

THE WORKFORCE

**'Tis the season
to be working!**

— see Page 8

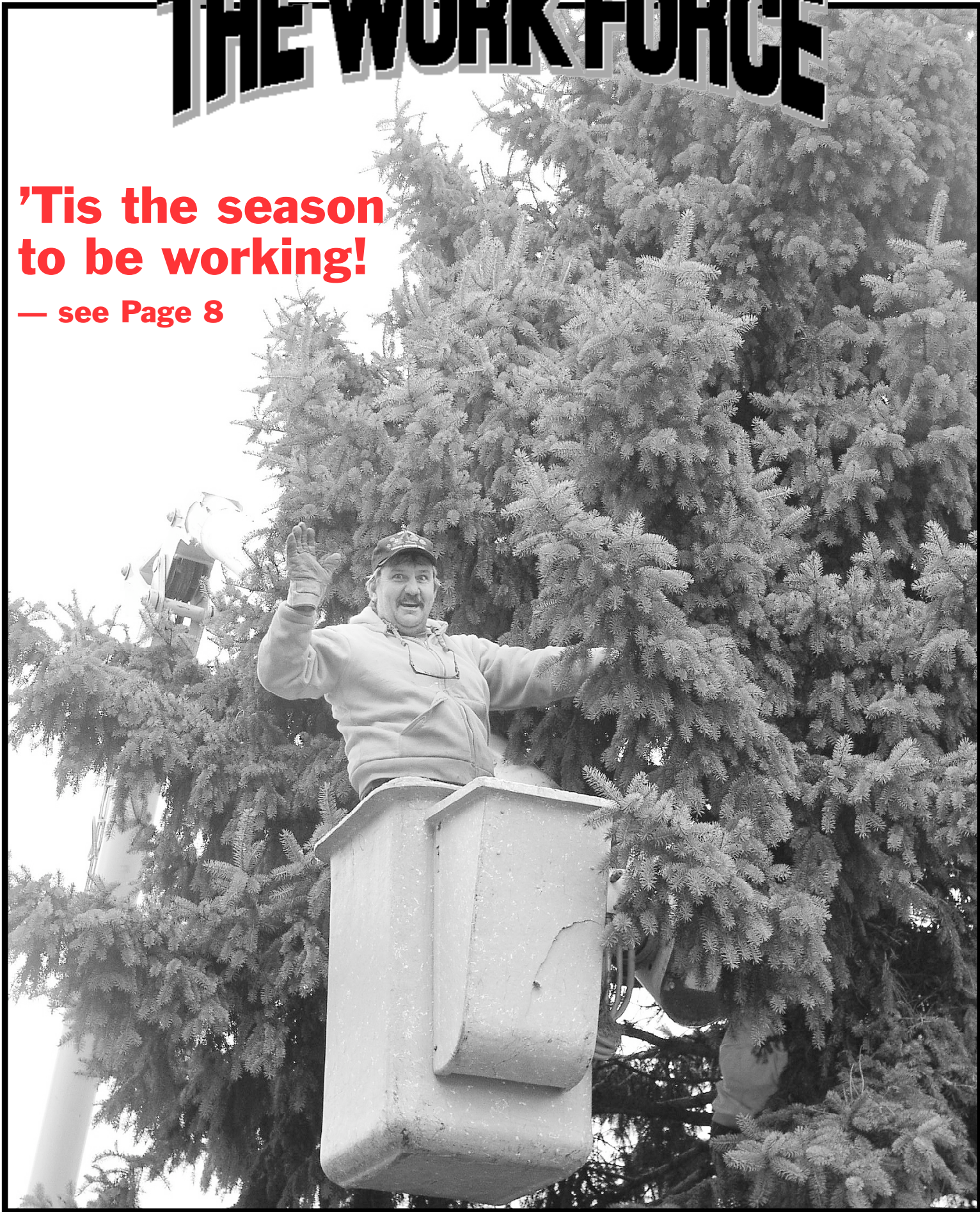


Photo by Jessica Stone

Photo of the Month



Photo by Lynn Miller

CSEA Zoological Society of Buffalo Local President Dave Brigham prepares a serval's cage for the winter at the Buffalo Zoological Gardens. Brigham is an animal handler at the zoo.

CSEA member killed

CSEA member Janis Avery, a senior social welfare examiner for Tompkins County, was killed recently when she was struck by a car.

According to police, it appears Avery was on lunch break and bent over near a crosswalk to pick up some magazines when she was struck.

Avery was a 30-year employee. She is survived by her husband and two children.

MAY 15 IS DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS, CHANGES TO CSEA'S CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS

Proposed resolutions and proposed amendments to the CSEA Constitution & Bylaws for consideration by CSEA delegates to the union's 2005 Annual Delegates Meeting **must be submitted by May 15, 2005.**

Proposed resolutions may be submitted **only** by a delegate and **must** be submitted on the proper forms. Forms for submitting resolutions are available from CSEA headquarters and region offices.

Proposed resolutions and proposed amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws must be submitted no later than May 15 to Statewide Secretary Barbara Reeves, CSEA Headquarters, 143 Washington Ave., Albany, N.Y., 12210-2303.

The 2005 CSEA Annual Delegates Meeting will be held Sept. 26-30 in Buffalo.

CSEA, OCFS address youth facility staff levels

RUSH — CSEA and the state Office of Children and Family Services are moving forward with plans to address staffing issues at the Industry secure youth center.

The labor-management cooperation comes on the heels of a disturbance on Nov. 9 at the facility that resulted in the arrests of three youths and a fourth youth being sent to a different secure unit.

"The labor-management team at Industry is working together and we have a good relationship," said Industry Local President Randy Charlton.

Some criticism had been raised earlier about emergency response time to the incident, but Charlton said the times were in line with what could be expected given that the response teams are pulled from various parts of a sprawling limited-secure facility more than a mile away.

"They did a hell of a job getting them there as early as they did," Charlton said.

"The whole thing was handled very well and kept injuries to a minimum, because of the professionalism of the staff," Charlton said.

CSEA and OCFS's meetings resulted in a plan that takes effect in January to better allocate existing staff to provide better coverage when needed, and also to clearly identify on a daily basis the members of that day's response teams.

Note: Due to incomplete information, several facts in the December 2004 *Work Force* article concerning a Nov. 9 youth uprising at the Industry secure youth center were incorrect:

- Six youth development aides were involved in quelling the incident, which involved four youths.
- No CSEA members were hospitalized.
- CSEA and OCFS already had been meeting to address staffing levels when the incident occurred.

CSEA fight to save Mount View continues

LOCKPORT — A vote by the Niagara County Community Services Committee has given union activists a bit more time in the fight to save Mount View Health Facility.

The committee recently voted to reject the only bid it had received for the purchase of the 150-bed facility. The committee will put out another request for proposals and open those bids Feb. 14 if the full legislature approves.

Meanwhile, activists from the Niagara County local will focus on their next move.

"We are going to continue to try to get the legislators to rescind the motions to close," said CSEA Labor Relations Specialist Candy Saxon. "We are going to try to get them on track to go ahead with the renovations."

The Niagara County Legislature voted 11-8 over loud CSEA protests last June to sell Mount View by next summer or close it down. That motion scrapped the county's previous plans to renovate the center.

— Lynn Miller

Plan doesn't solve fiscal crisis

CSEA slams Erie 'red' budget

BUFFALO — CSEA is appalled that Erie County is handing out pink slips to 400 union members despite efforts by the union to help the county out of a drastic financial situation.

Mobilization efforts by the Erie County Local have helped save some county jobs in face of a bare-bones 2005 county budget, and CSEA is continuing the fight.

Erie County legislators voted 10-5 to increase the county's sales tax by a penny and share it with municipalities and school districts.

The Legislature voted 8-7 to adopt the budget, though lawmakers from both parties opposed the plan. The adopted budget retains the county executive's patronage jobs, including a driver who earns \$81,000 annually. CSEA had called for the removal of patronage jobs.

"We are absolutely appalled at the actions of the Erie county executive and the legislature," said Western Region President Flo Tripi. "They had a wonderful opportunity to make the situation right but instead, 400 of our loyal, dedicated, hardworking county employees and CSEA members received layoff notices just in time for Christmas."

Tripi and local officers met with legislators several times throughout the month-long budget deliberation process. Union leaders had recommended lawmakers cut vacant positions, management positions and other spending. CSEA also recommended the shared sales tax and also a property tax increase. County property taxes have dropped by 30 percent in the last five years and have not kept up with



Erie Unit Executive Vice President Joan Bender, center, speaks to the media during a news conference at the union hall. She is surrounded by section presidents Dan Barton, left, Neal Hodgson, Denise Szymura, Ann Marie Haas, Nancy Moran, Gary Ghosen and Skip Ehrhart. Western Region President Flo Tripi also spoke at the event.

the cost of government, the local's position paper states.

Legislators "missed the key component" of the CSEA recommendation, said Western Region Director Roger Sherrie.

