote for the
candidates that CSEA has
endorsed for election.

While CSEA members are working on campaigns for their area's state and federal representatives, the biggest focus of this year's race is on the presidential election.

"Voting is a right and responsibility," said CSEA President Danny Donohue. "The race will be won or lost on the basis of turnout." (See President's column - page 4.)

CSEA has endorsed
Democratic Sen. John Kerry for election, and many union members are working in many ways to help the Kerry-Edwards ticket win the election.

"In a few days, Americans and union members in particular, will be asked to make an important decision," said Audie Brunson, a CSEA member from Kingsboro Psychiatric Center.



CSEA members in the Long Island Region recently rallied for the Kerry-Edwards ticket.

"We need to show this administration that the labor movement is still alive, is willing to fight and can still deliver for those who deliver for us."

As one example, CSEA members from the Metropolitan Region recently gave up a Saturday in October knowing that there was far too much at stake in November.

Delphine Moultrie, a CSEA member employed at the State Insurance Fund, brought along her 5-year-old son David on a bus trip to Philadelphia where they joined dozens of CSEA members in knocking on doors to remind union members about the importance of voting on Nov. 2. Pennsylvania and its electoral votes are highly

contested and absolutely crucial in winning this election.

"The importance of this election cannot be underestimated," said Moultrie. "The outcome of this election is probably more important for him than it is for me."

Similar sentiments and

efforts to get out the vote have become a familiar scene from the smallest towns to the largest cities, where CSEA members are helping to get out the vote. Members are volunteering to staff phone banks, attend rallies, leaflet, call friends and family in swing states and help with the overall effort. For the labor movement and working families across the country it has become a matter of survival.

"Mr. Bush is trying to destroy labor and working people and it's important to have someone who is sympathetic to working people," said CSEA member Walter S. Anthony.

—David Galarza



CSEA Metropolitan Region members Gwendolyn Ford and Audie Brunson speak with a union member in Philadelphia about the importance of voting for Kerry.

"The race will be won or lost on the basis of turnout."

On Page 1:

CSEA Metropolitan Region members and their families recently visited union members in Philadelphia to campaign for the Kerry-Edwards ticket. From left are Gwendolyn Ford, Delphine Moultrie, Moultrie's son, David (holding sign), Audie Brunson and Linda Williams, posed in front of Independence Hall.

THE WORK FORCE

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

Deputy Director of Communications

LOU HMIELESKI Executive Editor

JANICE MARRA Associate Editor

CATHLEEN FEBRAIO Graphic Production Specialist

JANICE M. KUCSKAR

Graphic Production Specialist
BETH McINTYRE
Communications Assistant

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Readers:

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

COMMUNICATIONS ASSOCIATES

Long Island Region

DAVID GALARZA (631) 462-0030

DAVID GALARZA Metropolitan Region (212) 406-2156

VACANT Southern Region (845) 831-1000

THERESE ASSALIAN Capital Region (518) 785-4400

MARK M. KOTZIN Central Region (315) 433-0050

RACHEL LANGERT

VACANT (315) 433-0050 VACANT Western Region (716) 886-0391 ED MOLITOR Headquarters (518) 257-1272

The Publications Committee

LONG ISLAND REGION Jane D'Amico
METROPOLITAN REGION Abraham Benjamin
SOUTHERN REGION Robert Lorenc
CAPITAL REGION Helen Fischedick
CENTRAL REGION Bruce Damalt, Chair
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If you don't vote, you lose!

As a labor movement and more importantly, as Americans, we are at a defining moment in our history. The outcome of the presidential election will affect all of us in big and small ways, not just in the weeks and months ahead, but also in the generation to come.



Anyone who thinks his or her vote doesn't count or that it doesn't matter who gets elected needs a reality check. It does matter and one vote does make a difference.

By now you've heard the arguments, seen the ads, and hopefully, you've watched the debates.

CSEA has weighed in with ample evidence about why we believe John Kerry and John Edwards are the best candidates for our members and all working Americans. CSEA's choice is based on careful consideration of the candidate's positions, records and judgments. If you don't agree, you're entitled to your opinion.

Most importantly, I urge every one of you, your family, friends and neighbors to get out and vote on Nov. 2. Our right to vote in free and fair elections is what sets America apart from much of the rest of the world. Americans and other people are continuing to die for that right every day. For their sake and your own, exercise your right to vote because it's also a responsibility.



STAT: Critical health care reform needed now

A critical need for health care reform has put public health care facilities on life support all across New York state. As more and more localities are giving up and pulling the plug, CSEA continues to fight to save at-risk facilities. (See related feature pages 10-11).

Fighting Contracting Out

In central New York, CSEA was able to fight off attempts to privatize mental health services in Broome and Madison counties. CSEA also halted an effort by Oneida County, which was considering privatizing their public health nursing services after the union began mounting a public opposition campaign.

Less successful was the fight to save Oswego County's Andrew Michaud Nursing Home, where, despite the union's best efforts, legislators voted to privatize earlier this year.

Not everyone in central New York has jumped on the privatization bandwagon. At press time, Otsego County was expected to officially open a brand new nursing home, Otsego Manor, to replace the county's aging facility, The Meadows.

The opening signals the end result of years of hard campaigning by the union to convince



Pauline Roberts, a technician at the SUNY Health Science Center in Brooklyn

county leaders to build a new facility instead of privatizing.

CSEA Central Region President Jim Moore said he's proud of the union's track record on fighting for health care services.

"We've been successful in nearly every battle we've fought," Moore said. "But we need to seek relief at the state and federal levels in order to stop having to constantly fight to maintain our health services."

In CSEA's Capital Region, attempts to sell Montgomery County's public nursing home, Montgomery Meadows, are momentarily taking a back seat to a countywide budget shortfall. CSEA is supporting a resolution to increase the county tax limit in hope of saving the nursing home and other valuable services county employees provide.

Westchester Worries

CSEA members in Westchester County are also facing challenges at public health facilities. Two countyowned dental clinics in White Plains and Yonkers closed in October, leaving thousands of underinsured children without access to dental care. The union fought the county's proposal to close the clinics.

While the clinics had closed in October, the county is funding the dental program through December.
Three CSEA members who had been employed at the clinics are now running a sealant program at area schools until December, when they will lose their jobs.



Anthony Lewis, a technician at the SUNY Health Science Center in Brooklyn

"The big losers are the kids and their parents," Westchester County Unit President Jack McPhillips said. "Instead of paying one affordable price for each visit, they are



Beth Lorenzen, a hygienist at two Westchester County dental clinics, fought to save the facilities from being closed by the county.

paying about three times the price for each service. It's very frustrating."

Union members at Westchester Medical Center are working under the constant cloud of a fiscal deficit, projected by hospital administrators to be \$41 million this year. Hundreds of hospital employees, including CSEA members, have been laid off since March 2003.

As the hospital's fiscal collapse deepened late last year, CSEA called for a public investigation into its finances. State Comptroller Alan Hevesi's office is now auditing the hospital's financial records. **Westchester County** officials are now taking a greater oversight role over the hospital that broke off from the county to become a public benefit corporation in 1998.



"We've been successful in nearly every battle we've fought, but we need to seek relief at the state and federal levels in order to stop having to constantly fight to maintain our health services."

CSE Voices



It's important to ensure the growth of our organization and to ensure that working families have the rights and benefits they deserve.

— Renee Chichester,
Telephone Operator,
Livingston County Skilled
Nursing Facility,
14-year member, participating
in CSEA's Leadership
Education and Development
(LEAD) program.



"We recognize the important mission this camp provides, and they couldn't do it without the dedicated workers we represent there."





I think it's very important to develop new leaders, because someone has to keep the fight going. We need to educate our members so we can continue to keep our union strong. >>>

—Adrianne Hudson, Developmental Aide and CSEA 2nd Vice President, Brooklyn DDSO, participating in CSEA's Leadership Education and Development (LEAD) program.

Corrections workers get reprieve

NORWICH — CSEA members employed at the State Department of Corrections' minimum-security "shock" prison camp, Camp Pharsalia in rural Chenango County, recently got some good news from state officials who announced a temporary reprieve in the state's efforts to shut down the facility.

For the workers, it's been an emotional roller coaster ride, first hearing the facility would be closed at the end of the year in the governor's initial state budget proposal, then finding out that the state Legislature restored their funding, only to have it vetoed by the governor.

Now, elected state leaders have announced that funding has been "found" to continue the camp's operation until the end of the fiscal year in March.

Despite the emotional ups and downs for the workers, they've remained focused on lobbying for the facility's long-term operation, which they say is sorely needed by the surrounding communities that are served by labor done by the camp's inmates.

From the first announcement of closure, the camp's workers have gotten strong support from their area state legislators. Now, the fight moves to putting pressure on state Department of Correctional Services



CSEA members from the state Veterans' Home at Oxford stand with Camp Pharsalia workers and state politicians at a support rally for keeping the camp in operation. State Sen. Thomas Libous, with microphone, is at center. Pictured on the lower level are, from left, certified nursing assistants Gary James and Joe Walley. On upper level is LPN Ray Wakefield, the CSEA Local Vice President at Oxford. Both facilities are in Chenango County.

Commissioner Glenn Goord, whom several of the legislators identified as pushing the facility's closure.

CSEA Central Region President Jim Moore said the union would continue to lobby on behalf of keeping the camp permanently funded and in operation. "We recognize the important mission this camp provides, and they couldn't do it without the dedicated workers we represent there. We're going to fight as hard as we can to make sure that it stays in operation," Moore said.

2:30 pm

1:30 pm

— Mark M. Kotzin

Stay informed about what state government is doing through

INSIDE ALBANY

CSEA is a longtime, major underwriter of this award-winning public television program. See the times below for the 2004 broadcast schedule in your area.

NYC

Saturday

Binghamton



- 1 - 0		p
Rochester	WXXI	5:30 pm
Sunday		
Albany	WMHT	12:30 pm
		11:30 pm
Buffalo	WNED	10:00 am
Long Island	WLIW	7:00 am
Plattsburgh	WCFE	9:00 am
Syracuse	WCNY	1:00 pm
Watertown	WPBS	7:00 am
Monday		
Long Island	WLIW	12:00 noon
3 3		

WSKG

WNET

Tax conference empowers stewards

LAKE GEORGE — What does a guy in an Elvis wig have to do with becoming a better shop steward?

Not a lot, actually, but enough to be part of a labor-management training program that could become a model for locals across the state.

The CSEA state Tax and Finance Local in Albany and the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance recently held the Lee Johnson Memorial Labor-Management Seminar, a program held every four years with a new state contract since the 1970s.

This year, the local's stewards and the state's labor relations staff participated in the three-day seminar.

Together, they review the new contract provisions and have a refresher course for stewards that include skits.

Violence in the workplace, sexual harassment, insubordination, and the department's code of conduct are included topics, and role reversal is employed.

As for the partial Elvis impersonator, he was portraying a shop steward trying to reconcile an issue between an employee and a supervisor. Props are used to keep the mood light.

"This is an excellent program for building the kinds of bridges between labor and management that ensure everyone has a voice," said CSEA Executive Vice President Mary Sullivan, who attended the program.

"I'd love to see this become a model for broader education programs," Sullivan said.

CSEA Statewide Treasurer Maureen Malone and Statewide Secretary Barbara Reeves also attended.



Tax and Finance staff and CSEA members Lois Bettie, top left, and T.J. O'Donnell, lower left, perform in costume with management Labor Relations staff.



Members of the state Department of Taxation and Finance Labor Relations bureau perform a skit involving a supervisor and shop steward trying to iron out a complaint.

"We have a very good rapport with our labor relations personnel and this was a way for stewards to see both sides and how we can work things out" said 2nd Vice President Diane Barosi.

In Barosi's skit, she played a supervisor who writes up another supervisor for insubordination. "In the end, we talk things out and I end up ripping up the counseling memo," she said.

Information about these issues is educational and important for the stewards, said 1st Vice President Mike Gifford, who along with fellow members of the local's Education Committee, plans the event. Gifford, also 2nd vice president for the CSEA Capital Region, has been serving on the committee since the early 1980s and said this year's program was particularly well received.

"This year everything just really came together, we received a lot of compliments from the stewards," said Gifford. "To have that positive feedback really makes it worthwhile," he said.

A strong emphasis on education and collaboration is intentional and meant to honor the memory of Lee Johnson, a CSEA activist and officer whose spirit and leadership qualities had a lasting impact on the local.

"Lee was a man who strongly believed in unionism and education," said Local President Ed Wysomski. "He always made sure that everybody was aware of union issues."

The conference concluded with 33 stewards receiving certification to become shop stewards.

— Therese Assalian Photos by Joe DiSanto



"This is an excellent program for building the kinds of bridges between labor and management that ensure everyone has a voice."





We need a new generation of leaders to take us into the new millennium. Without good leaders, you never know where you might end up. >>

—George McCroy, Tour Guide, NYS Office of General Services, six-year member, participating in CSEA's Leadership Education and Development (LEAD) program.



"Our members came to work for the city on the promise of good benefits, and now they want to start stripping away that promise. We're going to fight for what we deserve."

Oneonta workers stick to it for a contract

ONEONTA — City of Oneonta employees represented by CSEA, upset over a contract stalemate, are literally sticking together in a visibility campaign to fight for a fair contract.

Recently, to coincide with their first mediation session, CSEA members held a "sticker day," during which members wore stickers bearing their contract campaign theme, "Show Care, Be Fair."