"They needed to do something with the property tax as the least painful way to fix the structural imbalance," Sherrie said. "What they've done is negatively impact county operations and postpone the crisis. We can expect the same situation with the budget next year."

Employees affected by the job cuts were expected to receive layoff notices around Dec. 14.

"We will develop a plan to help workers know their rights and we will get them help and counseling," Tripi recently told members.

The "red budget" originally proposed by

County Executive Joel Giambra would have resulted in the loss of about 3,000 county positions, another 3,000 jobs in community and non-profit agencies and the loss of services and cultural organizations.

In the days leading up to the budget adoption, CSEA launched a campaign to stop the "red budget."

Section presidents spelled out the budget's impact on

their departments during each of four public hearings. They distributed literature and anti-red budget buttons to the public and spoke with local media. Section presidents also presented the local's recommendations to legislators through the position paper and news conferences.

— Lynn Miller



Erie County is not unique this year as every county in the state is facing financial difficulties, but the situation in Erie County is by far the worst.

THE WORK FORCE

ISSN 1522-1091

Official publication of
CSEA Local 1000, AFSCME, AFL-CIO
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Albany, NY 12210-2303
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The Work Force (USPS 0445-010) is published monthly by The CSEA Publication Office: 143 Washington Ave., Albany, NY 12210. Periodical Mail Postage paid at Post Office, Albany, New York 12288.

**Postmaster: Send address changes to:
CSEA, Attn: Membership Department,
143 Washington Ave., Albany, NY 12210.
CSEA on-line: The CSEA website
can be accessed at www.csealocal1000.org**

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IN TOUCH WITH THE WORK FORCE CSEA President Danny Donohue

New York's financial state affects you

By now I'm sure you are well aware of some huge budget issues facing New York.

CSEA has been out front and outspoken with our message that health care reform needs urgent care. County budgets are strained to the breaking point over Medicaid obligations while public health care facilities continue to be shortchanged by a long out-of-date funding formula.

As if this challenge isn't enough, the state now faces a court ordered requirement to increase funding to New York City public schools by about \$23 billion over five years. It is likely that the ruling will require additional funding for other school districts across the state.

It should be clear that there are no simple solutions. But you can be sure the stakes are high and the results will affect you, your family, friends and neighbors in many ways for the generation to come.

CSEA will be actively involved in seeking meaningful solutions. It won't be easy. We will work hard to provide information to you in many different ways. Read this publication and visit our web site (www.csealocal1000.org) as a starting point. It is more important than ever that you stay informed and get involved to help ensure that our voice will be heard.



Danny

CSEA campaign for future of public health care gains momentum

Public health care in critical condition

ALBANY — CSEA's efforts to reform New York's health care system now are gaining steam with statewide advertising, activist information sessions and grassroots efforts for meaningful change.

"County budgets are strained to the breaking point over Medicaid obligations while public health care facilities continue to be shortchanged by a long out-of-date funding formula," said CSEA President Danny Donohue. "From small community clinics to large, complex public hospitals, the future of public health care is in critical condition. It should be obvious across the state that we need health care reform now."

Years of neglect and inadequate funding from the federal and state governments have made a bad situation worse. Additionally, the outdated funding formula shortchanges public facilities compared with private health care facilities.

For months CSEA has been fighting to preserve public health care across the state. The basic issue is the same in every place — inadequate funding — but the scale,

complexity and approach to the crisis has varied by locality.

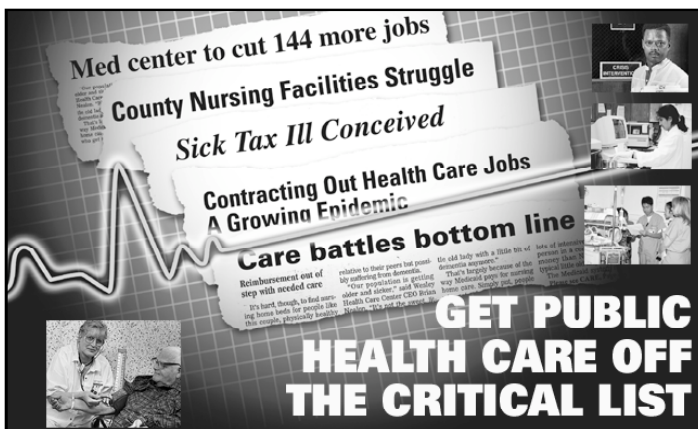
Last year CSEA successfully secured \$30 million in the state budget to help at-risk public health care facilities. But it is clear a more comprehensive health care reform is long overdue to ensure the future for public health care, including improvements to the Medicaid program that go beyond simply shifting costs.

In the new legislative session, 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.

CSEA ads are already airing on radio and TV statewide and the issue received an in-depth program presentation at CSEA's recent statewide Women's Conference. (See full conference coverage, pages 10 - 11.)

Additionally, CSEA is working with other organizations to gain allies in the fight ahead.

CSEA is fighting for changes in funding while also working to ensure that the essential services that



Help fight for health care reform!

For more information about CSEA's health care reform campaign and how to be a part of it, visit the CSEA web site at www.csealocal1000.org

members deliver will continue to be delivered.

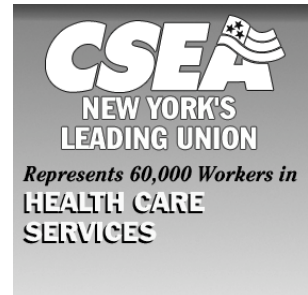
"CSEA members need to get involved in this effort no matter who you are or what you do," Donohue said. "Whether you work in the public health field or not, you have a stake in ensuring that these services will continue to be available to those

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.



Anthony Lewis, who works as a technician at the SUNY Health Science Center in Brooklyn, would be among the thousands of CSEA members affected by health care reform.



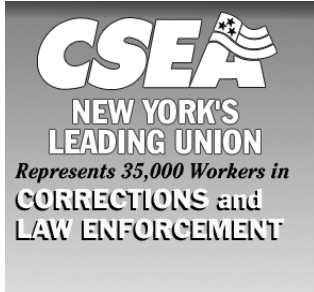
"All of us need to make it clear to the governor, state lawmakers and local elected officials that health care reform needs urgent care."

CSEA Voices



"I attended the women's conference because I am curious to learn more about the union so that I can take the information back and share with co-workers. "

— Joanne McNaney, keyboard specialist 1, Education Department, 16-year member and first time Women's Conference attendee.



“This is an urgent matter of public safety. We can’t allow the county to wait until this jeopardizes an emergency situation.”

CSEA Voices



“At the women’s conference, I was especially interested in some of the sessions such as those on elder care and workplace violence.”

— Maryann Fredericks, keyboard specialist 1, Department of Labor, 31-year member and first time Women’s Conference attendee.

CSEA calls dispatcher shortage an emergency

CORTLAND — CSEA is waging a public battle with Cortland County leaders to push for more staff in the county’s 911 dispatch center.

“When you make a mistake, you might lose something. When somebody in emergency services makes a mistake, you might lose a life. None of us here want that,” said Cortland County Sheriff’s Department 911 Shift Supervisor Nick Wagner, a 15-year employee.

Nearly fourfold call increase

Although the department has seen its emergency calls increase nearly four times since the center opened in 1994, the county has only added one additional full-time dispatcher.

The staffing battle began after the county consolidated Cortland’s police dispatching duties into the center without hiring more staff. Suddenly, 12- to 16-hour shifts became the norm rather than the exception.

“We started out with 11 dispatchers and now we’ve got 12, and we’ve added 25,000 calls. We needed more staff before we added the extra duties,” Wagner said. “You can’t sit here for 16 hours and be sharp at the end of it. You just can’t.”

County dispatchers also rotate between fire, sheriff’s and state police dispatch stations. CSEA Unit President and Dispatcher Chip Elwood thinks the setup is a recipe for trouble.

“Our duties have increased by a huge amount. Our dispatchers have done a tremendous job of stepping up to the challenge of handling the increased volume and duties without extra workers, but everyone is getting burned out,” he said.

CSEA fights back

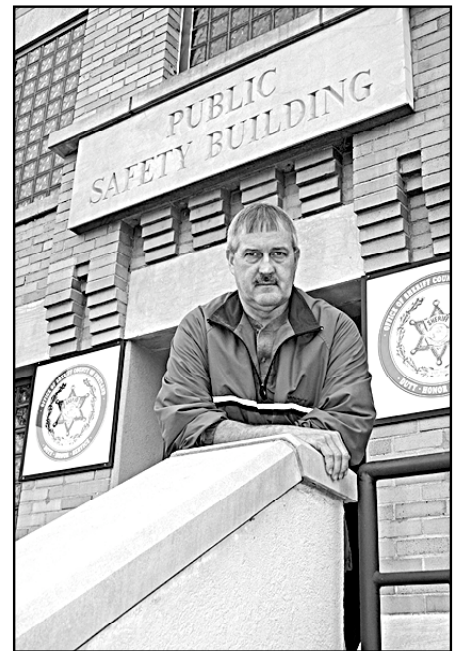
After county officials rejected legislation that would have added an extra full-time dispatcher per shift, CSEA fired back and disputed the county’s position, demanding that more staff be hired.