CSEA City of Oneonta Unit President Dominic Pucci III said the workers are showing their solidarity against unfair city demands to pay for health insurance contributions while employee salaries remain unrealistically low.

"What we've told the city is that we're standing firm in our position that we won't pay for our health insurance while our salaries remain so low," he said. "Our members came to work for the city on the promise of good benefits, and now they want to start stripping away that promise. We're going to fight for what we deserve."

demonstrations outside the homes of elected city leaders. They've created a campaign web site to gain public support which can be found at

CSEA members also intend to

leaflet and conduct

http://www.showcarebefair.com.

CSEA City of Oneonta Unit

President Dominic Pucci III, right, puts a sticker on co-worker Mike Baldwin, a heavy equipment operator for the city Department of Public Works, outside Oneonta City Hall.

— Mark M. Kotzin

CSEA Voices



66 Tf CSEA and organized labor are not constantly developing tomorrow's leaders, the labor movement will die, as will the benefits that unions have gained throughout history. >>

- Rob Mueller, Laborer, **Town of Hamburg Highway** Department, participating in CSEA's Leadership **Education and Development** (LEAD) program.

Parks worker saves drowning boy

BROOKLYN — Ricky Davis forgot one important thing when he dove into the chilly waters of the East River to save a drowning boy.

He can't swim.

"After it happened I couldn't believe that I actually jumped into the East River," said Davis, a CSEA member who works at **Empire Fulton Ferry State** Park, an urban oasis in the shadow of the Brooklyn Bridge. "I was concerned about this 11-year-old kid."

The heroic deed happened during an otherwise regular, yet sweltering summer morning. Davis said that he was making his usual rounds while a group of children were exploring the park on a school field trip.

"I was just hoping that none of these kids did anything unusual,' said Davis.

He soon heard a splash and noticed that a boy, who was apparently not a part of the



CSEA member Ricky Davis learned a very important lesson himself when he recently saved a child from drowning in the East River.

larger group, was in the water near some boulders that are off limits to visitors.

"Since the day was hot, I thought he had jumped in to take a cool dip," said Davis until he saw that the boy was struggling to keep his head above the water.

"I ran and jumped into the water and was able to tread my way to where he was. Then I stuck my left arm out to pull him in," said Davis who is still

mourning the loss of his watch during the rescue.

"I grabbed his wrist and started to tread my way to the rocks," Davis said. "He was hysterical. I was, too."

Emergency personnel quickly arrived and Davis, still in his soaking uniform, called his supervisor to report the incident. Despite a case of shock, Davis was uninjured during the rescue. He did ask for a tetanus shot as a precaution against the East River waters.

"When you're a civil service worker, you have a job to do," he said. "You just do it."

Davis, the proud father of a 2year-old boy, Dillon, and a recently born baby girl, Denim, is now intent on teaching his children a valuable skill.

"I'm going to make sure that they learn to swim," he said.

- David Galarza

Walking for a cure

CENTRAL VALLEY — William O'Toole works hard to actively recruit his co-workers to participate in the American Cancer Society's annual Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk.

O'Toole, president of the CSEA Monroe-Woodbury School District unit, has been increasingly successful in his efforts each year. This year, about 25 unit members and their families joined the Orange County local's team for the walk at the Woodbury Commons Premium Outlets. Also walking with the Orange County local were members of the Orange County unit, Port Jervis School District unit and Washingtonville School District unit.

In addition to Orange County local members, CSEA members from across the Southern Region actively participated in the Woodbury Commons event.

"We walk every year," O'Toole said. "We walk as part of the Orange County local, but since (the district) is near Woodbury Commons, it's easy for us to come out and help."

The walk is one of 15 Making Strides events that the American Cancer Society sponsors in New York state each October. The Woodbury Commons site alone attracts about 8,000 walkers each year, and monies raised from the events go to programs that include breast cancer research and public awareness about the disease.

Breast cancer strikes more than $200,\!000$ people in the United States each year and claims about $40,\!000$ lives.

CSEA members across the state have embraced the event as a way to fight breast cancer.

The union's Long Island region is a flagship sponsor of the Jones Beach walk. CSEA members there raised over \$20,000 at the 2003 walk.

CSEA members in the Metropolitan, Capital, Central and Western regions are also active with their area Making Strides events.

"I post a sign-up sheet every year, and it's always full," O'Toole said. "We give the walkers event T-shirts. On the day of the walk, we always get a lot of extra people who show up at the last minute. That's great for us."

The team raised over \$800 at the event, and O'Toole expects that figure to rise.

"Even people who didn't walk this year have been contributing," he said. "The walk is getting bigger every year, and we have an increasing number of members interested in helping."

Participating in the walk is important to O'Toole and many of the members in his unit because breast cancer has affected them.

Three CSEA members employed at the district have battled the disease over the past four years.

"We're working with the district to try to start a breast cancer support group among our staff," O'Toole said. "We have members affected by the disease, and we want to support them. We have received very warm letters from people who are grateful to us for our help."

— Janice Marra



CSEA members in the Orange County Local walk in this year's Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk at Woodbury Commons Premium Outlets. Pictured here, from left, are Betty Kranz, Port Jervis School District Unit President and Monroe-Woodbury School District members Russ Hall, Evelyn Schiller and Joanne Milian. NEW YORK'S LEADING UNION Represents 55,000 Workers in EDUCATION SUPPORT SERVICES

"We have members affected by the disease, and we want to support them."

CSEA Voices



We need new people to take over when our current leaders decide to retire.

— Theresa Palmer, Typist and CSEA Unit President, Binghamton City School District, participating in CSEA's Leadership Education and Development (LEAD) program.

CSEA sponsoring high school sports tournaments

ALBANY — For the second year in a row, CSEA is proud to partner with the New York State Public High School Athletic Association as a sponsor of 24 major sport championship tournaments statewide.

"CSEA members in school districts statewide play a direct role in preparing and maintaining the athletic facilities, making the scheduling and travel arrangements, driving the student athletes to games and performing numerous other tasks that contribute to a positive environment in our schools," said CSEA President Danny Donohue.

"Thousands more CSEA members are coaches, parents and fans who support the students, which is why CSEA is so proud to sponsor the state championship tournaments," Donohue said.

From highly visible team sports like basketball, football, baseball and soccer to individual championships for golf, bowling and track, CSEA is on the scene with visible support for both boys and girls.

For more information about the athletic championships, visit their web site at http://www.nysphsaa.org.

THE WORK FORCE

CSEA launches campaign for future of public health care

Health Care Reform Needs Urgent Care

From small community clinics to large, complex public hospitals, the future of public health care is in serious doubt in every part of New York.

Essential public health care is in critical condition. Years of neglect and inadequate funding from the federal and state governments have made a bad situation worse

"A 20-year old state funding formula's left local taxpayers shouldering a back-breaking burden trying to maintain needed public health facilities and services," said CSEA President Danny Donohue. "It's not right and it puts the sick and elderly at risk."

Additionally, the outdated funding formula shortchanges public facilities compared to private health care facilities.

For months CSEA has been fighting to preserve public health care across the state with mixed results (See story page 5). The basic issue is the same in every place — inadequate funding — but the scale, complexity and approach to the crisis has varied by locality.

CSEA successfully secured \$30 million in the state budget to help at-risk public health care facilities for the remainder of this year. But it is clear a more comprehensive health care reform is long overdue to ensure the future for public health care.

The time is right as the governor and state lawmakers will soon take up reauthorization of the Health Care Reform Act which sets the funding formulas for health care facilities.

Ensuring fairness and a future for public health services is a top CSEA priority. To hammer home the importance, CSEA is launching a statewide campaign that will include advertising, grassroots organizing, coalition-building and numerous other efforts to build support and visibility for this critically important issue.

"The funding need is obvious but the issue is really about recognizing that public health care providers are performing a necessary and demanding responsibility that nobody else is addressing," Donohue said. "We need reform but we also need to preserve that unique role."

"ĈSEA members need to get involved in this effort no matter who you are or what you do," he said. "Whether you work in the public health field or not, you have a stake in ensuring that these services will continue to be available to those who need them — someday it might be you or a member of your family."

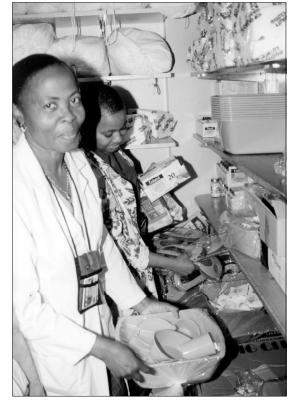
"All of us need to make it clear to the governor, state lawmakers and local elected officials that health care reform needs urgent care," Donohue said.

For more information and to find out how you can be a part of this campaign visit the CSEA website: www.csealocal1000.org.



Pricilla Johnson, right, cares for a patient at the SUNY Health Science Center in Brooklyn.

Opposite Page, clockwise from top left: Rena Victor and Faith Walters in the supply room of the SUNY Health Science Center in Brooklyn; Allan Elliot, a technician at the SUNY Health Science Center in Brooklyn; Yzonne Bain, a worker at the SUNY Health Science Center in Brooklyn; certified nursing assistants Samantha Francis, left, and Mindy Wallace spend time with Andrew Michaud Nursing Home resident Barb Lyon.









AFSCME grant provides confined space training

LEADING UNION

265,000 Members Strong

SAFETY and

LLEVIZI.

Keeping safe in a pinch

COBLESKILL — Twenty SUNY Cobleskill maintenance department employees recently participated in a work site confined space training program sponsored by AFSCME.

AFSCME (American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, CSEA's affiliate union)

instructors used classroom lectures and hands-on demonstrations during the two-day program to train workers about the dangers of working in confined spaces and how to use proper equipment for various confined space situations.

Occupational Safety and Health Administration standards require employers to evaluate all work areas for confined spaces. OSHA defines a confined space as one that is large enough that an employee can bodily enter and perform assigned work, has limited or restricted means for entry or exit and is not designated for continuous occupancy.

Public employees, such as those at SUNY Cobleskill, fall under the state Public Employee Safety and Health (PESH) Act's guidelines for safety. PESH, for the most part, mirrors OSHA regulations.

The group also learned the differences between non-permit-required and permit-required confined spaces. Non-permit-required spaces are not considered

to be potentially hazardous to workers. Permit-required spaces, which include boilers, catch basins, storage tanks, trenches, tunnels and crawl spaces, are potentially hazardous because they contain one or more substances that could

be dangerous to workers.

The OSHA standards require employers to inform affected workers of the existence, location and danger posed by permitrequired confined spaces, and employers must label spaces to restrict unauthorized access. If workers must enter such confined spaces, employers must develop and implement a written program that complies with the standards.

"This training is important because it increases awareness of



the hazards of entering into a confined space," CSEA Occupational Safety and Health Specialist Gary China said. "Serious injury or fatalities can

occur if people don't have the proper training and don't take the necessary precautions."

— Therese Assalian

Have questions about workplace safety?

✓ Check out CSEA's Occupational Safety and Health Department page at http://www.csealocal1000.org.

✓ Learn more about state safety standards at www.nycosh.org





CSEA members raise funds for home improvements

SCOTIA — CSEA members employed at Glendale Nursing Home recently organized a weekend of fun events that benefited the residents.

On Friday, staff members hosted an ice cream social for the residents, during which workers served ice cream with a choice of toppings. Residents topped off the afternoon with music and socializing.

On the following day, 23-year CSEA member George Kirker, a Maintenance, Housekeeping and Laundry Supervisor, organized a Car and Craft show.

"We planned the event for over four months and the whole facility was involved," Kirker said.

More than 300 residents and community members attended the Car and Craft show. In addition to the cars, craft tables and food vendors, the event included a car seat safety inspection. The show also featured a demonstration from the Schenectady County Sheriff's Office's K-9 unit and representatives from the Village

of Scotia and the Scotia-Glenville police departments' DARE program.

The Car and Craft show raised \$3,000 for the resident council's fund, which Kirker said will likely be used to buy wallpaper and other items to allow Glendale's CSEA maintenance workers to decorate the residents' rooms.

Kirker is happy with the show's success and already has plans for another event in May.

Kirker said that, given the current crisis facing public nursing homes, it's important that the community is aware of the dedication of the public employees working at



Participating in the recent activities to benefit residents at Glendale Nursing Home are, from left, Mina Aini, a Housekeeping department employee and 15-year CSEA member, Ellen Rank, a resident and Mary Anne Cook, a retired physical therapy assistant.

the homes.

"People need to know we're here providing a valuable service and good care," he said.

— Therese Assalian



"People need to know we're here providing a valuable service and good care."

Operation Adopt a Soldier

WILTON — CSEA workers at Mt. McGregor Correctional Facility are hosting a project to help bring mail and kind words to service men and women currently serving across the globe, including in the United States.

The staff asks that you write letters, send a card or a note to those serving their country.

To download a list of service people who would like to receive mail, complete with addresses, visit the CSEA web site at www.csealocal1000.org/r4/region4.php

You can also contact Mt. McGregor Local President Cliff Seguin Jr. at (518) 587-3960, ext. 3801.