“This is an urgent matter of public safety,” said Central Region President Jim Moore. “We can’t allow the county to wait until this jeopardizes an emergency situation. Cortland County must stop playing politics with this issue and do whatever it takes to increase the staff to ensure that public safety is not put at risk. Neither taxpayers nor our members should have to wait until a lawsuit is filed to get real relief from this problem.”

‘Nuisance’ calls add to stress

Dispatcher Gene Caufield said the increase in cellular phone usage over the last few years has led to more “nuisance” calls that take up precious minutes when dispatchers are busy handling real emergencies. “Unfortunately, we don’t have a crystal ball to know when we’re going to need more people to handle the extra calls,” he said.

It would cost the county less to hire more full-time dispatchers than to continue paying overtime, Elwood said.



Chip Elwood, shown above outside the Cortland County Public Safety Building, has seen 911 dispatchers’ duties increase significantly.

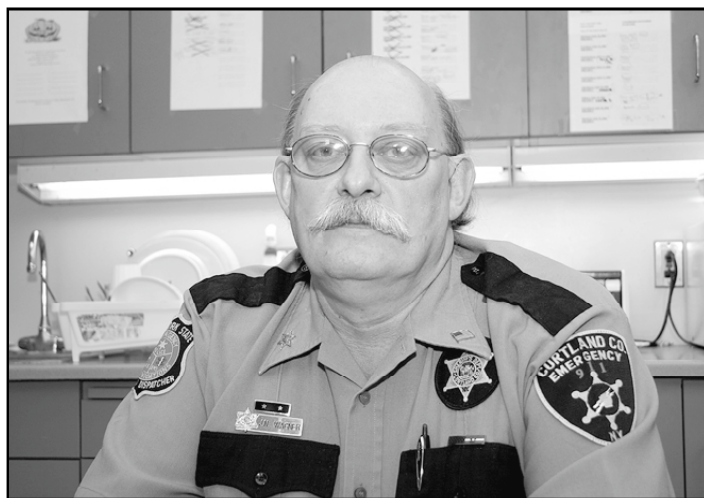
Wagner said he’s not sure why the county is opposed to adding more dispatchers.

“There’s no question that we need three people sitting in those chairs. This doesn’t need to be a fight with the county,” he said.

Wagner said the dispatchers will continue to handle the extra hours, shifts and calls, because they care.

“Just because your hours here increase, your level of concern and your empathy doesn’t decrease. The battle goes on,” he said.

—Mark M. Kotzin



Nick Wagner, and other department members have been regularly working 16-hour shifts because of the extra calls that county dispatchers now must handle.

State meets CSEA safety demands before NYC move

MANHATTAN — Months of organizing, testifying, meetings and press conferences have paid off for hundreds of CSEA members concerned about being moved to a building damaged and contaminated during the Sept. 11 attacks.

“We have come a long way,” Metropolitan Region President George Boncoraglio told members during a recent meeting. “We’ve made significant progress to protect the health and safety of workers and the public.”

More than 600 workers at the city offices of the state Department of Health, the Public Service Commission and Health Research Incorporated will move next month into a combined 250,000-square-foot space on four floors at 90 Church St.

The 15-story limestone building was hit by debris from the Twin Towers and landing gear from one of the two hijacked airliners. It sustained structural damage and was heavily contaminated by substances that include asbestos, lead, fiberglass, heavy metals and mercury.

Not satisfied with initial safety reports, the absence of other information related to the building cleanup and the reluctance by some state agencies to release this information led to a campaign by CSEA activists that eventually led to the improvements.

“In 90 Church Street, we now have probably one of the safest buildings in lower Manhattan,” said Health Research Incorporated Local President Deborah Hanna, who fought tirelessly along with Public Service Commission Local President Rene Jackson and Department of Health Local officer Marie Rogers Granger, to ensure the safety and well being



From left, Public Service Commission Local President Rene Jackson, CSEA Occupational Safety and Health Specialist Komilla John, Health Research Inc. Local President Deborah Hanna, CSEA Industrial Hygienist Mark Stipano and Metropolitan Region President George Boncoraglio speak with members about improvements at 90 Church St.

of their members.

Among the health and safety issues being addressed before workers move into the building are a filtration upgrade for the building’s ventilation system, an indoor air quality monitoring program, installation of secondary windows, compliance with city building codes and permission to perform additional air quality testing.

“The reason why we have been so successful is because we have all been working together,” CSEA Industrial Hygienist Mark Stipano said.

Stipano also tried to alleviate concerns members had about working next to one of the largest construction projects the city has seen in decades, between the building of the Liberty Tower and other projects in and around the World Trade Center site.

“Those construction workers are union members too, and their safety and health experts are going to do everything possible to protect them and the public,” Stipano said.

CSEA has also joined a

coalition that will continue monitoring and responding to environmental concerns in lower Manhattan.

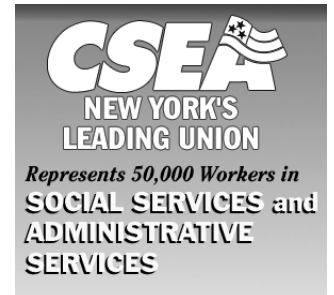
“We also set up a labor-management committee that will continue to discuss and work to resolve additional issues or problems,” CSEA Occupational Safety and Health Specialist Komilla John said.

Members who attended the meetings were generally relieved with the improvements, although some were still upset by the state’s initial reluctance to discuss their concerns.

“My distrust of our employer to safeguard our health remains as strong as ever,” said Mark Hammer, an AIDS Institute worker. “Matters of safety and health should have never been a matter for labor and management to disagree.”

“Had it not been for the union, the significant improvements that were obtained would have never been realized,” said Hammer.

— David Galarza



“We’ve made significant progress to protect the health and safety of workers and the public.”

CSEA Voices



“I want to get more involved in my union, and this conference is a great way to do that.”

— Gail Stewart, accounts examiner, Department of Labor, four-year member, local shop steward and grievance representative; first time CSEA Women’s Conference attendee.



Each holiday season, CSEA members across the state work at spreading cheer. While some union members decorate to make their communities look festive, other members work hard to bring to life activities that the whole family can enjoy.

CSEA Voices



“One of my big concerns is that my two kids are getting older and will soon be entering the work force. I hope to make the world a better place for them. The work force is changing so much, and I want my kids to have the skills they need. Hopefully, I can teach them to stand up for themselves.”

—Rhonda Jones, cleaner, Finger Lakes Community College, 15-year member and first time Women’s Conference attendee

Workers add warmth to winter’s chill



Above, City of Newburgh Unit members, left to right, Jake Olsen, Marvin Navarro and Reed Sheehan secure an evergreen donated by a local family to its new home on Broadway. Olsen also appears on Page 1.



Onondaga County Parks Department workers, from left to right, Don Spraker, Guiliano Mevoli and Shirley Chapman set up the union’s display in Onondaga Lake Park for the 2004 Lights on the Lake holiday show.



Above, CSEA members Cole Sumner and Dan Seguin (on lift), both employed at the state Office of General Services’ Grounds Department, put the finishing touches on an evergreen outside the state Capitol in Albany.



Left, Erin O’Neil, left, and Kristina Schoepfer, members of the Palisades Interstate Park Local who work in the office at Bear Mountain State Park, decorate an evergreen that sits alongside the park’s popular indoor merry-go-round.



Left, state Office of General Services employees and CSEA members, from left to right, Dave Stewart, Chuck Leibach and Ben Danton maintain the skating rink at the Empire State Plaza in Albany.

— Photos by Mark Kotzin, Janice Marra, Ed Molitor and Jessica Stone

Ceramics college shatters CSEA wage agreement

ALFRED — CSEA is charging Alfred University College of Ceramics officials are deliberately denying workers pre-approved raises in retaliation for joining the union.

The workers' raises are covered by the New York state pay bill and, as such, they have traditionally been given the same raises other unionized state employees received.

After nearly a year of negotiations, which followed a contentious organizing campaign, campus management is refusing to offer employees the package other state workers won last April.

"These workers have always gotten the same raises as other state workers," said CSEA Western Region President Flo Tripi. "Clearly, this is payback for exercising their right to form a union."

Tripi said she believes the university is taking this stance to try to send a message to other private, non-unionized employees to discourage them from trying to form a union.

Meanwhile, she said the money for the raises has already been approved by the state.

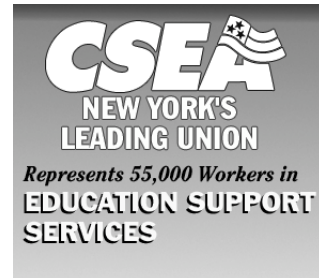
"The money for these raises is just sitting in

Albany," Tripi said. "All the university has to do is ask for it." Local politicians, as well as Alfred faculty, students and alumni have come out in support of the workers, and University President Charles Edmonson is getting daily pressure to settle the contract.

In April, more than 70,000 CSEA-represented state executive branch employees ratified a four-year pact on which raises for the Alfred workers would be modeled. That agreement includes the following pay increases:

- \$800 bonus payable upon ratification
- 2.5 percent increase on base salary on April 1, 2004
- 2.75 percent increase on base salary on April 1, 2005
- 3 percent increase on base salary on April 1 2006; and
- \$800 increase on base salary on April 1, 2007 (fourth year total — 5.5 percent increase on an average CSEA salary)

— Ed Molitor



"These workers have gotten the same raises as other state workers forever. Clearly, this is payback for exercising their right to form a union."

CSEA Voices



"I am trying to get more involved. I believe it's very important. I am looking forward to bringing information back to work for other members."

— Lana DuBois, head cook, Hanibal Central School, and first time Women's Conference attendee

Fighting for fairness and respect



From left to right, CSEA members Diane Rutkowski, Debbie Atria, Lindenhurst School District Clerical Unit treasurer, Valerie Deasy, negotiating team member, and Maureen Russo, unit president, demonstrate outside a Lindenhurst school. "We just want to be treated fairly and respected for the good job we do. We shouldn't be treated like nothing we do matters," Russo said.

INSIDE THE WORK FORCE

Women's Conference renews union strength

More than 500 CSEA members recently jammed Albany's Desmond Hotel for the union's biennial Women's Conference. This year's theme was "Remembering the Struggle, Renewing Our Strength."

The conference was especially poignant this year as it was held weeks after the death of former statewide Secretary Irene Carr, a trailblazer for women's issues.

The conference was dedicated in memory of Carr, who served as statewide secretary for 17 years until retiring in 1993. A special video

montage detailed her accomplishments, which included forming the first CSEA Women's Committee, working to establish affordable day care centers for state workers, and encouraging women to take an active role in CSEA leadership.

Her years of tireless advocacy led in 1988 to the creation of the Irene Carr Leadership Award, which was awarded this year to Mary Rubilotta, a deputy director in CSEA's Contract Administration Department.

"The effects of Irene's many years of hard work are still benefiting our members today,"

President Danny Donohue said.

Executive Vice President Mary Sullivan also recalled Carr's contributions.

"When Irene and I started out in CSEA, there were only two women (statewide) officers," she said. "Now, there are six of us."

The CSEA Women's Committee, which organized the conference, also paid tribute to Carr by collecting \$1,700 in donations in her memory to benefit Parkinson's disease research at Albany Medical Center.

The three-day conference offered workshops helpful to members at work and at home.



Workshop participants learn relaxation techniques, including the Eastern practice of tai chi.

Topics included a seminar on legal issues surrounding elder care, a pertinent topic given the increase in the aging population, and a workshop addressing domestic violence and its effect in the workplace.

spread throughout CSEA. The conference is refreshing and I know from all of the comments that I received from some of the new participants that they really enjoyed the weekend."

— Jessica Stone



Christine Mumma and Karen Pecora, both Southern Region representatives on the CSEA Women's Committee, pay homage to women in history.



CSEA Deputy Director of Contract Administration Mary Rubilotta accepts the 2004 Irene Carr Leadership Award from CSEA President Danny Donohue.



First-time Women's Conference attendees join CSEA President Danny Donohue, front center, and statewide Secretary Barbara Reeves, sitting at right. On left is CSEA Women's Committee Chair Jacqueline Stanford. Kneeling from left are CSEA Women's Committee members Christine Mumma, Karen Pecora and Cathy Barretta. Committee member Kim Wallace is to Stanford's right.

Political action plenary

The weekend also included a plenary session addressing state and federal political action issues. Fran Turner, director of CSEA's Legislative and Political Action Department, quizzed members on topics such as health care and the privatization of Social Security under President George W. Bush.

The committee added a dose of relaxation to the event by offering exercise classes (such as tai chi and yoga) and hiring several massage therapists.

CSEA Treasurer Maureen Malone, with a little help from reindeer union representative "Nick Venisoni" (Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte), gave attendees tips on shopping for union-made products for the holidays.

Union members, many of whom increasingly face under-staffing and greater workloads, also received tips on managing stress. Dr. Carol J. Scott, an emergency room physician and author of several books on stress management, advised members on how to find their "Best Stress Zone" to maximize productivity.

Women's Committee Chairwoman Jacqueline Stanford, along with the committee, made a special effort to reach out to first-time conference attendees, many of whom are interested in becoming activists.

"The conference was absolutely great," she said. "I wish that all of the energy and camaraderie from that conference could



A costumed CSEA Treasurer Maureen Malone discusses union issues with reindeer union representative "Nick Venisoni" (played by Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte) during the "Are you gifting this season?" program, exploring the virtues of buying union made products.

Committee gives OSHA ergonomics recommendations

A federal ergonomics advisory committee recently offered recommendations to the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration to help reduce musculoskeletal disorders in the workplace.

The National Advisory Committee on Ergonomics, a 15-member committee formed by the U.S. Department of Labor in 2002, recommended to OSHA that the agency conduct further research into musculoskeletal disorders, improve its ergonomics success stories and continue its efforts to refine its ergonomics guidelines.

Many CSEA members, whether they work at computers or in a manhole, find themselves at risk for workplace injuries related to heavy lifting or repetitive strain. Such injuries, which could be prevented using ergonomics

During the past two years, the committee gave recommendations to the Department of Labor on using ergonomics to help decline musculoskeletal disorders in workplaces. OSHA is a division of the federal department.

The committee urged OSHA to conduct more research into the causes and effects of musculoskeletal disorders and ergonomics' role in preventing them. OSHA is considering addressing the research gaps at a future meeting of the National Occupational Research Agenda, which is sponsored by the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health.

Along with further research, the committee also recommended that OSHA improve its ergonomics success stories on the agency's web site.

Recommendations include increasing the number and quality of the stories, which depict how workplaces successfully address ergonomics to help prevent injuries. To help the agency implement this recommendation, the committee gave OSHA a success story template.

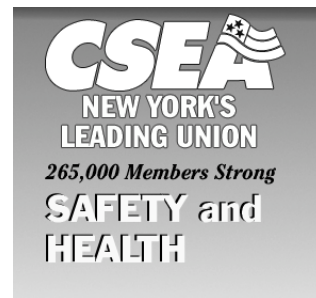
The committee also recommended that workplaces should include ergonomics in their overall safety and health programs, and that OSHA continue to develop its ergonomics guidelines as researchers learn more about musculoskeletal disorders.

While the committee's recommendations are intended to reduce injuries caused by heavy

lifting or repetitive strain, the Bush administration's stances on ergonomics may make implementation difficult.

Soon after taking office in 2001, Bush repealed the OSHA ergonomics standard enacted during the Clinton administration, as well as the agency's ruling requiring musculoskeletal disorders to be noted on the workplace injury log.

Bush has also cut funding for worker safety and health training programs, placing employees at a greater risk for injuries.



Job injury postings due Feb. 1

On Feb. 1, all government employers must post a summary of the total number of job-related injuries and illnesses that occurred last year.

Public sector employers are required to maintain records of work related injuries and illnesses under the Part 801 of the New York State Department of Labor regulations. Copies of that regulation and others can be viewed on the state Labor Department web site at

www.labor.state.ny.us/business_ny/employer_responsibilities/safety/coderule.htm.

Public employers are required to post the SH 900.1 form, entitled the "Annual Summary of Work Related Injuries and Illnesses." Employers are allowed to use alternative forms if they provide the

same information as the Labor Department forms. Management must display the form near other required employee notices. The forms can be viewed at the department's web site at www.labor.state.ny.us/business_ny/employer_responsibilities/safety_health.html.

CSEA encourages all members who had a work related injury or illness last year to review the summary and determine whether their employer properly documented the incident. Any CSEA member who determines that their employer is not keeping proper records or the required postings are not present should immediately contact one of their local officers or Labor Relations Specialist.

Need information on safety and health?

CSEA has numerous occupational safety and health publications available for download from the union's web site at http://www.csealocal1000.org/osh/osh_pubs.php

You can also order copies of the publications to be mailed to you by contacting the CSEA Occupational Safety & Health Department (800) 342-4146, ext. 1292.

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.



Saturday

Binghamton	WSKG	2:30 pm
NYC	WNET	1:30 pm
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	WCPE	9:00 am
Syracuse	WCNY	1:00 pm
Watertown	WPBS	7:00 am

Monday

Long Island	WLIW	12:00 noon
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Gracious giving a CSEA hallmark

CSEA members are known for their generosity to family, friends and neighbors, and during the holiday season are often leading the way in helping those less fortunate in their communities, or those who may not be home for the holidays.

Here are a few examples of the many kind acts union members performed in recent months.