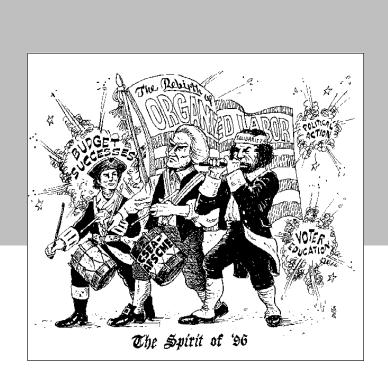
Tune in to... Prospering in America for news affecting working families

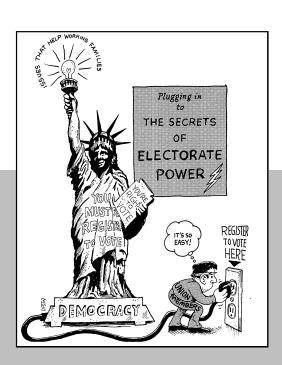
Listen to Prospering in
America in Buffalo Thursdays
at 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. on WHLDAM 1270 and
Saturdays at 8
a.m. on WSPQAM 1330; in Rochester at 5
p.m. on WROC-AM 950; in
Albany Sundays at 7 p.m. on
WGY-AM 810 and 9 p.m. on
WTDY-AM 1670; or on the web
at http://www.piaradio.com/.

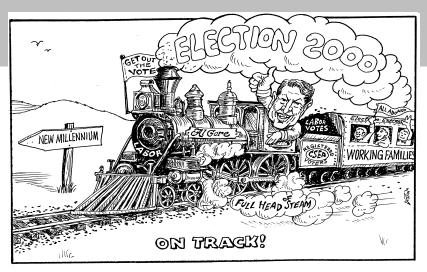
Prospering in America is made possible in part through support from CSEA.

Making your vote count...CSEA style!

Award-winning artist Ralph Distin created these classic cartoons (through the years) to remind union members that getting out the vote keeps democracy on track.









7 years ago ...

CSEA played a leading role in defeating a call for a New York state Constitutional Convention on the November ballot.

CSEA's concerns centered on the potentially wasteful cost of a Constitutional Convention without any guarantee that it would actually

improve state government. There was also a strong likelihood that a Constitutional Convention could undermine constitutionally guaranteed rights, benefits and protections that CSEA members and other New Yorkers take for granted.

CSEA's arguments are just as important today, at a time when some individuals and groups are advancing a Constitutional Convention once again as a way to reform the legislative process in Albany. CSEA believes there are better ways to fix the problems in Albany.

Also in 1997 ...

- * Tony Blair elected British Prime Minister
- ★ Hong Kong reverts to China after 156 years as a British colony
- * Russian space station 'Mir' experiences a series of lifethreatening malfunctions and accidents.
- * Millions commemorate the 20th anniversary of Elvis' death
- $\ensuremath{\bigstar}$ Britain's Princess Diana is killed in a Paris car crash.
- * Titanic is the top film at the box office
- * The Florida Marlins defeat the Cleveland Indians in the World Series

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CSEA pushes for political equality in Seneca County

WATERLOO – Just a few minutes down Route 20 from Seneca Falls, birthplace of the women's suffrage movement, a determined CSEA political activist recently won a new battle for political equal rights.

CSEA members employed in the Seneca County Office Building now have the right to put up signs in their work areas supporting political candidates.

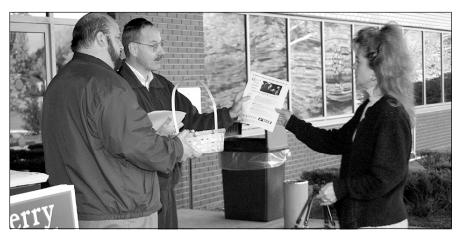
While it may seem like a small victory, it's significant to workers who want to be politically active. One

Gerald McEntee, President

employee compared the win to an oppressive weight being lifted off of members' shoulders.

"It made me feel like my rights were suppressed," said Carla Felice, a data entry machine operator for the county's Human Services Department. "It felt like something was lifted when they changed this."

The battle began after CSEA Seneca County Local President Bruce Damalt, who works in the county's Social Services



CSEA Central Region Political Action Coordinator Michael Ottaviano, left, and Seneca County Local President Bruce Damalt, right, hand out flyers outside the Seneca County Office Building as employees come in to work.

Department, made a startling discovery that forced county leaders to do an about-face. Damalt noticed that a county attorney had a political button posted on the wall of his office despite a longstanding, unwritten rule prohibiting such displays of support.

That prompted Damalt to approach the County Board of Supervisors chairman and the county manager to demand equal treatment for CSEA members wanting to express support in the workplace for political candidates.

"I felt that either everyone gets to do it or nobody gets to do it," he said. "If a county attorney was allowed to do it,

then our members have the right to do it. I considered it a civil rights issue."

"I think that whether you're a member of CSEA or not, you have the right to express your political beliefs," Felice added. "I don't think it should coincide with where you work."

— Mark M. Kotzin



RECEIVED tiert is some October 6, 2004 OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT **UNITEHERE!** Danny Donohue, President **CSEA** Local 100 AFSCME, AFL-CIO New York, NY 10001 **CSEA Headquarters** To. (212) 265-7000 Fax (212) 265-3415 Albany, New York WWW.UNITEHERE.ORG Dear Danny: On behalf of our members at UNITE HERE Local 25 and the entire EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENTS UNITE HERE family, thank you for canceling your Union's Annual Sherri Chiesa Convention, which was to be held at the Marriott Wardman Park. As you know, we are currently in contentious contract negotiations with hotel employers in Los Angeles and Washington, D.C., where our workers have Alexandra Dagg Maria Elena Durazo Mark Fleischman been working without a contract since June and mid-September respectively. Workers in both cities have authorized their bargaining committees to call a strike. Additionally, hotel employers have locked us out of 10 hotels in San Francisco, and we are on strike at 4 other hotels there Marriott Wardman Park is one of the most important employers in the multi-employer council with whom we are bargaining in Washington, D.C., and we have not yet come close to terms with them on basic contract demands, such as affordable healthcare, a decent pension, and a 2-year contract. CSEA's cancellation of their convention sent a powerful message to the Marriott Wardman Park: as long as hotel employers are disrespecting their workers, our fellow brothers and sisters in the labor movement will not patronize their hotels. We have a long struggle ahead of us in each city if we want to win respect and dignity for our members. But, together, we will prevail. The CSEA's action in Washington, D.C. was critical to our success. For everything your Union has done for our members, thank you so very much and it was good to see you again in Washington at AFSCME headquarters. If I can be of any help to you or CSEA please feel free to ask nue Way Bruce Raynor John Boardman, President UNITE HERE Local 25

The letter above was sent from UNITE-HERE President Bruce Raynor to CSEA President Danny Donohue expressing thanks for CSEA's decision to cancel its Annual Delegates Meeting to provide solidarity to the Hotel workers who are still in a contract dispute. For more on this issue, see the insert in this edition of *The Work Force*.

Members on the march



CSEA members take part in the annual Albany Labor Parade recently, marching down the city's Washington Avenue. Dozens of folks wearing CSEA T-shirts took part.

What's In It For You?

CSEA Employee Benefit Fund Representatives Available to Visit Members



Did you know that CSEA Employee Benefit Fund (EBF) representatives are available to meet with CSEA members?

We are available to attend:

- Membership Meetings
- Health Fairs
- Information Days
- EAP Sponsored Days
- Lunch and Learns
- Option Transfer/Open Enrollment Meetings

What will we do at the event and what will we bring?

Representatives will be available to answer any questions members may have about the EBF benefits. EBF representatives will also have written benefit information to distribute.

What do I need to do to have a representative visit my location?

Contact your region representative listed below, or visit our web site at http://www.cseaebf.com and complete a visit request card online

To help ensure a successful event, use the checklist below:

1. Set a time, date and location for your event. You should consult with your employer, as there may already be a meeting scheduled that CSEA members can attend.

2. Complete the request form online, and send it to EBF through e-mail, fax or postal mail.

You can also call your EBF representative.

3. Tell members about the event through newsletters, postings or flyers.

What if I can't schedule an event, but I still want updated EBF information?

Updated materials can be picked up at any CSEA region or satellite office, or call or e-mail your region representative.

Local Government Representatives

Region 1: Linda Sclafani 631-462-5224 LindaSclafani@aol.com

Region 3: Carisa Haberl 1-800-323-2732 x813 chaberl@cseaebf.org

Region 4: Kim Bailey 1-800-323-2732 x818 kbailey@cseaebf.org

Region 5: Meghan Pastiglione 1-800-323-2732 x860 mpastiglione@cseaebf.org

Region 6: Mike Wagner 716-668-8720 mwagner@cseaebf.org

State Representatives

Regions 1, 2, 3 & 4: Geoff Switts 1-800-323-2732 x816 gswitts@cseaebf.org

Regions 4, 5 & 6: Dave Reed 1-800-323-2732 x806 dreed@cseaebf.org.

Summary of September 2004 CSEA board of directors meetings



summary of actions take by CSEA's board of directors. The summary is prepared by CSEA Statewide Secretary Barbara Reeves for

union members.

Editor's note: The

Work Force

publishes a

Reeves

ALBANY — CSEA's statewide board of directors met twice on September 14.

A special budget meeting was held at 10 a.m. to adopt the union's 2004-2005 spending plan. The board also approved a Capital Additions budget for the upcoming fiscal year.

A regular board meeting was held at 1 p.m. and in official business:

- Changed date of the joint State Government and Local Government/Private Sector workshop in Lake Placid to May 20 to 22, 2005;
- Changed date of the 2007 Annual Delegates Meeting in Lake Placid to October 22 to 26;
- Authorized a lease for the Putnam County local to rent office space at the Knights of Columbus, 6318 Associates, Inc., 10 Fair Street, Carmel;
- Approved the appointment of Julia Mercatili, Rose Galieri and Ann

Doyle to the Southern Region Political Action Committee;

- Appointed Robert Calhoun to the Capital Region Political Action Committee;
- Designated Joan Hand to the Central Region Political Action Committee; and
- Placed into administratorship Annsville Residential Center Local 563, Amsterdam Head Start Local 733, Weedsport School District Unit 6265 of Local 806, and Horseheads Secretaries Association Unit 6355-04 of Local 808.

ALBANY — An emergency meeting of the statewide board of directors was held on September 28. In official business, the board:

- Voted not to hold the 2004 Annual Delegates Meeting until the next regularly scheduled ADM in 2005; and
- Voted unanimously to support President Danny Donohue's decision to cancel the 2004 ADM because of an imminent strike threat by hotel workers.

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

NYSHIP to release 2005 Health Insurance Choices

Once again, it's that time of year to start thinking about your health insurance options. The NYSHIP option transfer period will be held after the 2005 health insurance premiums are approved.

During the option transfer period, CSEA represented state employees will be able to change their health insurance plan for the 2005 plan year. Members will be able to choose from the Empire Plan or one of the NYSHIP-approved Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs) in their region.

Enrollees will receive a copy of "Choosing Your Health Plan" from the Department of Civil Service. Members should review each of the options carefully to determine

which health insurance plan will best meet their and their families'

"Choosing Your Health Plan" also features web site information on resources that measure the quality of HMOs, including the state Insurance and Health departments.

The Joint Committee on Health Benefits will soon publish additional information on health insurance premiums for the 2005 plan year to help members make the most informed choices for their and their families' health care needs in 2005.

Please watch for additional information in *The Work Force* as the option transfer period draws nearer.

An Ever Better Future

November marks annual option transfer period

The following information applies to CSEA represented state Executive branch employees who are enrolled in a state health insurance program and are covered by one of the following CSEA collective bargaining agreements: Administrative Services Unit, Institutional Services Unit, Operational Services Unit or the Division of Military and Naval Affairs.

November is typically the annual option transfer month, during which state employees may change their health insurance options and pre-tax contribution status.

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

Benefit administrators will receive copies of *Choices for 2005*, a guide to NYSHIP health insurance options. Employees who are considering changing their options should read the plan descriptions, which include important information about office visits and prescription drug copayments for each of the available health plans in your region. The guide can be a very important resource for enrollees considering changing their plans. Employees may review the available plans and benefits by getting a copy of the guide from their health benefits administrator.

The *Rates & Deadlines Guide* is another important resource during the option transfer period. As soon as the 2005 rates are approved,



these guides will be mailed to enrollees' homes to allow them to make an informed decision about their health insurance choices.

Enrollees will have 30 days from the date that the rate information is approved to make any changes. Employees who decide NOT to change their health insurance options do not have to take any action. Enrollees who wish to change their health insurance options must submit a signed Health Insurance Transaction Form PS-404 to their agency's health benefits administrator by the deadline specified in the *Rates & Deadlines Guide*.

Pre-tax Contribution Program (PTCP)

The Pre-tax Contribution Program (PTCP) allows enrolled members to have their health insurance premiums deducted from their pay before taxes are taken out. This may lower the taxable income, giving enrollees more income. Members are automatically enrolled in this program when they become eligible for health insurance, unless they decline to participate. The enrollee's pay stub shows whether he or she is enrolled in the program. "Regular Before Tax Health" will appear in the check's "Before Tax Deductions" column if the members' health insurance premiums are deducted from their wages before taxes are withheld. "Regular After Tax Health" will appear in the check's "After Tax

Deductions" column if the health insurance premium is deducted from members' wages after taxes are withheld.

Under IRS rules, by participating in the program, enrollees may change their health insurance deduction during the tax year only after a PTCP qualifying event such as a change in family status. More information about the program is available in the NYSHIP Health Insurance's *Choices for 2005* guide.

If members wish to change their pre-tax selections for the 2005 plan's health insurance premiums, they must contact their health benefits administrator to complete a health insurance transaction form by Nov. 30, 2004. Members do not need to take any action if they wish to keep their current pre-tax options.