In Buffalo, the CSEA Erie County Local Women's Committee organized a food drive during the local's annual holiday party.

"It is important for the union to work with the community," said Nancy Simms, Women's Committee chairwoman. "We try to help charities every year. This year, we thought a food drive would be a good way to help the Food Bank of Western New York because they are desperately in need of donations."



Also in the Western Region, members of the state Department of Transportation Local in Rochester showed their commitment to the community recently when CSEA members volunteered for the Salvation Army's red kettle campaign. Local members rang bells and collected donations for the Salvation Army at



Beverly Maloney, left, state Comptroller's Office, and Lori Jubic, of the state Tax and Finance Department, help prepare a Thanksgiving meal for hundreds in the Capital Region.



Santa Claus greets children of local members during the Onondaga Country Local's recent CSEA Night at Lights on the Lake. Onondaga County DOT Unit President Miles Neugent helped fill Santa's shoes with the logistics of his visit to the county local's party.

the city's Marketplace Mall.

In the CSEA Central Region, CSEA members at SUNY Cortland collected toys, clothing and food for 33 migrant farmworker families they "adopted" for the holidays. Local President Charlotte Plunkett, who ran the union's collection efforts, said campus workers collected toys for 95 children and gifts for their parents as well. Plunkett worked with the Cortland Migrant Education Outreach Program (MEOP) which has a "family center" on campus to provide migrant farmworker families with access to educational resources and other basic living needs. "It makes me almost want to cry when I see what our members were willing to do for someone else," Plunkett said.

Meanwhile, CSEA Onondaga County Local members collected another record haul to benefit their area *Toys for Tots* campaign. Activist Rick Adsitt, who co-chaired the annual effort along with activist Nick Kochan, said the toy drive, held in conjunction with the local's *Lights On The Lake* holiday event, raised enough money to buy more than \$1,800 worth of toys. Many toys were also collected at drop boxes throughout county worksites.

In the Capital Region, CSEA members took part in helping prepare the annual Equinox Thanksgiving dinner, which provides a meal for hundreds who would otherwise go without dinner.

In CSEA's Southern Region, members of the Sullivan County Local recently brought Santa Claus and a sack full of gifts to the Sullivan County Head Start in Woodbourne, a facility that serves area lower-income residents.

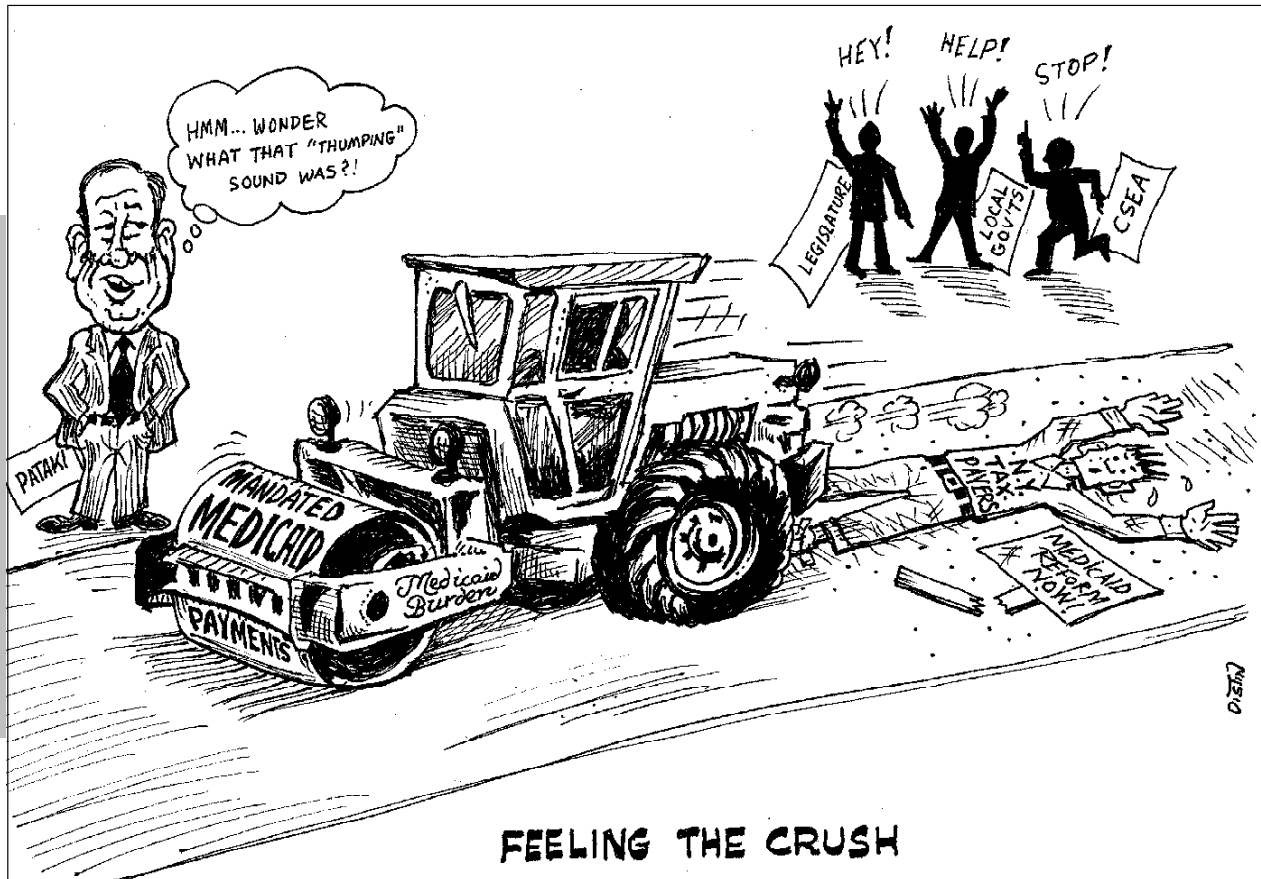
Gifts for the 4-year olds were specially chosen; teachers had interviewed their charges beforehand for their gift wishes. The local sponsors the event each year, in addition to supporting a team with the Fallsburg Little League and contributing towards an 8K run.

In the Metropolitan region, the Metropolitan Region Women's Committee will be donating a television to a local homeless facility in Lower Manhattan and making a financial contribution toward their food program that will allow for dozens of people to be fed a nutritious meal. The Women's Committee at the State Insurance Fund Local have also adopted a family in Brooklyn that's headed by a single mother raising five children. Members pitched in and donated toys, clothing and food for the holidays.

On Long Island, CSEA recently collected hundreds of boxes full of personal care and non-perishable food donations and packed them up for shipment to troops in Iraq.

CSEA members filled nearly two, 2 1/2-ton Army trucks. The drive was led by Veteran's committee Chair Steve Abramson of the Long Beach Unit, Nelson Gutierrez, 2nd vice president of the Pilgrim Local, Willie Gwynn, 2nd vice president of the LIDDSO Local, and Maryann Phelps, 4th vice president of the SUNY Stony Brook Local.

— Lynn Miller, Mark M. Kotzin, Therese Assalian, Ed Molitor, Jessica Stone, David Galarza and Rachel Langert contributed to this report.



FEELING THE CRUSH

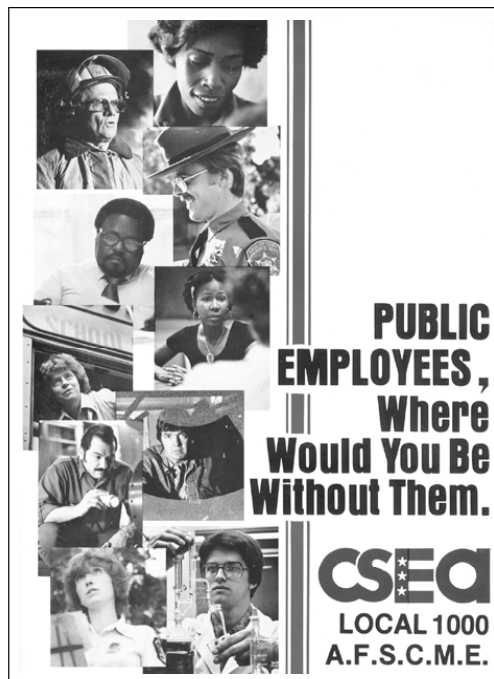


27 years ago ...

Among the numerous momentous events for CSEA in 1978 was the launching of a statewide image advertising campaign that promoted the value of CSEA members' work. As New York's leading union, CSEA had long used advertising to get its message out on specific issues but the 1978 campaign used a coordinated campaign to improve the public's understanding of the importance of CSEA workers.

"We know that our members do important jobs with determination and dedication," wrote then President William McGowan in a letter to CSEA leaders. "Through this advertising campaign we can show that to the public. This campaign will also improve the feelings of our members about themselves..."

CSEA effectively uses advertising and other marketing tools to this day in its efforts to best represent its members.



Also in 1978 ...