NYSHIP HMO Offerings for 2005

Based on the annual review, NYSHIP approved HMO choices will remain similar to the 2004 programs, with one exception: Mohawk Valley Physicians (MVP) was approved for expansion into Jefferson County.

HMO copayments are not negotiated by CSEA; they are established by the HMO. Enrollees will be sent a side-by-side comparison from the HMO detailing any changes in benefits for 2005. Contact the HMO for clarification of office visit or prescription drug copayment changes.

For any questions regarding member health benefits, please contact the CSEA Health Benefits Department at 518-785-4774 or 1-800-286-5242 (JCHB) or you may send an e-mail to healthben@cseainc.org.

Save Money, Stress and Time - Get a Will

Editor's note: This is the third of a series of articles by CSEA's expert attorneys appearing every other month to provide valuable information to you and your family members regarding the important areas of protection available to you through the CSEA Legal Services Program [LSP]. The LSP covers many areas of law that affect us every day. Get more information about legal plans in the LSP by calling CSEA Headquarters at 1-800-342-4146, extension 1454, or by visiting the CSEA web site, www.csealocal1000.org, and clicking on the legal services menu item.

People may procrastinate about making a will, but having a will in place is extremely important to ensure the well-being of your loved ones after your death.

If you die without a will, your estate, including the contents of your home, will be distributed according to the laws of the state in which



you live when you die. If you live in New York state at the time of your death and do not have a will, the state's public administrator may handle your estate if you have no immediate relatives.

Under the public administrator, heirs may be required to undergo before the Surrogate Court a "kinship hearing" intended to prove one's relationship to you before they can inherit your estate. During this long, costly proceeding, relatives would testify about their relationship to you as well as give the court copies of birth certificates, death certificates and related documents for the entire family. The court may appoint a "guardian ad litem" to represent any unknown family members.

The guardian and the public administrator earn fees paid from your estate monies, reducing any money that your heirs receive. When the court is unable to find one or more suitable heirs, the court pays the estate to New York state.

If you die without a will, your estate may be also inherited by relatives whom you may not wish to name as heirs.

The public administrator will auction your personal property and family heirlooms. As such,

your loved ones may never have an opportunity to receive irreplaceable family heirlooms.

Having a will can expedite the handling of your estate, cut expenses and ensure

that your loved ones inherit your estate upon your death. A will dictates who inherits your property and in which manner.

Wills also allow you to name an executor of your estate, the person responsible for the collection and distribution of assets to your beneficiaries. This person would also clear out and sell your home, if no one remains there. With the right executor, the distribution of your estate should be a fast, simple process.

—This article was written by Brian Raphan, Esq., CSEA Elder Law Plan attorney for the Metropolitan Region.



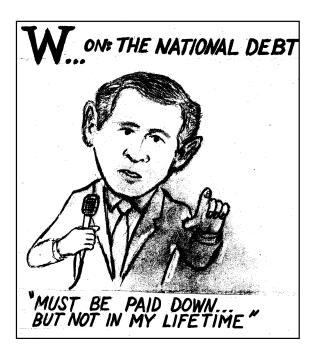
WALLKILL — When Charles Landi hears or reads political headlines, he often goes back to the drawing board — literally.

The 18-year CSEA member, a general mechanic and local president at Shawangunk Correctional Facility in Ulster County, creates political cartoons during his free time.

Whether he is bashing Bush administration policies or lampooning local politics, Landi can draw some of his inspiration from personal experience. The Kingston resident served on the city's Common Council from 1987 to 2001.

While some of Landi's cartoons have been published in local newspapers, he said he will probably remain an amateur cartoonist because he has a busy schedule. Landi is married, with two sons and four grandchildren.

CSEA Associate Editor Janice Marra recently spoke with Landi about his political cartooning. Two of Landi's cartoons appear on this page.



WF: How did you get into drawing political cartoons?

CL: I've always liked to doodle, and the doodles developed into faces. Eventually, I captured them on paper doing some activity. I would go to my drawing board in my den to doodle images and send them to local newspapers. I took an art course in high school, and I enjoy reading political cartoons. I often clip the cartoons from the newspaper.

WF: What subjects do you most enjoy drawing?

CL: I like to draw (subjects) in defense of the taxpayers and the working person to bolster their position. I also draw politicians who have no semblance of concern to the taxpayers. In these cases, I will draw the politician's likeness in the cartoons and send them to the newspaper.

WF: Have your cartoons ever been published?

CL: I have been published in the (Kingston) *Daily Freeman* and the *Poughkeepsie Journal*. I have either faxed or mailed the cartoons to the newspapers, and the editors will sometimes publish them. It's a pictorial letter to the editor.

WF: What inspires you to draw political cartoons?

CL: If I'm reading an article in the newspaper and I get a strong opinion on the issue (being discussed), I will sometimes conjure up an image and try to make it fit the article. Sometimes, it's funny and other times, it's serious. I like to opt for humor but it doesn't always work.

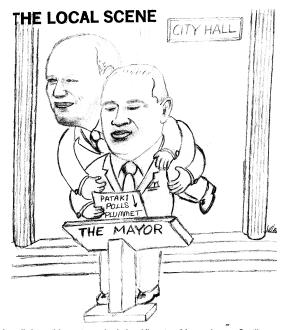
WF: With what types of art materials do you create your cartoons?

CL: I work with No. 2 pencils. I will sometimes draw over the pencils with a black felt tip pen. I never use colors.

WF: What political subjects have inspired you lately?

CL: I'm not a fan of the Bush administration. As Sen. John Kerry said, I feel that President Bush has made some colossal policy mistakes. I was especially upset that after the 2000 presidential election, the Supreme

Cartoons Provide Commentary, Laughs



Landi drew this cartoon depicting Kingston Mayor James Sottile carrying Gov. George Pataki. Sottile had crossed party lines in 2002 to endorse Pataki for re-election.

Court didn't demand a total recount of Florida. I think that the outcome of the election would have been different, and I feel that it tainted the Bush administration. President Bush should have insisted on a recount, and the facts still remain so close to this year's election.

WF: Do you ever plan on drawing political cartoons full time?

CL: If I retire, I may get more involved with the cartoons. Drawing comes in fits, and I have to be inspired to do it. I hope to get more time to draw, but I'm a fairly busy guy.



Take advantage of your CSEA membership to Catch the 'Cuse at reduced rates!

Nov. 6 is CSEA day!



Pittsburgh - November 6th Adult: \$23 Youth (ages 18 and younger): \$12

Get your order form on the web at www.csealocal1000.org or by calling the CSEA Member Benefits Department at 1-800-342-4146.

AFSCME Scholarship Deadline

The deadline to apply for the AFSCME Family Scholarship program is Dec. 31. All applications must be postmarked by that date.

AFSCME awards 10 scholarships of \$2,000 each to eligible high school seniors that are renewable annually for a maximum of four years.

Graduating high school seniors who are children of AFSCME members or whose legal guardians are AFSCME members are eligible. Applicants must intend to enroll in a full-time, four-year degree program in an accredited college or university.

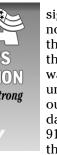
To get an application, write the following address:

AFSCME Family Scholarship Program Attention: Education Department 1625 L Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20036

Members can also get an application by e-mailing requests to education@afscme.org, downloading from the AFSCME web site at www.afscme.org or calling (202) 429-1250.



PEOPLE PERSON — The PEOPLE recruiter of the month of September is Marie **NEW YORK'S** Prince of the Erie County Local in the Western Region. LEADING UNION She recruited 22 new PEOPLE 265,000 Members Strong members. PEOPLE is CSEA CSEA and AFSCME's political action program. It is responsible for TODAY raising money and collecting voluntary contributions from the membership so CSEA can effectively promote our interests at the state and federal level... MORE PEOPLE — Members of the New York Liquidations Bureau Local will now be able to join the PEOPLE program through checkoff...DORMITORY CONTRACT — The New York Dormitory Authority Local recently ratified a new contract that will run through March 31, 2007....PERB **VICTORY** — The Village of Hempstead Unit recently won at the Public **Employment Relations Board an** improper practice change filed against the village and Hempstead police department. Nassau Municipal local president John Shepherd filed the charge after he learned that the village's police contract included a 'parity clause,' which entitles police officers to any additional benefits won by CSEA. PERB ruled that the clause harmed CSEA's right to negotiate contracts...LAYOFF FIGHT — More than 100 CSEA members and community activists recently attended a Tioga County Legislature meeting to speak out against a county proposal to eliminate five Mental Health Department jobs...HERO HIGHWAY WORKERS Tim Haire and Lois Marshall, both CSEA members employed by the state Department of Transportation's Ithaca sign crew, are being called heroes for recently saving the life of a man whose truck went off the road in the middle of the night. The workers were replacing a



sign on Route 89 when Haire noticed a truck on its roof at the bottom of the gorge by the highway. Near the truck was its driver, who was unable to move and had been outside since midnight that day. Haire and Marshall called 911, and paramedics credited the DOT workers for saving

the man's life, noting that he wouldn't have survived another two hours outside..FAIR HEALTH CARE FIGHT — Town of Mount Pleasant employees represented by CSEA are fighting for a contract that includes affordable health care benefits. CSEA represented employees, who have been working without a contract since Dec. 31, 2002. pay 25 percent of their annual premium costs, although they are the lowest-paid employees. CSEA has proposed to place the workers' health insurance contributions on par with town employees represented by other labor unions, which have fully paid health insurance included in their agreements either upon hire or after four years of service. Town officials have been unwilling to negotiate changes in the CSEA employees' health insurance plan. CSEA members and their supporters recently held a demonstration at the town's Fall Foliage Festival to express their views...A BIG THANK YOU members working for the City of Fulton recently got a big "thank you" from the city for a job well done. In September, the City held their first "CSEA Appreciation Day" at the city DPW garage. At the event, members of the public were invited to meet their CSEA city workforce, and view the fleet of DPW equipment. Unit President Ron Edick reported that the event was a big hit with his members.

Break in membership affects eligibility for union office, voting privileges

A break in union membership status can have long-term future implications. Your membership status affects your eligibility with respect to:

- seeking or holding union office;
- signing nominating petitions for potential candidates;
 - voting in union elections, and;
 - voting on collective bargaining contracts.

Only members "in good standing" can participate in these activities. To be in "good standing," your dues cannot be delinquent.

If you go on unpaid leave or for any other reason have a break in your employment status, your dues will not continue to be paid through payroll deductions. You must make arrangements to pay your dues directly to CSEA to continue your membership status. If you are either laid off

or placed on leave without pay status due to becoming disabled by accident, illness, maternity or paternity, you may be eligible for dues-free membership status for a period not to exceed one year. If you are called up for active military duty you may also apply for dues-free status.

Note, however, you **must** continue to pay dues to run for office. Dues-free or gratuitous membership allows members to continue their insurance coverage while out of work. It does not protect your right to run for or hold office. This does not apply to members who are on leave due to being called up for military duty. Members on active military duty, upon return, are considered to have had continuous membership status for all CSEA election purposes.

Please notify the CSEA Membership Records Department at 1-800-342-4146, Ext. 1327, of any change in your status and what arrangements you are making to continue your membership in CSEA.

If you don't vote, you lose!

— CSEA President Danny Donohue



John Kerry will fight for our future, particularly in:

Healthcare:

- Reduce costs of prescription drugs
- ✓ Take on big drug companies
- Provide a real Medicare prescription benefit for seniors
- Put patients first

Medicare efit for seniors t

Workers rights:

- ✓ Reverse Bush's attack on overtime pay
- Enforce workplace health and safety laws
- Protect our pensions and Social Security

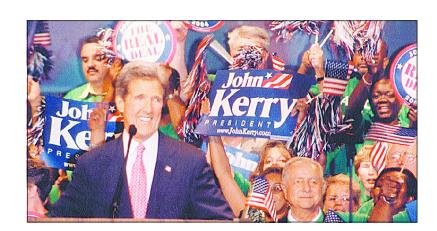


On health care: Children across our country don't have health care. We're the richest country on the face of the planet, the only industrialized nation in the world not to do it. I have a plan to cover all Americans. We're going to make it affordable and accessible.

— JOHN KERRY

Tell Your Friends About the Kerry-Edwards Team

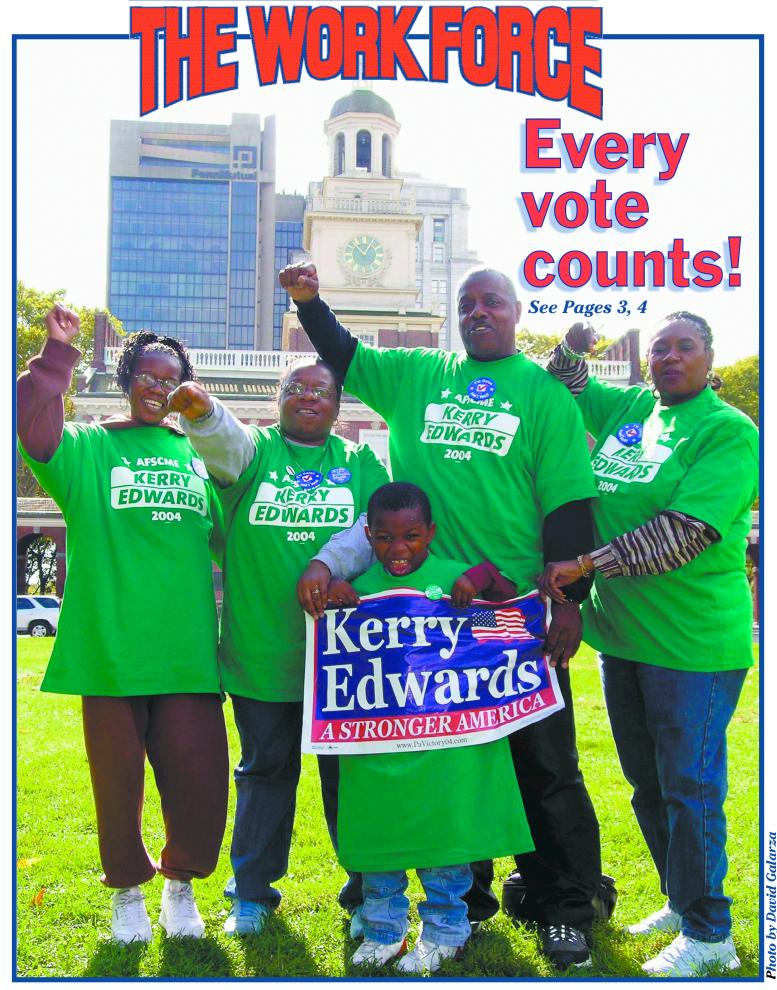
John Kerry and John Edwards will protect and strengthen Social Security by fighting efforts to privatize the program, and by addressing our long-term solvency problems by restoring fiscal discipline and growing the economy.





NOV. 2

Volume 7 No. 11 November 2004



Your Nassau County Local Newsletter, The Nassau Express, is enclosed



A Monthly Publication of CSEA Nassau County Local 830 JANE D'AMICO, President

Tony Panzarella, *Editor* (516) 571-2919 Ext. #13

Ronald G. Gurrieri, Chair, Communications Committee CSEA Long Island Region Communications Associate Rachel Langert (631) 462-0030

NASSAU LOCAL 830

Executive Officers:
JANE D'AMICO, President
LES EASON, Executive Vice President GEORGE WALSH, 1st Vice President ROBERT CAULDWELL, 2nd Vice President RAYMOND CANNELLA, 3rd Vice President JEWEL WEINSTEIN, 4th Vice President RON GURRIERI, 5th Vice President MARY DELMARE, 6th Vice President TIM CORR, 7th Vice President NANCY IANSON, 8th Vice President RUDY BRUCE. 9th Vice President BOBBI EISGRAU, Secretary KATHLEEN VITAN, Treasurer

Unit Presidents/Executive Board: CHARLES ALBERS, Fire & Rescue Services JOHN ALOISIO III, Treasurer's Office ROB ARCIELLO, Deputy Sheriffs STANLEY BERGMAN, Comptroller's Office RICHARD BREUSCH, Public Safety
RUDY BRUCE, Department of Public Works
RAY CANNELLA, Civil Service Commission
TIM CARTER, Health Department
TIM CORR, Recreation & Parks
VIVIAN CROWLEY, General Services
VENNETH DASH SP. Administrative Unit KENNETH DASH, SR., Administrative Unit MARY DELMARE, School Crossing Guards LES EASON, A. Holly Patterson Extended Care Facility BOBBI EISGRAU, County Clerk
RAYMOND FLAMMER, Assessment Department SUSAN GRAHAM, County/District Attorney NANCY IANSON, Drug & Alcohol DEBRA IMPERATORE, Police Civilians RON KAHL, AMTs JERRY LARICCHIUTA, Sheriffs Support Unit DIANE RUSS, Consumer Affairs MICHAEL TIMMONS, Social Services GEORGE WALSH, Nassau University Medical Center JEWEL WEINSTEIN, Nassau Community College PETER WRBA. Probatio

We welcome reader suggestions: Please address your comments to Tony Panzarella, Editor, Nassau County EXPRESS at CSEA Nassau Co. Local 830, 400 County Seat Dr., Mineola, NY 11501-4137.

LEGAL UPDATE

Lightning Strikes Twice!



Louis D. Stober, Jr., Esq. **CSEA Regional Attorney** www.lstoberesg.com

Recently, I brought to your attention an important arbitration decision finding that a longtime, parttime employee in the Sheriff's

Department was terminated without affording him any rights under Section 10 of the CSEA/County Collective Bargaining

The employee immediately filed a grievance and the case went to arbitration.

The arbitrator held: "The county admitted that it did not follow the provisions of Section 10 because it claimed that doing so was unnecessary since the grievant had not been disciplined but had been laid off and, therefore, there were no charges to serve him with ... There is no evidence to support the county's contention that the grievant was laid off and not terminated. In fact, if the county had intended to lay off the grievant, it has failed to comply with the contractual requirements for the layoff of an employee as outlined in Section 14 of the Parties' CBA ... The county violated the terms of the Parties' CBA, specifically, Section 10, when it terminated the part-time employment of the grievant ... The grievant shall be reinstated and reimbursed all back pay and any benefits lost from the date of the termination of his parttime employment ... to the date of his reinstatement."

Now, just four months later, a second arbitrator, Howard Edelman, hearing a nearly identical case in the Department of Social Services has reconfirmed the fact that employees cannot be terminated without affording them Section 10 rights.

In this case, ... the county is going to owe the employee nearly two years' worth of back pay because they failed or refused to follow the procedures in the collective

bargaining agreement.

In sustaining the grievance, Arbitrator Edelman held: "The facts of this case fall squarely within the case decided by Arbitrator

Germano, I find. A different result here would be harmful to sound labor relations and encourage arbitrator shopping. Such a result is to be avoided.

Nor can it be said that Arbitrator Germano's determination was so palpably erroneous that it should be ignored. To the contrary, the reasoning therein makes perfect sense and should be followed here. I am convinced.

Given this determination, it is clear that the union's grievance must be sustained."

With this decision the county has been put on notice not once but twice that termination of CSEA members without following the requirements of Section 10 will not be tolerated by the arbitrators on our panel.

In this case, like the prior case, the county is going to owe the employee nearly two years' worth of back pay because they failed or refused to follow the procedures in the collective bargaining agreement.

Your disciplinary rights are there for a reason. Make sure your rights are adhered to whenever the county seeks to take action against you.

President's Forum

JOSEPH WHITTAKER, Fire Marshal

D'Amico Sets Up Series Of Work Site Meetings

Local 830 President Jane D'Amico has launched a series of work site meetings called "President's Forums" in order to meet directly with members to discuss union issues and member concerns. So far, D'Amico has met with numerous units and has several more meetings scheduled between now and year's end. The following photos were taken at a meeting set up at Nassau Community College by Unit President Jewel Weinstein. A wide range of issues were discussed and numerous questions were answered.

Members brought up several concerns which D'Amico said the union would address.



Vote Nov. 2nd

State Senate and Assembly Election Also Important to CSEA Members

With the presidential election capturing the front pages every day, we tend to forget the importance of electing the local candidates who will represent us in Albany. When you go to the polls to vote on Nov. 2nd, CSEA urges you to pull the lever for the candidates below in your state Senate and state Assembly Districts. After careful consideration and personal interviews with all candidates, CSEA has concluded that these men and women most closely

VOTE FOR
your local
candidates

embrace the philosophy, causes and goals of our union and most associate themselves with the aspirations of working men and women.

STATE ASSEMBLY

- AD 12 Joseph Saladino, (R)
- AD 13 David Sidikman (I & WF)
- AD 14 No Endorsement
- AD 15 No Endorsement
- AD 16 Thomas DiNapoli, (D)
- AD 17 No Endorsement AD 18 Earlene Hooper, (
- AD 18 Earlene Hooper, (D) AD 19 No Endorsement
- AD 19 No Endorsement AD 20 Harvey Weisenberg, (D)
- AD 21 No Endorsement

STATE SENATE

- SD 5 Carl Marcellino (R)
- SD 6 Kemp Hannon, (R)
- SD 7 Michael Balboni, (R)
- SD 8 Charles Fuschillo, (R)
- SD 9 Dean Skelos, (R)

JUDGES

Justice of Supreme Court: Ruth Balkin Nassau 2nd District Court: Christopher Quinn, Norman Janowitz, Gary Knobel

Nassau 4th District Court: Margaret Reilly
Nassau County Court: Donald Belfi, Daniel Palmieri,

Daniel Cotter

Nassau Family Court: Salvatore Pontillo





On health care: Children across our country don't have health care. We're the richest country on the face of the planet, the only industrialized nation in the world not to do it. I have a plan to cover all Americans. We're going to make it affordable and accessible.

- JOHN KERRY

Tell Your Friends About the Kerry-Edwards Team

John Kerry and John Edwards will protect and strengthen Social Security by fighting efforts to privatize the program, and by addressing our long-term solvency problems by restoring fiscal discipline and growing the economy.



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A Day of Fun and Food at 2004 CSEA Picnic



More than 500 CSEA members, family and friends turned out at Eisenhower Park for a day of fun and food at Local 830's annual picnic on Oct. 2.

Social Committee Co-Chairs George Walsh and Nydia Concepcion along with their committee members once again did an outstanding job in putting all the details together and making sure the event went smoothly.

"George and Nydia along with the Social Committee members did an outstanding job putting this event together and they deserve the thanks of all who attended. A special thanks should also go to the Women's Committee for their invaluable assistance," said CSEA President Jane D'Amico.

"I would also like to offer thanks to our volunteers and the many public officials who attended for helping to make the picnic a great success," D'Amico said.

The Nassau Express captured much of the excitement in photographs and wants to share the images of the day with our readers.

Photos on this page, counter

clockwise from top left: Social

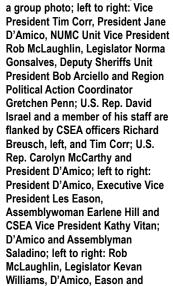
Committee and volunteers pose for











Judge Norman St. George; left to right: President D'Amico, Legislator Diane Yatauro, CSEA Vice President Ray Cannella, Glen Cove City Councilman Chuck Lavine, CSEA NUMC Unit Vice President Rob McLaughlin.



CSEA To Honor Martin Luther King At Jan. 8 Luncheon

Tickets are now on sale for CSEA's 11th annual Dr. Martin Luther King Luncheon, which will be held on Saturday, Jan. 8, 2005, from 12:30 to 4:30 p.m. at the Coral House in Baldwin. The price remains at \$30 per person (\$20 for children 12 and under).



Also, nominating forms are now available for the annual college scholarships presented

each year by the Unity Committee at the luncheon. This year, four \$500 scholarship awards will be awarded. (See scholarship story and form.)

According to Tim Corr, unity committee chairman, the luncheon will include a full sit-down meal, entertainment, raffles, door prizes and guest speakers.

For more information or to buy tickets, call Corr at 571-2919, Ext. 14, Juanita Mckinnies at 378-2790 or Rudy Bruce at 571-2919, Ext. 16.

Computer Courses Available Through Oceanside Schools

CSEA members who would like to become computer literate can take a course on the subject in the Oceanside School District's "New Horizons" program. The course is free for members who live in the district and \$15 for non-residents. Day and evening classes as well as several other courses are also available.

Interested persons should call 678-7577 during the day and 678-7595 in the evenings. Classes are held at St. Anthony's Church, 110 Anchor Ave., and at School #6 on Castleton Court, both in Oceanside.



Standard Time



Four \$500 Scholarships Offered By Unity Committee

Nominating forms are now available for the four \$500 scholarships to be awarded by the Unity Committee at its annual Dr.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Luncheon, set for Saturday, Jan. 8, 2005, at the Coral House in Baldwin. Scholarship winners will be announced during the luncheon ceremonies.

Verification must be submitted that the student is a graduating high school senior or an enrolled college student in good standing. The student must maintain a cumulative average of 3.0 (B) or better and must be the child or under the guardianship of an active CSEA Local 830 member. Financial need is also a factor. The award may be renewed at the discretion of the Unity Committee. Nominations must be submitted on an official scholarship nomination form found below or at the CSEA office in Mineola.

According to Tim Corr, unity committee co-chairman, it must be shown that the student has active personal involvement in the advancement of the principles of human rights within the community. This includes such activities as educating and empowering the public, voter registration drives, improving community relations, volunteer work, promoting civil harmony, civil rights, civil unity, diversity and human dignity. The condition of financial need must be included or attached.

For more information on the scholarships, call Corr at 571-2919, ext. 14; Juanita Mckinnies at 378-2790 or Rudy Bruce at 571-2919, ext. 16.

CSEA LOCAL 830 – UNITY COMMITTEE SCHOLARSHIP NOMINATION FORM PLEASE SUBMIT ALL NOMINATIONS BY DEC. 16 (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY OR TYPE)

I NOMINATE		
HOME ADDRESS		
STUDENT OF (OR EMPLOYED BY)		
HOME PHONE WORK PHONE		
NOMINATED BY:		
MEMBER OF UNIT		
WORK PHONE HOME PHONE		
DESCRIBE FULLY HOW THE NOMINEE MEETS THE CRITERIA OUTLINED IN SCHOLARSHIP STORY ABOVE. BE AS SPECIFIC AS POSSIBLE. ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS FOR PERTINENT INFORMATION.		
PLEASE RETURN TO: CSEA LOCAL 830, ATTENTION UNITY COMMITTEE 400 COUNTY SEAT DRIVE, MINEOLA, NY 11501		

Veterans Corner

Veterans Day Services Set For Eisenhower Park & D.C.