- * The Camp David Peace Treaty is signed between Israel and Egypt.
- * The mass murder/suicide of Jim Jones' religious cult occurs in Guyana.
- * Hugh Carey is re-elected to his second term as governor of New York.
- * CSEA affiliates with AFSCME.
- * The Space Invaders video arcade game is developed.
- * Bucky Dent shatters the hopes of Red Sox faithful with a seventh inning homer as the Yankees win a one game playoff in Fenway Park before defeating the Los Angeles Dodgers in the World Series.

QSAC members win first contract

NEW YORK — More than 400 CSEA members employed at Quality Services for the Autism Community now have a first contract that will significantly improve their pay, benefits and working conditions.

CSEA and QSAC reached a contract that provides 10 percent raises over the next three years, 4 percent retroactive pay dating back to February and substantial employee rights and benefits. Both sides recently ratified the agreement.

“The contract campaign proved the power of teamwork,” President Danny Donohue said. “This agreement reflects the determination of our new members at QSAC, as well as our many allies in the community, to have a voice at work.”

“This agreement is a testament to the courage and determination of the QSAC workers,” said George Boncoraglio, Metropolitan Region president. “It brings a new era of equality and dignity for the work force there. We also look forward to forging a new relationship with QSAC to support its important mission in serving adults and children who suffer from autism spectrum disorders.”

The contract also provides significant contractual protections for employees with respect to seniority, work scheduling, overtime, discipline, grievances and other issues.

“We look forward to maintaining the highest standards of quality care,” said Rosetta Muhammed, interim president of the new QSAC CSEA local. “This contract will ensure that we get the dignity and respect we fought so hard to achieve.”

After a year-long campaign to form a union and improve quality care, hundreds of workers at QSAC chose to form a union with CSEA in February by negotiating a card check/neutrality agreement that required QSAC management to remain

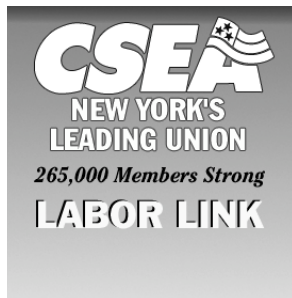
neutral while workers chose whether they wanted to form a union.

Many elected officials were involved in bringing the two sides together during these negotiations, including New York City Councilman Hiram Monserrate and New York state Assemblymen Michael Gianaris and Jose Peralta.

Other elected officials who were involved include New York state Assembly members Peter Rivera, Audrey Pheffer, Mark Weprin, John Lavelle and Brian McLaughlin; New York state Senators Malcolm Smith and Toby Ann Stavisky; New York City Council members Leroy Comrie, Margarita Lopez, and Speaker Gifford Miller; U.S. Rep. Anthony Weiner, state

Comptroller Alan Hevesi, and city Comptroller William Thompson.

Other community groups that supported the workers’ efforts include



QSAC employees celebrate their formation of a CSEA local earlier this year when agency management recognized them as a union. Both sides recently ratified the first agreement between CSEA and QSAC.

the Queens Federation of Churches, New York City Central Labor Council, the Greater New York Labor Religion Coalition, Jobs with Justice and various autism community advocates.

— David Galarza

CSEA is a proud sponsor of

Labor's Voice on the Radio

When and Where:
Thursdays at 9 a.m. and 3 p.m.
on WHLD AM 1270 — Buffalo

Saturdays at 8 a.m.
on WSPQ AM 1330 — Springville

Saturdays at 5 p.m.
on WROC AM 950 — Rochester

Sundays at 7 p.m.
on WGY AM 810 — Albany
or Listen at www.piaradio.com

TUNE IN TO HEAR LABOR'S VOICE!



Scherna Sutton, left, a member of the Westchester County unit, examines her PEOPLE enrollment form while members Israel Rosa, center, and Pedro Baez, right, look on. The unit successfully negotiated PEOPLE payroll deduction into its latest contract with the county which was settled in June. (Photo by Jessica Stone)

2005 CSEA ELECTIONS Info

Public Sector Local, Unit elections scheduled for 2005

Elections will be conducted for all public sector local officers, delegates and unit officers

The term of office for all current public sector local officers, delegates and unit officers expires June 30, 2005. Public sector officers and delegates will be elected to four-year terms. Balloting for local officers, delegates and unit officers will be conducted between May 15 and June 15, 2005.

Each local and unit executive board must select its own election

committee and committee chairperson. The local and/or unit election committee is primarily responsible for conducting the election.

Slate petitioning and slate voting will be an option for candidates for local and unit office (see adjacent information).

Members may run as individual candidates if they wish.

Important information about slate petitioning and slate voting

Local Elections

In local elections, a slate must contain a candidate running for the offices of president, one or more vice presidents as set forth in the local's by-laws, secretary and treasurer.

The slate may also include candidates for other offices that have been created according to the local constitution and by-laws. In locals that have created the combined position of secretary-treasurer in their by-laws, the slate must include a candidate for that office.

Unit Elections

In unit elections, a slate must contain a candidate running for the offices of president, one or more vice presidents as set forth in the unit's by-laws, secretary and treasurer.

The slate may also include candidates for other offices that have been created according to the unit constitution and by-laws. In units that have created the combined position of secretary-treasurer in their by-laws, the slate must include a candidate for that office.

Candidates should know the following:

- A member cannot be a candidate for officer and for delegate on the same slate. An officer candidate must circulate a separate nominating petition in order to appear on the ballot also as a candidate for delegate. The member will appear on the ballot as a candidate for office as part of the slate and as an individual for the position of delegate.

- Candidates who run as a slate must complete a Slate Consent Form and a Slate Petition Request Form. By petitioning as a slate, candidates who appear as part of a slate need to submit only one set of the required number of signatures to qualify as a candidate. Individual petitions are not necessary for slate candidates.

- Candidates who withdraw from a slate must complete a Slate Withdrawal Form and return the form to CSEA headquarters.

More detailed information about election slates will be available from local and unit election committees.

Attention: public sector local, unit presidents Did you send Election Committee Data Form to CSEA headquarters?

During early January, members of registered election committees will receive an election package to help them carry out their election duties. As long as election committee forms continue to be received, packages will be mailed.

CSEA headquarters cannot send material and information to any

appointed election committee without first receiving the completed committee form from the local or unit president.

Inquiries concerning election materials may be directed to the CSEA Central Files Department at 1-800-342-4146, ext. 1214.

Nominating procedure for smallest CSEA locals and units: special election rules apply

The union's election rules require a minimum of 10 signatures on nominating petitions for office in all locals and units. However, this requirement causes problems in locals and units **with 10 or fewer members.**

Special election rules apply for CSEA locals and units of 10 or fewer members.

In these smaller locals and units, completion of the Application for Election to Office replaces the requirement to obtain signatures on a nominating petition.

In locals or units with 10 or fewer members, any member who submits the application and meets election requirements under the appropriate local or unit constitution will be placed on the ballot.

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.

Protecting Your Benefits



New York state Empire Plan changes effective Jan. 1, 2005

In accordance with the CSEA - New York state 2003-2007 collective bargaining agreement, the following health insurance changes affect active state employees who are represented by CSEA and are enrolled in the Empire Plan.

The Empire Plan Hospital Benefits Program: Empire Blue Cross and Blue Shield (1-877-7-NYSHIP or 1-877-769-7447)

Changes effective Jan. 1, 2005

Hospital network for Empire Plan — primary enrollees through PPO network.

Network inpatient paid in full: Paid in full anesthesiology, pathology and radiology at network hospital.

Network outpatient and emergency care: Paid in full anesthesiology, pathology and radiology at network hospital.

- \$30 outpatient
- \$50 emergency room
- \$12 physical therapy

Non-network inpatient: 10 percent co-insurance up to \$1,500 annually per enrollee, \$1,500 per spouse/domestic partner and \$1,500 for all children combined. *Note: \$1,000 of \$1,500 annual co-insurance maximum is reimbursable under the United Healthcare Basic Medical Program.*

Non-Network outpatient: 10 percent co-insurance or \$75 up to \$1,500 annually per enrollee, spouse or domestic partner and all children combined.

Note: \$1,000 of \$1,500 annual co-insurance maximum is reimbursable under the United Healthcare Basic Medical Program.

Outpatient hospital services provided at network hospital extension clinics, including ambulatory care centers are covered, subject to applicable \$30 hospital outpatient and \$50 emergency care co-payments.

- No coverage for non-medically necessary inpatient hospital days.

The Empire Plan Medical / Surgical Benefits Program: United Healthcare (1-877-7-NYSHIP or 1-877-769-7447)

Changes effective Jan. 1, 2005

- \$12 co-payment at participating provider for office visits, office surgery, X-ray, laboratory services and contraceptive drugs and devices dispensed in a doctor's office.
- \$225 basic medical program annual deductible for non-participating providers.

- \$900 annual co-insurance maximum (out-of-pocket costs) under the Basic Medical Program.

The co-insurance maximum will be reduced to \$500 for employees in or equated to a salary grade 6 or below.