By Edward G. Aulman
Nassau County Veterans Service Agency

The Levittown Post 1711 American Legion invites interested veterans to join them on Nov. 10 and 11 for a trip to Washington, D.C. Luxury motor coach departs 6 a.m. on Nov. 10 from the Levittown American Legion and departs D.C. 6 p.m. on Nov. 11. Overnight stay at Holiday Inn in Georgetown, dinner, morning bagels, juice, snacks and movies are all included. Call Ann at 516-822-5966 for more information and reservations.

Veterans are also reminded of the United Veterans Organization of Nassau County Veterans Day Ceremony Sunday, Nov. 7, 2004 at the Veterans Plaza, Eisenhower Park at 10 a.m.

Homeless Veterans Stand Down

Nassau County Veterans Service Agency will host a second "Homeless Veterans Stand Down" on Nov. 22 at the New York Guard Armory, 63 Babylon Turnpike, Freeport. Three days before Thanksgiving, 100 volunteers and 25 government and private agencies will provide breakfast, dinner, haircuts, health screening, clothes, job placement, social services assistance and counseling to some of Nassau County's almost 4,000 homeless veterans. Volunteers are needed and are asked to call Pat Yngstrom at 516-572-8452. Donations of clothes and non-perishable foods for a take home pantry are welcome.

Military Funeral Honors

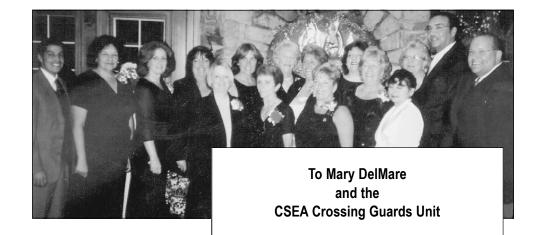
By law, the Department of Defense must provide upon request military funeral honors. The funeral director typically makes this arrangement. At least two uniformed service members fold and present the flag and play "Taps" by a recording or bugler. One widow and one veteran from the Farmingdale American Legion Post have informed me that DoD has denied this honor lately because of lack of military personnel.

Please contact the agency if you know an honorably discharged veteran who has been denied this final benefit.

Marines Win at the Post Office

After years petitioning the U.S. Postal Service, U.S. Marines will finally see four of their heroes on U.S. postage stamps; "Chesty" Puller and John A. LeJune, "Manila John" Basilone and Glen Cove's Dan Daly will all be on stamps in 2005.





CSEA Nassau Local 830 Crossing Guards Unit Celebrates 50 Years

We are extremely proud of our Crossing Guards and we highly commend them for their 50 years of continued dedication and commitment to the safety and well-being of our school children and the citizens of Nassau County.

From your colleagues and friends at











Annual Delegates Meeting canceled due to events beyond CSEA's control

On Thursday, Sept. 16, 2004, I canceled CSEA's 94th Annual Delegates Meeting just days before it was scheduled to begin at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel in Washington, D.C.

This decision was not made lightly and only made after a complete assessment of information and projections available at the time.

Local 25 of UNITE HERE, the union representing the hotel and restaurant employees at the hotel, had been in productive negotiations with management. On Wednesday, Sept. 15, CSEA was notified that those negotiations had deteriorated rapidly and management had broken off talks. Members of Local 25 UNITE HERE took a strike authorization vote, which passed overwhelmingly.

From the time of that notification and for the next 24 hours, I was in constant communication with UNITE HERE, AFSCME and the AFL-CIO leadership and staff to stay informed about the situation.

On Thursday, Sept. 16, after receiving faxed letters from both UNITE HERE and the AFL-CIO, it was clear the only alternative was to cancel the Annual Delegates Meeting.

CSEA's Board of Directors has since met in special session to consider the options to take care of the business that would have been addressed at the ADM.

There were eight proposed amendments to the statewide constitution and by-laws. Seven of those proposals had to do with internal elections that will be held in 2008 and, therefore, could be addressed at subsequent ADMs.

The eighth proposal would increase the dues rebate to the regions by 25 cents per member. The proposal, if need be, could be addressed by action of the CSEA Board of Directors for this year and presented to the delegates in 2005 for subsequent years.

After much deliberation and discussion, the

Board passed two motions:

- That we not hold a convention until our regularly scheduled one in 2005. This motion passed overwhelmingly after consideration of the amount of business to be conducted, the potential cost of canceling the 2004 ADM and the cost of scheduling another ADM in 2004
- A motion to formally support the President's decision to cancel the 2004 Annual Delegates Meeting. This motion was passed unanimously.

All business scheduled for the 2004 ADM will be moved to the 2005 agenda.

If you want to review more information about this difficult decision, please visit the CSEA website: csealocal 1000.org.

The reports of the statewide officers scheduled to be delivered at the Annual Delegates Meeting follow



DANNY DONOHUE, CSEA STATEWIDE PRESIDENT

"We must look to the future to make sure our union will change and grow to be even stronger and more effective for the next generation of members. To this end, we are working hard to introduce the LEAD (Leadership Education and Development) program and ensure its success. None of this can be done without your help and energy and we must renew our efforts going forward."

he past year has been a time of extraordinary achievement for CSEA. Yet, for all of our accomplishments, there are always new and continuing challenges to confront. For that reason alone, it is easy to lose sight of just how much we do as a union, and I want to be sure that we maintain perspective on our track record as New York's leading union.

I also want to acknowledge that our ongoing success depends on our continued unity of purpose as we fight the good fight. Your efforts in every part of the state over the past year have been proof positive of what hard work, determination and solidarity can achieve.

Think about our achievements:

We have locked down strong contracts in every part of the state despite tough financial and political times. Success after lengthy fights in places like Orange and Westchester counties demonstrate the importance of remaining focused on our objectives and standing up for what's right.

We once again led the way on a state

contract agreement that is second to none.

We have demonstrated the importance of leadership in negotiating with Schenectady County the first of its kind benefit in New York for accessing lower cost prescription drugs from Canada.

We fought the good fight for public health care over and over again in county after county and in the halls of the Capitol.

We helped workers organize to make sure their voices will be heard. Thanks to our solidarity, food service workers at SUNY New Paltz now have a union contract and new respect at their worksite; workers at Clarkson University and at the Quality Services for the Autism Community (Q-SAC) have found their voice at work through CSEA. Many others will soon follow.

We have broken new ground on a cooperative Labor-Management training program through our Work Institute. The initial program has trained scores of our members and provided career advancement opportunity in the health care field while helping ensure counties gain qualified

employees for hard-to-fill positions.

We have expanded access to our Legal Services Plan and extended its scope to provide an array of Elder Law services, in addition to the Workers' Compensation and general practice services to benefit you and your family.

We have continued to make strides in Safety and Health protection and training including substantive programs on Ergonomics, Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response, along with committee and labor-management training. There is also a significant initiative under way aimed at workplace violence reduction.

We demonstrated unprecedented generosity, with state members contributing \$10 million in pledges under the State Employees Federated Appeal, which I co-chaired, and other members serving as the backbone of local United Way and other charitable campaigns.

We have done all this and more and, yet, we still face serious obstacles.

We have to make sure we elect John Kerry

MARY E. SULLIVAN, CSEA EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

"If unions in general, and CSEA in particular, are to maintain our status as a leader in the fight for all workers, we also have to carry our message to our communities, our friends and neighbors. We must encourage others to join unions. We must continue to make it clear to politicians at every level and of every political party — if they want our continued support, they must be there to support our issues."

Today's union members are a continuation of labor's proud history, but too many do not understand or appreciate all that unions have done for this country. Too many do not realize the tremendous role labor unions played in building America and what tremendous gains have been achieved because of unions.

During the 1800s and into the early 1900s, Americans were literally dying to get a union into their workplaces to better their working conditions. Today, many take for granted the vast array of benefits and workplace improvements for which the pioneers of the labor movement struggled. It is because of these brave men and women that we do not have little children working in factories seven days a week something that still happens in many other places in the world; none of us have to work 80 or 90 hours a week with no time off in order to support our family like the workers in the early days of our country.

Because of unions, American workers today enjoy paid vacations, holidays and sick leave. We have health insurance, dental insurance, vision care and drug coverage. We have pensions, a 40-hour week and paid overtime. We have Workers' Compensation benefits and unemployment insurance. Ninety-three years ago, scores of lives were lost in the Triangle Shirt Factory fire because of deplorable working conditions. Today, there are safety and health laws that protect workers no matter where they are employed.

While workers originally formed unions to gain dignity and justice in the workplace, the labor movement also brought social justice to all Americans. Organized labor has always been in the forefront of the battle for social justice. Social Security and Medicare, public health care and public education are benefits that unions fought to win for all Americans and, we continue to fight to

retain them even today. We have fought against discrimination and for equal rights.

For all the gains that labor unions have made in the past century, they have become a victim of their own success. Most people, including many union members, take these gains for granted. We take it for granted that there is a 40-hour workweek; we take it for granted that we have weekends off; we take it for granted that our children are not working in sweatshops; we take it for granted that when we decide to retire, we have pensions and Social Security to ensure that we have a guaranteed income.

Too many workers today think unions are no longer necessary. As a result, union membership is dropping, unions are losing their clout and union leaders need to work harder than ever to show workers that unions are as important — if not even more important — as ever.

How many workers have been affected by the changes in eligibility for overtime pay? How many workers have been injured or killed because of the lax enforcement of health and safety laws? How many future retirees will be harmed if Social Security benefits are not protected? How many retirees will be hurt by the horrendous Medicare drug law adopted this year? How much longer can we afford to let all that has been gained slip away?

If unions are no longer a strong and powerful voice for all workers, who will be there to fight for improved pensions and enhanced COLA adjustments for our retirees; who will be there to fight for the passage of school budgets so that every child has access to a quality education; who will be there to ensure that every American has quality, affordable health care; who will fight for the rights of the needy and not the greedy? If you think unions are no longer needed in this day and age, just think about all that we could lose.

We need to fight back, Brothers and Sisters. We have to remind every CSEA member that their salary, their health benefits, their time off was not handed to them by their employers. All the benefits and protections they have in the workplace are the direct result of the hard work and sacrifice of those CSEA members who came before us, and it is now our responsibility, and the responsibility of those who will follow, to protect and enhance them.

If unions in general, and CSEA in particular, are to maintain our status as a leader in the fight for all workers, we also have to carry our message to our communities, our friends and neighbors. We must encourage others to join unions. We must continue to make it clear to politicians at every level and of every political party — if they want our continued support, they must be there to support our issues.

In our own house, we need to encourage our members to get involved. To continue to be New York's Leading Union, we must lead the way in recruiting new activists, in organizing new members and, most importantly, in training new leaders.

Clearly, we have to develop the union leaders of the future at all levels. Each and every "seasoned" leader has a responsibility to encourage the participation of our members in their union and mentor those who may, one day, succeed us.

Because this is so vital to our future as a union, CSEA has developed a new Leadership Education and Development (LEAD) program designed to provide those members who have demonstrated enthusiasm and commitment to the labor movement with the knowledge and skills to guide our union in the future. Your support of this initiative, as CSEA members, is essential if we are to ensure our place as a strong voice for all working people.



BARBARA REEVES STATEWIDE SECRETARY

"Register and vote. Get actively involved in electing pro-working family candidates be they Democrats or Republicans. It's time to take back America."

he savvy Lucy Van Pelt in Charles Schultz's comic *PEANUTS* once gave the hapless Charlie Brown this advice: "If you can't be right, be loud." The radicals who run the White House and the Congress have taken this advice to heart. They have crafted a noise machine that dominates our nation's agenda. They twist words in the belief that they can fool all of us all the time.

They call their plan to end overtime pay "flexibility" legislation. They call their plan to exploit our environment "Clear Skies."

They call their plan to take away our privacy the "Patriot Act."

They call their plan to give school districts new mandates without real money "No Child Left Behind."

They call their plan to stop our political action efforts "Paycheck Protection."

You get the picture: Say one thing, mean another.

Let me spotlight one item on their agenda, prescription drugs, because it's a case study in how the radicals operate.

The White House pushed a Medicare drug bill through Congress that is a prescription for trouble.

They said the drug benefit would cost \$400 million over 10 years even though, it turned out later, the real cost would be closer to \$534 billion. How did they get away with it? They threatened to fire the government's chief Medicare analyst if he revealed the full cost of the legislation.

They launched a \$12.6 million advertising campaign, using taxpayer money, to promote the drug law. Video press releases were sent to television stations praising the program though, it later turned out, the *General Accounting Office* ruled the "press releases" were not only illegal (covert propaganda) but also misleading.

The real winners here are the drug companies. The new law does nothing to control drug prices. It even prevents Medicare from using its purchasing power to negotiate lower drug prices. No wonder the industry spent \$11.8 billion on marketing last year.

(Keep in mind that, after wages, health insurance is the "big ticket" item in our contract negotiations.)

The score: drug companies one, consumers zero.

Read on. It gets worse.

The drug bill discriminates against retirees with employer-provided drug coverage. While it includes new tax advantages for *private employers* who maintain coverage for their retirees, *public employers* get no comparable relief. Estimates are that as many as 3.8 million retirees may lose their employer-sponsored drug coverage.

The only good news is the new Medicare drug benefit doesn't go into effect until 2006. We have time to fight back.

Register and vote. Get actively involved in electing pro-working family candidates be they Democrats or Republicans.