Basic Medical Discount Provider Program:

As of Oct. 1, 2004, plan enrollees have access to an expanded network of providers through MultiPlan. Basic medical provisions will apply to the providers in the expanded network options. Payment will be based on a discounted schedule and payment will be sent directly to discount providers. No balance billing above discounted rate will be permitted.

- Prostheses and orthotic devices are paid in full when a network provider is used. Non-network providers are covered under the Basic Medical Program, subject to deductible and co-insurance.

• External mastectomy prostheses are covered in full under the Basic Medical Program, not subject to deductible or co-insurance. Call toll free at 1-877-7-NYSHIP (1-877-769-7447). Pre-authorization is required if over \$1,000.

- \$1,200 per hearing aid, per ear, once every four years is covered. Coverage every two years for children 12 years and under.

• Increase the lifetime maximum to \$50,000 for certain infertility benefits, called "qualified procedures."

A Cancer Center of Excellence program became available Oct. 1, 2004. Enrollees have direct access to telephone nurse consultations as well as information and assistance in locating appropriate care centers for cancer. Paid in full benefits and a \$10,000 travel/lodging allowance are available when care is pre-certified and received at a Cancer Resource Service Center of Excellence.

Contact United Healthcare at 1-877-769-7447 or Cancer Resource Services at 1-866-936-6002 for more information.

The Empire Plan Mental Health and Substance Abuse program: ValueOptions

(1-877-7-NYSHIP or 1-877-769-7447)

Changes Effective Jan. 1, 2005

- \$12 co-payment for outpatient substance abuse
- \$50 co-payment for emergency room

The Empire Plan Prescription Drug Program: Express Scripts (1-877-7-NYSHIP or 1-877-769-7447)

Changes Effective Jan. 1, 2005

Benefit based on whether drug is generic, preferred brand name or non-preferred brand name drug.

- Up to 30-day supply from retail pharmacy or mail order: generic \$5, preferred brand name \$15, *non-preferred \$30

- Up to 90-day supply from retail pharmacy: generic \$10, preferred brand name \$30, *non-preferred \$60

- Up to 90-day supply through mail order: generic \$5, preferred brand name \$20, *non-preferred \$55

Questions regarding the 2005 Empire Plan/Express Scripts preferred drug list can be answered online. For web access, go to www.cs.state.ny.us; click on Employee Benefits and choose Empire Plan Pharmacy. Or, call Express Scripts toll free at 1-877-7-NYSHIP (1-877-769-7447).

*When a brand name prescription drug is dispensed and an FDA approved generic equivalent is available, the member continues to have the right to request a generic appeal or they will be responsible for the difference in cost between the generic drug and the non-preferred brand name drug, plus the non-preferred brand name co-payment.

Eligibility Changes

Changes Effective Jan. 1, 2005

Six month waiting period is required to initially enroll a domestic partner. One year waiting period to enroll a subsequent or re-enroll a domestic partner.

HMO out of pocket costs are not negotiated by CSEA. Enrollees should contact their specific HMO for clarification of office visit or prescription drug co-payment changes.

If you have any questions regarding your health benefits, please contact your agency health benefits administrator (HBA), usually located in the personnel office or you may contact the CSEA Health Benefits Department at 518-785-4774 or 1-800-286-5242 (JCHB) or you may send e-mail inquires to healthben@cseainc.org.

Promoting Good Health

Leading Edge



Lou Ann Gapp is one of two full-time EAP coordinators for the Capital Area Multi-Agency EAP. She serves employees from nine state agencies that are participating in this pilot program.

ALBANY — A labor-management initiative two years in the making has led to the formation of the Capital Area Multi-Agency Employee Assistance Program.

In this pilot program, nine state agencies join together to provide Capital Region state workers with two full-time EAP coordinators.

The New York state EAP is a confidential assessment and referral service for state employees and their families who need help with personal problems or concerns that may be affecting their work performance or overall well-being, particularly during the holiday season.

Some local government employers may also provide EAP for their workers.

The state EAP allows employees to get help from workplace program coordinators, who offer professional, confidential assistance with many personal issues. Coordinators not only provide resources and referrals, but conduct workshops on health education and wellness.

Steering and Oversight committees were established to aid in the formation and continued monitoring of the Capital Area Multi-Agency EAP. Similar multi-agency projects are in place around the state and have been successful. Capital Region activist Rose DeSorbo served on the committee representing one of the participating agencies, Empire State Development. "It's a great program, and we think it's really going to work this way," DeSorbo said.

CSEA member Lou Ann Gapp, one of the two multi-agency coordinators, began her new position in September. The Work Force's Therese Assalian caught up with her to discuss her new position and the program.

Q: Why is this multi-agency concept a good idea?

LAG: "The concept started because not all agencies had coordinators and some had part-time coordinators. Part-time coordinators have to balance the responsibilities of both jobs and workload and release time issues. With the two full-time coordinators, we're hoping to be able to provide better quality services and coverage."

Q: Where did you work before this?

LAG: "I worked for seven years in the Office of the Attorney General as a clerk. I was the part-time EAP coordinator there for six years. I was very proud to receive recognition for Superior Service from the Attorney General's office for EAP work in the aftermath of Sept. 11."

Q: What type of training do you get?

LAG: "We get ongoing training on a range of issues from assessment skills, mental health, chemical dependency, finances, elder care, grief and loss. We also meet with local community providers to learn the services they offer so when we make a referral we know who we are sending people to."

Q: Why are some people hesitant to call EAP for help?

LAG: "You know there's still some stigma attached to it. Some people think that if anyone finds out they'll be thought of as seriously ill. People use EAP services for all sorts of issues. It is completely confidential and you don't even have to call a coordinator in your own agency; you can call another one. Some people like the anonymity of talking to a stranger. Either way, people have to feel comfortable. The most important thing is that they make the call to get the help they need. It's not all about problems. EAP is a resource that's available to help you tap into what you need to make a better decision."

Q: How are referrals made?

LAG: "We've been talking about self-referrals, those are most common, but referrals also come from concerned family members, co-workers, friends, supervisors and the union. These referrals are also kept confidential. We won't get a call from someone like a co-worker and then

reach out to you. We just accept the information as background should that person contact us, but we won't share it with anyone. Confidentiality is paramount."

Q: What got you interested in EAP?

LAG: "I love working with people. I'm definitely a people person. I've been through things myself and I know how important it is to get the resources you need when you need them."

To find a state agency EAP coordinator:

On the web:

- Visit the state EAP web page at www.eap.lmc.state.ny.us.
- Click on "door to EAP."
- Click on "locate a coordinator."

On the phone:

- Call (800) 822-0244 to find an EAP coordinator.
- *You may choose to use a coordinator from an agency other than your own.

Local government workers should contact their employers for more information on EAP programs.

State agencies participating in the Capital Area Multi-Agency EAP

- Office of the Attorney General
- Department of State
- Empire State Development
- Insurance Department
- Workers' Compensation
- Office of Technology
- Office of Temporary & Disability Assistance
- Office of General Services
- Office of Real Property

What's In It For You?

Celebrate the New Year with more money in your pocket



Happy New Year from the Employee Benefit Fund. With the new year, we face new challenges, such as the rising use and costs of prescription drugs and rising co-payments for almost everything related to health care. The Employee Benefit Fund may be able to help you meet these challenges. State employees represented by CSEA should consider taking advantage of the Prescription Drug Co-Pay Reimbursement Benefit, available only to state workers.

What is the Prescription Co-Pay Reimbursement Benefit?

The Employee Benefit Fund helps members and their dependents defray some of the costs associated with excessive co-payments for prescription drugs. If you qualify for this benefit, you can be reimbursed for up to \$100 of your costs.

Who is eligible for this benefit?

CSEA state employees who are enrolled in a New York state health insurance program (either the Empire Plan or a health maintenance organization) are entitled to reimbursement once annually for NYSHIP prescription drug co-payments only.

I am eligible. How do I qualify to receive the \$100?

Once your co-payment for prescription drugs for the year (January — December) reaches \$300, the next \$100 in

prescription drug co-payments is reimbursable. To get the maximum benefit of \$100, wait until your co-payment expenses reach \$400 before filing your claim. If you don't accumulate \$400 in expenses before the end of the year, submit your claim after Dec. 31 for what you paid over \$300. See the examples in the chart below.

What do I need to do to claim my money?

Four easy steps:

- Obtain a Prescription Drug Co-Payment Reimbursement Claim Form from a CSEA EBF representative, your union or personnel office or by calling EBF at 1-800-CSEA-EBF or visiting EBF online at cseaebf.com. Once you get the form, fill it out completely.
- Make a copy of your (the member) Empire Plan or HMO insurance card.
- Get your original receipts or a pharmacy copy of the receipt clearly indicating the co-payment amount.
- Mail the completed claim form, the copy of your card and the receipts (original or copies) to:

**CSEA Employee Benefit Fund
P.O. Box 516
Latham, NY 12110-0516**

What's in it for you? An ever better future and a little of your money back in your pockets.