It's time to take back America. ■



MAUREEN S. MALONE STATEWIDE TREASURER

"I would say a commitment to the Kerry/Edwards team is a necessity, something to focus all our attention on . . . Kerry/Edwards have promised to stem the tide of jobs being lost to foreign soil."

our great Union, CSEA, it is summertime. Today the sun is shining, no rain in sight, with very low humidity. As many of us do, I took a little trip over the weekend to attend a Renaissance Festival. Having been told more than once I am "old school," I felt right at home in this setting.

There were various tents set up around the site and one of particular interest to me contained the tarot readers. If you are not familiar with this, it is the reading of cards to predict the future or advise of the past whatever the case may be. I chose to have the next 12 months looked at with the hope of a Lotto win in my near future. It is not to be.

Things in my future that I want to share with you, I believe, will not only impact me but all of us in CSEA. In the next two months, I must focus more on issues surrounding my job. Well, in plain English, I would say a commitment to the Kerry/Edwards team is a necessity, something to focus all our attention on. The current expansion of the North Atlantic Fair Trade Agreement (NAFTA) has had a rippling effect in the United States. Large corporations such as Microsoft, Coca-Cola, Carrier and more have increased use of foreign workers on foreign soil to take jobs traditionally held by trade unionists. Industrial plants have been built all across South America faster than we can imagine while vacant foundries and warehouses litter the American landscape. When you call American Express Customer Service, don't be astonished if you ask where they are located and they reply, "India." Normal white collar U.S. jobs are being shipped overseas at an alarming rate. Kerry/Edwards have promised to stem the tide of jobs being lost to foreign soil. It is essential for our children's future to vote for the team that promises hope in preserving our current work ethic and standard of living.

Next, my cards let me know that playing by the traditional rules may not be my answer to the big problem. We must begin to think out of the traditional box. Whether it be contract negotiations, grievance settlements, preservation of health care benefits, downsizing, organizing or a myriad of other activities it has come to a point where we need to expand our thinking to look beyond today. The shrinking economy is showing us that once what was old is new again. The largest employer in our country, Wal-Mart, is the king of the part-time, minimum wage, few benefits, poor health insurance and discriminatory employers. As the good job market continues to shrink, health insurance and drug costs skyrocket and the tax base lessens. What are our options? Some say Canadian pharmaceuticals, some say managed health care, some say more casinos and some say nothing. We must join together to seek new solutions to these old problems.

Finally, my tarot cards advised me of a new beginning. It will be time to harvest the fruits of our labor. If this be the truth, then Kerry/Edwards will be triumphant and the United States will see a new direction set for our future. Jobs will once again flourish and



NICK LAMORTE LONG ISLAND REGION **PRESIDENT**



 ${f B}$ rothers and Sisters, Let me begin my report to the Annual Delegates Meeting by thanking the members of CSEA Long Island Region for their continued support. Without them, I could not have been reelected — without any opposition — to my

fourth term in office. I want all of you to know that I remain just as committed to our members, as I was the very first time I ran for office.

As I have so often said, representing you is the best job in the world. When we stand side by side, we are taller and stronger than we would be individually which enables us to get fair contracts, gain ground for our people, and beat back efforts to eat away at the hard-won gains we have made over the years. And in the slash and burn atmosphere that prevails in many places today, just keeping our footing solid becomes more challenging every day.

Fortunately, in the Long Island Region, we have a dedicated, experienced, unified and diverse team to fight on your behalf. From an executive vice president who is a clerical in a state psychiatric center: to an LPN in a county nursing home; to a county probation officer; to a carpenter in the largest state university in New York; to an account clerk in a school district, and an inventory clerk at LIDC — who also happens to be the longest serving region officer — they all have your best interests at heart.

Together we represent 26 different locals, four divisions, and approximately 48,000 members so that's a lot of ground to cover. And there is never any time to slow down.

Try as they might, no one person or group can do it alone. That is why it is important not to lose sight of the fact that we are all part of one big labor movement. The struggles of unionized telecommunications, health care, construction trades, retail, supermarket and manufacturing workers **are** as important as our own. Because as the Wal-Mart-ization of America illustrates, where there is no union protection, the drive to cut wages, eliminate benefits, as well as any notion of job security, only gains speed and momentum, making it harder for us to maintain the protections that we have.

Make no mistake.

When you shop at discount centers like Wal-Mart, guided only by the cheapest price, you cheapen the value of someone else's labor.



GEORGE Boncoraglio **METROPOLITAN** REGION PRESIDENT



D ear Brothers and Sisters.

As working families, I know I'm preaching to the choir when I state the obvious: We are living under extraordinarily difficult and dangerous times. At every level of government, and particularly in the private

sector, it seems that the rights and working conditions of millions of hard working Americans are rapidly being diminished or dismantled.

You may or may not think I'm exaggerating, but I am truly afraid that another four years of George W. Bush will inevitably turn the clock back to a time when unions were simply outlawed and workers' rights were non-existent.

Let us not forget that this is the same Supreme Court appointed president who created the Department of Homeland Security after the September 11 attacks, only to then take away the collective bargaining rights from its workers.

Indeed, this is the same president who ended overtime pay protections for many U.S. workers, who refused to extend unemployment insurance to jobless workers, denied airport screeners the freedom to choose a union, pressured the EPA to downplay the toxic threat in the World Trade Center report, supported tax breaks for sending jobs overseas ... I know you get the bleak picture.

In this next election, it seems like everything we have ever fought for is at stake. If we do not stop Bush, I need not remind you that as a lame duck he can and will do everything in his power to permanently destroy labor and its allies.

That is why we need to organize. First to stop Bush, second to rebuild the labor movement and restore it to its rightful place in America.

Sisters and brothers, I know you're familiar with the expression "Organize or Die." Well, union organizers working for a major U.S.-based multinational corporation in Colombia are actually being killed for organizing. It is a dreadful situation that workers once faced in this country as they attempted to organize workers at plants, oil refineries and mines owned by the likes of ruthless robber barons like Carnegie and Rockefeller.

Several staff members from our regional office recently participated in a Fact-Finding Delegation to investigate the ongoing violence against union members who work for Coca-Cola in Colombia. They personally took testimony from union leaders who have been threatened and attacked



DIANE HEWITT **SOUTHERN REGION PRESIDENT**



G reetings from the Southern Region! I hope that all of my Union brothers and sisters from across New York state have had a happy, productive year, and I wish to extend my congratulations to all of those who have been elected to serve CSEA.

On behalf of myself and all the Southern Region Officers, we wish to thank all who have supported us in the recent election. Together, we will fight to win the many battles that lie ahead.

The Southern Region has once again experienced an extremely busy year full of victories and challenges, and we are fighting for working families every step of the way.

CSEA members across the Hudson Valley are working hard to ensure that President George W. Bush is defeated in this fall's election. We have participated in labor walks in the neighboring battleground state of Pennsylvania, as well as local get-out-the-vote efforts such as phone banking and voter registration. One of the Southern Region's biggest priorities this year is to elect candidates on all levels of government who are friendly to working families. No matter what our individual political stances may be, we simply cannot survive another four years of the Bush administration. Over the past year, our Region has seen some victories among local candidates that hopefully signal the beginning of a trend for working families to take back America. During last year's local government elections, over 80 percent of CSEA's endorsed candidates in the Hudson Valley were elected. This fall we plan to continue achieving success, led by our Region's Political Action Committee chaired by Tom Murray.

Private food service employees at SUNY New Paltz, who won recognition as a CSEA Local in March 2003, won their first contract in November 2003. The vote to ratify this agreement was a unanimous YES, with bargaining unit members dancing their way in and out of the vote. Their contract gives them significant improvements in wages, health insurance and working conditions, and I congratulate CSEA's negotiating team of Maria Mach, Brian Franciola and Michele Kusmuk on a hard-won and richly deserved victory. The Region is continuing its efforts to help unorganized workers win a voice at work through helping private food service employees at SUNY Purchase form a union. These workers, employed

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KATHY GARRISON CAPITAL REGION PRESIDENT



would like to start my report by thanking the delegates for their support last year while I was dealing with some personal challenges. The care and concern that you expressed was truly overwhelming. On behalf of my family and myself, I want to

express my appreciation for your prayers.

I would also like to thank you for your support in the Region Election. I am gratified every day that I can continue to fight for the betterment of our membership. This is a job, or should I say a lifestyle, that is thoroughly rewarding. Capital Region members chose their regional leadership, and we have been working together on behalf of all members. A sincere "thank you" to my Region Officers for the work they do every day.

Throughout our stay in Washington, D.C., this week, I am sure you will continue to hear the arguments that substantiate CSEA's endorsement for Democratic Presidential nominee John Kerry. Based on the current administration's position on health & safety protections, overtime pay, job losses, trade policies, tax cuts, and the relentless attack on public employees and their rights to join unions, CSEA and other unions have no better choice than to support the Kerry/Edwards ticket. I know CSEA's Local and Unit leadership will be working hard to elect a pro-labor president this November.

A few years ago, I spoke to the delegates regarding Social Security and the current administration's initiatives to privatize at least part of the fund. Social Security is America's most important family-protection program. It spans class, race, gender, income and generations. Everyone pays into the system, and everyone benefits from the system with secure, guaranteed benefits. President Bush's commission's recommendations would force people to work longer before they could retire with Social Security. One plan has the effect of raising the retirement age. The commission would also penalize people whose careers were physically demanding and those who could not find work after losing their jobs. This basic safety net must be saved for generations to come. Since the fall of the stock market, we have not heard a lot of public debate regarding this issue. But, we must be prepared to fight if the current administration decides to resurrect their ill-conceived ideas about privatizing.

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JIM MOORE CENTRAL REGION PRESIDENT



D ear Brothers and Sisters:

This is really my first opportunity to say thank you for allowing me the privilege of once again serving as your Region President.

This term will bring me into my third

decade as a statewide officer and 32 years as a member of our Statewide Board of Directors.

Much has changed over the past 30 years, but that does not come as a surprise to many of you. CSEA's greatest asset continues to be our membership, and for that I thank you.

Again, I am proud to be your Region President. ■



FLO TRIPI WESTERN REGION PRESIDENT



Brothers and Sisters:
"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times." That quote best describes our year in CSEA Western Region

The year brought many good things. It was filled with many successful campaigns

throughout the region. We won difficult contract battles. We overcame serious budget deficits. We were able to prevent layoffs and outsourcing of CSEA members' jobs. Our hardworking staff and activists together continue to "Fight the Good Fight."

It was also another banner year for Region events. Our region activities continue to be innovative and overwhelmingly successful thanks to our dedicated committees.

The Region Officers and I were re-elected to a new term of office. Our sincere gratitude to all who placed their faith and trust in us. Our commitment is strong and firm. We are ready for the challenges, and with your help we will face them together. Congratulations also to all the Statewide Officers and Region Officers on their elections. We look forward to working together on behalf of all CSEA members.

Unfortunately, the year brought us sadness as well. We lost several CSEA activists, and while it is a difficult time for us in our Region, we celebrate that we were lucky to have had these wonderful people in our CSEA family. I know many of you remember former Region President Bob Lattimer. Bob was a man who was well known for his work in the Labor Movement. He commanded respect and worked to promote dignity for all workers. He was acutely aware of the political issues affecting each of us and was an outspoken advocate in getting those issues resolved. He was an intimidating force that helped shape CSEA and make it the great union that it is today. He was a friend and mentor to many, and I am grateful to have had the opportunity to work with him. He will be sadly missed.

Now let us get back to that quote. We, as union members, live in a precarious time. Precarious because we find ourselves on the brink of change that is absolutely essential for our survival. During the recent Labor Day holiday, I was reminded of the wonderful history of labor unions. How workers came together and forgot the word "self" and began to think and act

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When you buy a foreign made, non-union made vehicle, you are stomping on your union brother's or sister's ability to either get a job, or keep a decent job in this country! Turning the key on a new foreign car, actually turns off another American's ability to have a decent life.

When you buy cheap, foreign-made clothing, you are supporting companies that chain impoverished women and children to sewing machines and work them to exhaustion — without breaks, without decent pay, without any benefits at all!

And when you buy sweatshop goods, you make it easier for American companies to turn American workplaces into sweatshops, too. That is for the few American companies that have not outsourced their jobs yet!

That is why the cry of "Buy Union! Buy American!" is not an empty slogan.

When you buy union, buy American, you are defending the American dream for you, your children, and the children of other union workers in this country.

Do not forget that we must also foster a strong labor movement that is community based. I would encourage everyone here to stay involved in the union, as well as related groups, and dive into activities in your community. From fire-fighting, to scouting, to religious groups, and even political activities, it's important that we maintain contacts that can help us all someday.

As members, we may not like to admit it, but political activity is a critical part of the toolbox we need to get our union job done. Never forget that we are all public servants and we have the unique ability to actually

hire and fire our bosses. We use that tool at the ballot box.

Let us remember well, the words of UAW President Walter Reuther.

"There's a direct relationship between the bread box and the ballot box, and what the union fights for and wins at the bargaining table can be

taken away in the legislative halls."

Believe me, there is no shortage of political types today who would leave us with nothing but crumbs on our tables.

When you think of that ballot box, think about the bread for your dinner table, the 'bread' for your mortgage payment; winter coats for your families, tuition for your children, medicine, doctors bills and hospital bills when any one of you gets sick!

Because these are the things we fight for. These are the things that are at stake when we go door to door passing out literature; when we phone bank to get out the vote; when we feel complacent to let others do the work for us; when we do not bother to learn about the candidates, the issues, or to even go out and vote at all.

If you have never done anything political before, **this is the time**, my friends.

It is all on the line.

Overtime, health and safety, a voice on the job, a right to even have any rights at all — these are not extras, or luxuries — they are human rights in a free society. These are rights that our union forefathers fought for, and some died to defend; and now they are at risk at the ballot box come November.

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by paramilitaries because of their involvement with the union. They also heard the grim stories of those who had been killed for union activity.

We support the right of our brothers and sisters in Colombia to organize, and we recognize that the right to organize is specifically under attack by Coca-Cola, as they use extreme measures of violence to destroy the union. And as we fight for the human rights and dignity of workers in other countries like Colombia, we need to ensure that we do not reverse course in the United States. How can we do that? By organizing.

I am extremely proud of the efforts that went into organizing workers at Quality Services for the Autistic Community (QSAC). Staff, union activists, community leaders, politicians and the religious community came together to fight for workers who were being paid less than their state counterparts and getting little to no benefits. They waged a sometimes colorful but always valiant campaign that led to a neutrality card check agreement that allowed hundreds of workers to form a union and join CSEA.

We need to continue building on this victory in New York City, in the state of New York and across the country. We need to shamelessly promote ourselves to friends and family members who may not be organized and spread the message that a union job is good for working families and good for America. To further this mission, I have set a goal of organizing at least 1,000 new union members per year in the CSEA Metropolitan Region. I believe that together we can accomplish this goal, continue growing our CSEA family and the labor movement in general.

Finally Brothers and Sisters, I want to remind you that you have until Oct. 8 to register yourself and everyone you know to vote in the next general election. It is not only our civic responsibility, we also owe it to the many who fought and died so that we might enjoy this and other basic human and civil rights. Use it or lose it.

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In New York State, the battles to protect our jobs is equally important. This past year, the Capital Region has continued to actively campaign to protect public employment. In our region, several counties have looked into the feasibility of selling off their county nursing homes to the highest bidder. In many instances, the elected representatives understand that the county home is an asset that should be maintained for the citizens that they represent. Although, in our most active and aggressive campaign, the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors has failed to understand that a county nursing home is often the place of last resort for their disabled, elderly population. Over the past six months, the region has worked with Local and Unit leadership and membership to lobby the various town supervisors to garner their support for keeping the county home, Montgomery Meadows. We have also lobbied in Albany for additional funding for distressed nursing homes. CSEA has been successful in those efforts. Thirty million dollars in funding for distressed homes has been secured, in large part to CSEA lobbying efforts. The state has also agreed to take over the local governments' portion of Family Health Plus. This is expected to further ease the heavy burden exerted on local governments. These are just a few of the success stories that signify that some help is on

the way for distressed homes. We are urging the supervisors in Montgomery County to take these and other budgeted funding items into consideration as they weigh their final decision in the coming weeks. I hope to report at the convention that CSEA was successful in this campaign.

Raising the minimum wage is also an issue that I believe all union and non-union workers should fight for. On July 21, the state legislature passed a minimum wage increase bill with a "message of necessity" from the governor, which normally indicates his support for a bill. However, on July 29 thegovernor vetoed the bill stating that it would put New York state employers at a competitive disadvantage with neighboring states like Pennsylvania and New Jersey. He also maintained minimum wage increases should only be accomplished at the federal level. The bill would have phased in increases from the current \$5.15 per hour in New York state to \$7.15 by January 2007. The state Assembly did override the veto. Now it is time for the state Senate to act. It is just appalling that in the State of New York we have people struggling to support their families, pay their bills, provide health insurance and survive on a pitiful \$5.15 an hour! We should all do whatever we can to put an end to this injustice.

SOUTHERN REGION PRESIDENT continued from page 4

by Chartwells, work in an environment full of harassment and intimidation. These workers have received enthusiastic support not only from the members of CSEA SUNY Purchase Local 637 but from campus students. On March 31, 2004, 14 of these students were arrested by local police for taking part in a peaceful campus demonstration in support of the Chartwells' workers. The students have since fought back through actions such as boycotting campus dining facilities and participating in a hunger strike. CSEA continues its fight to secure card check neutrality to allow food service employees to make their decision to form a union without the fear and intimidation that they face at the hands of Chartwells.

The past year in our Region has been marked by contract fights, and, in some cases, contract victories. Thanks to the efforts of our State Negotiating Team, state employees now have a fair and equitable agreement. The Mid-Hudson Adjustment that is included in the contract for the first time is proving to be a benefit for our state employees in Dutchess, Orange and Putnam Counties, who must contend with population growth and downstate costs, yet did not previously receive any form of adjustment to reflect their needs. CSEA members in the Southern Region who are employed by the state really stood together, and I am proud to be among your numbers.

About 2,200 CSEA members employed by Orange County ratified a fair and equitable agreement in April after a two-year fight. The County employees worked for 16 months without a contract, and negotiations with Orange County were extremely difficult. County officials had taken away the employees' daily coffee breaks, a policy that was met with ridicule in the local and national media. The county also

attempted to change the workers' health insurance and end the paid lunch hour. Thanks to the efforts of Orange County Unit President Ron Greene, CSEA Labor Relations Specialist Glenn Blackman and the Union's negotiating team, our members became mobilized for a fair contract through activities such as speaking out at County Legislature meetings, wearing "Give us a Break" and "Contract Now" buttons and organizing numerous demonstrations. I am proud of our members in Orange County for standing up and fighting for what is right — they truly won.

Our Westchester County Unit is also celebrating a contract victory. About 3,900 CSEA members ratified, in June, their agreement with the county after working without a contract for 29 months. Unit President Jack McPhillips, Labor Relations Specialist Don Partrick and the Union's negotiating team really stood up and fought for a contract that is fair and equitable to working families. It took them three years to reach a fair agreement, but not once did they back down to the county's attempts to harm working families. Under the leadership of Jack, the Unit Officers and the negotiating team, members became deeply involved in political action initiatives like campaigning for labor-friendly local candidates and other mobilization efforts such as demonstrations. These members demonstrated outside the County Office Building in White Plains during the evenings and lunch hours, and they visited the homes of county leaders to demand a fair contract. The members persevered — and they eventually won. I am so proud of Jack McPhillips and his negotiating team for showing us all what working families can do.

Our members in the Putnam County Unit are also proud examples of what CSEA members can

accomplish when faced with adversity. The Unit was also facing difficulties in their contract negotiations with county officials who were proposing to change longevity payments. Our members decided to fight back in March holding extremely successful demonstrations during the County Executive's annual State of the County Address and State of the County breakfast the following morning. The demonstrations - and our members' commitment to a fair and equitable agreement led to a more positive turn in negotiations. In July, over 300 CSEA members in the Putnam County Unit ratified a fair contract. I am very proud of the Unit's negotiating team for their efforts to fight for working families.

Despite these wonderful victories, we are still facing numerous contract fights in our Region. Members in the Port Jervis School District Unit, led by Betty Kranz, and the City of White Plains Unit, led by Joe Roche, have been working without a contract for over two years. Each of these Units is fighting hard to preserve the gains that working families have won over the years, and the Southern Region is behind them every step of the way.

CSEA members in the Southern Region have been fighting hard during this past year against budget cuts and layoffs. Our members at Westchester Medical Center have been dealing with their hospital's fiscal collapse, which has resulted in hundreds of layoffs of CSEA members and other hospital employees. The hospital had a deficit of \$80 million last year — five years after the hospital broke with Westchester County to become a public-benefit corporation and five years after the hospital had access to millions in loans and bonds guaranteed by Westchester

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collectively. I thought about the successes of our Labor Movement, the laws that were enacted, the rights and benefits negotiated and the dignity given to those who worked. I remember the men and women that we can only read about who preceded us in our labor struggles. I remembered the respect earned by those who fought the good fight. That is our history, but that history is eroding.

We have now come to a time in history when our call is the same as the call of those historical individuals. When we must take up the new cause of the Labor Movement and that is survival. We must work within our society to again show what unions are and what we do. We must enact laws and elect politicians that will again show respect for the American worker. We must begin to read between the lines and know what is actually happening when we talk about

Homeland Security. We must make the public aware that we are citizens and taxpayers of the greatest country on earth and we are paying dearly for that right.

Brothers and Sisters, this has to be the year of change. It is time to "Fight the Good Fight." It is time that each of us gets involved in taking back our country. It is time that the working people of this country say "enough" and elect a president and vice president that have respect for working families. It is time that we come together, proud that we are union members, and work toward strengthening labor in this country, no matter what your party affiliation. This is the year that we must remember only that we are working people and we must elect leaders that will help us to continue to "Fight the Good Fight." Join with us and let's do just that.

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Think about what's in **YOUR** family's breadbox the next time somebody says they do not have the time nor the inclination to vote. And get out there — and fight!

Keep walking those districts, keep making those phone calls, keep encouraging everyone you meet to do the same. And, if you cannot do anything else, make sure you vote for the candidates with a record of fighting for people like us!

Because, you can be damned sure that the people who oppose everything we stand for are marshalling their forces against us just waiting for the opportunity to steal four more years!

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president this November to let America be America again and ensure fairness and respect for working people. CSEA members across the state are energized to achieve this objective, but we must take no election for granted.

There is still a public health care crisis that demands our attention — we successfully helped secure stopgap funding in the state budget to help localities maintain public health care facilities — but must focus our efforts for the year ahead on overhauling the Health Care Reform Act among other things for long term stability.

Budget pressure on localities and municipalities continues to be a real crisis that affects our ability to bargain and protect the rights and benefits of our members.

Some politicians and big business interests are ratcheting up their campaigns to undermine the integrity of the public employment pension system at your expense.

We must look to the future to make sure our union will change and grow to be even stronger and more effective for the next generation of members. To this end, we are working hard to introduce the LEAD (Leadership Education and Development) program and ensure its success.

None of this can be done without your help and energy and we must renew our efforts going forward. I thank you for that in advance and know that you will be with us as we fight the good fight. ■

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closed industrial parks will reopen. Jobs sent overseas will return and the unionized American worker will once again see a future of prosperity.

Beyond the elections at the national level, we in CSEA must renew our dedication and commitment to preserving the dreams and goals we have for our futures here in New York. The continual inability of our state legislators to pass a budget to run this state is crippling the ability of local governments and school districts to function. Everyday there are headlines about some city, town or village that must face layoffs and/or downsizing of services to make ends meet. Of course, we know that all of this is tied to the issues we must fight at the federal level. But, with renewed energy in the New Year, we can bring about internal change and accomplish positive results for the CSEA membership.

By working together we can change the future. It is in the cards and I look forward to achieving our goal — a tomorrow brighter than today and a world we are happy to leave for our children's children.

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County. A Louisiana-based consulting firm, Pitts Management Group, has taken over operations at the hospital with the sole purpose of repairing the facility's finances. Upon learning the depth of Westchester Medical Center's fiscal problems in December 2003, CSEA called for a public investigation into the hospital's finances. Like so many other people who have been hurt by this situation, CSEA is calling for the hospital's previous management to honestly answer the question of "where did the money go?" CSEA is also working hard to find a real solution to the hospital's financial problems that do not harm working families. We want — and deserve — accountability for our members and for those who use the hospital.

CSEA members at the Yonkers Public Schools are also dealing with fiscal shortages at their district, a situation that seems like an annual occurrence. The District is facing a multi-million dollar deficit, and it has been bailed out by the state numerous times over the past several years. But, with the state facing its own shortages, it is unable to bail Yonkers out this year. As one of the state's "Big Five" Districts, Yonkers receives its funding through the City of Yonkers. CSEA is taking the lead in appealing to Yonkers' Mayor, Phil Amicone, and Yonkers' City Council to make their schools the top priority. The Union is recommending this through a hiring freeze in both the city and the district, and by raising the Yonkers Income Tax Surcharge. While these are tough choices, they may, in fact, be the only choices to save quality education.

The Region has also been active in efforts to maintain public mental health services at Middletown Psychiatric Center. Gov. George Pataki had once again, in January, proposed to close the facility as part of the state budget. CSEA immediately led the fight to encourage the Pataki administration to establish a comprehensive plan for community-based mental health services to ensure that these vital services continue to be available in our communities. I want to extend my appreciation to State Senators Bill Larkin and John Bonacic, State Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther and the local government officials who have pledged to stand behind Middletown Psychiatric Center. We need change in our state's mental health system, and change comes with a plan that meets all of our communities needs.

The Southern Region has been very busy this year with our committees and events. In March, we held a successful Leadership Weekend at the Holiday Inn in Fishkill. In August, the Region held its Annual Major Weekend at Fernwood Hotel & Resort in Pennsylvania. Both weekends were geared to give our new and established CSEA officers an education in the basics of running our Union, and I thank the Region's Education & Programs Committee, including former Chairperson, Dottie Lattin and current Co-Chairpersons, Debbie Downey and Jack McPhillips, for their hard work.

Our Region's other committees have also been hard at work. Our Veterans' Committee, chaired by Standing Veterans' Committee Chairperson Lenny Beaulieu, dedicated a memorial stone to our military veterans in June. That stone, purchased through generous donations, sits beautifully outside of the Region Office in Beacon. Our Community Action Committee, chaired by Karen Pecora, is, once again, active and hard at work. Our Scholarship Committee, chaired by Dottie Lattin, awarded five Region scholarships in June to deserving high school seniors who are children of CSEA members.

We have all faced some tough times together over the past several years, and we will have some tough fights ahead. I am proud of the Southern Region for showing strong solidarity during good and bad times, and I hope that all of you have a safe, happy and victorious year! ■

Election Day is Tuesday, Nov. 2.