An Ever Better Future

Examples of prescription co-pay reimbursement benefit

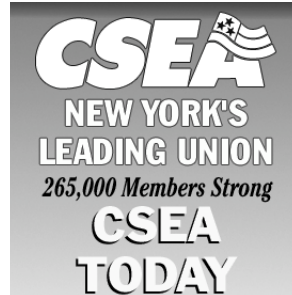
Family	Rx Co-pay Totals	Minimum Amount	Benefit Reimbursement	Notes
Anderson	\$278	\$300	\$0	Do not meet requirements
Smith	\$385	\$300	\$85	Some money is reimbursed
Williams	\$478	\$300	\$100	Maximum benefit is reimbursed

PEOPLE PERSON

— The PEOPLE recruiter of the month for October is Pedro Baez of the Westchester Local in the Southern Region. He recruited 18 new PEOPLE members.

PEOPLE is CSEA and AFSCME's political action program. It is responsible for raising money and collecting voluntary contributions from the membership so CSEA can effectively promote our interests at the state and federal level ...

HONORED — Ricky Davis, a



CSEA member who works at Empire Fulton Ferry State Park in Brooklyn, will be traveling to Saratoga in January to receive a plaque for his heroism from the state Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation.

Last summer Davis rescued an 11-year-old boy who was drowning in the East River. When the incident happened, he recently told *The Work Force*, he didn't have time to think about his own inability to swim. Both Davis and the boy came to shore safely.

Students Inside Albany deadline approaching

ALBANY — The League of Women Voters of New York state is accepting essays from 10th through 12th grade students for its 2005 **Students Inside Albany** conference.

CSEA and New York State United Teachers are among the longtime sponsors of the program, which will be held in Albany April 3 - 6, 2005.

Students from all New York state high schools are eligible to participate. Local league chapters will judge the essays, and local contest winners will win an all-expense paid trip to Albany for the four-day Students Inside Albany conference. Students who do not have a League of Women Voters in their area will be able to participate in the contest on an at-large basis.

Students will learn more about state government



through interactive lectures, learning lobbying techniques, observing lawmakers and shadowing their state Assembly representatives and senators.

CSEA actively participates in the program, educating students about labor as well as CSEA's role in state government.

An overall essay contest will be awarded a \$3,000 scholarship for post-high school education.

For more information, visit the Students Inside Albany web page at www.lwvny.org/SIA, or contact Tom Daniel at the state League by e-mail at tom@lwvny.org or by phone at (518) 465-4162 or (866) 598-6971.

Med center to cut 144 more jobs

County Nursing Facilities Struggle

Sick Tax Ill Conceived

Contracting Out Health Care Jobs A Growing Epidemic

Care battles bottom line

Reimbursement out of step with needed care

It's hard, though, to find nursing home beds for people like this couple, physically healthy relative to their peers but possibly suffering from dementia.

"Our population is getting older and sicker," said Wesley Health Care Center CEO Brian Nealon. "It's not the sweet little old lady with a little bit of dementia anymore."

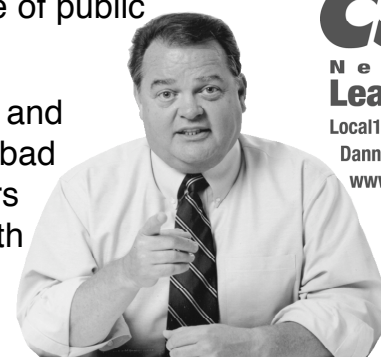
That's largely because of the way Medicaid pays for nursing home care. Simply put, people lots of interest in a person in a money the typical little The Me Please

GET PUBLIC HEALTH CARE OFF THE CRITICAL LIST

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 state.

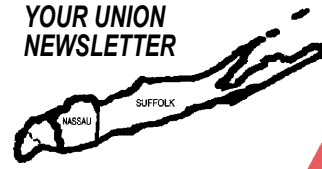
Why is such essential public health care gasping for life? Years of neglect and inadequate funding from the federal and state governments have made a bad situation worse. A 20-year-old state funding formula has left local taxpayers shouldering a back-breaking burden trying to maintain needed public health facilities and services. It's not right and it puts the sick and elderly at risk.

The time is now for real reform. The governor, state lawmakers and local officials need to act quickly and responsibly to ensure services will be there for the people who need them most.



CSEA
 New York's
Leading Union
 Local 1000, AFSCME, AFL-CIO
 Danny Donohue, President
www.csealocal1000.net

Tell your elected officials:
 Health Care Reform
 needs urgent care now!



Message from CSEA Local 830 President Jane D'Amico

NHCC Bosses: Platitudes and Pink Slips; Grievance Victory to Benefit 1,000-Plus

ON THE NHCC SIDE

The Health Care Corporation simply cannot justify the layoffs announced on Dec. 10 by NHCC management. The drastic and ill-conceived cutbacks over the past few years have already left NHCC with fewer services, empty beds and a tarnished reputation while trying to compete in an industry in which services and reputation are the hallmarks of success.

Past staffing cuts, rather than helping NHCC's financial situation, have left the Nassau University Medical Center, the A. Holly Patterson Extended Care Facility and various community health centers teetering on the brink of financial disaster. Management has gone way beyond cutting to the bone. They are now amputating vital limbs as they continue to eliminate essential services for the residents of Nassau County. At press time for this issue of *The Express*, a major demonstration against further layoffs was planned for Dec. 16 at NUMC.

CSEA members have borne the brunt of NHCC's past fiscal mismanagement for far too long. In fact, CSEA members have gone above and beyond the call of duty in their efforts to help keep NHCC solvent and maintain a high level of excellence in patient care.

In last month's issue of *The Express*, we ran a story about how one of our members obtained a \$352,000 grant for new breast imaging equipment. A few months earlier, there was a story on how the nurses and technicians of the blood donor center save NUMC more than \$2 million a year. Although every employee doesn't get a chance to write a grant or save money, our members have made a major impact on the quality of health care in the NHCC system through the dedicated and professional services they provide, important ingredients in keeping the system afloat. In addition, CSEA's cooperation in the ongoing contract negotiations has enabled NHCC to project an annual savings of almost \$15 million when a settlement occurs.

Our members deserve far more consideration from the NHCC bosses. Their treatment by management has been an ongoing disgrace and it's high time they receive the recognition they deserve, in the form of a fair contract with a clause to prevent further layoffs, instead of platitudes and pink slips.

CSEA is providing the needle and thread that is needed to suture NHCC's financial wounds. We have continuously demonstrated willingness to work cooperatively with NHCC management to implement more equitable solutions, but clearly continued layoffs are not the answer.

CSEA's consistent position has been that there are better ways to achieve efficiencies at NHCC other than through layoffs. Management initiatives should

CSEA's consistent position has been that there are better ways to achieve efficiencies at NHCC other than through layoffs.

include the reduction of top-heavy administrative positions, elimination of costly outside subcontracting and the institution of an efficient billing and collection system for outstanding patient revenues.

It's about time that management demonstrates an ability to use creative thinking and innovative approaches to balance both the need for the services that CSEA members provide, and the need for fiscal responsibility

ON THE COUNTY SIDE

In county-related matters, I'm delighted to report that one of the most important CSEA grievance victories in recent memory has already begun paying off in cash for many members. By the time all is said and done, it is estimated that more than 1,000 CSEA members will have benefited. The class action grievance against Nassau County relating to promotions originally affected only members who were promoted during the year 2001. We were also successful in preventing the county from overturning that win. Moreover, it will correct the county's erroneous practices prospectively.

The problem arose when the county used incorrect calculations in preparing the new salaries, shortchanging those who were promoted. Our attorneys and the county have been working over the past several months compiling information to correct those salaries and computing the amount of back pay owed. Members affected by this win have already begun to see the correction reflected in their paychecks. Retroactive pay making these members whole will be issued in early 2005.

The award may ultimately result in more than 1,000 members receiving adjusted salary compensation, not only from the 2001 promotions but for those incorrectly calculated since that time. And the union is still fighting for those members who were promoted before 2001.

In other matters, the real estate consolidation story continues to be one

Please see Message continued on Page 2
of keeping a watchful eye on the process as it proceeds toward completion. CSEA continues to closely monitor all proposals and decisions made by the

The Work Force



January 2005 • Vol. 10 No. 1

A Monthly Publication of CSEA Nassau County Local 830
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JOSEPH WHITTAKER, Fire Marshal

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.

Four Clerk Titles Affected

County to Eliminate Lowest Salary Steps

In a victory for CSEA, the county has decided to eliminate the lowest salary step levels — 0A and 0B — for the titles of Clerk Typist I, Clerk Typist I-bilingual, Clerk I and Clerk I-bilingual.

"We have been fighting for many years to change the starting salaries of several titles, including the clerk titles that are finally being made more equitable by this decision," said Nassau County Local President Jane D'Amico.

"This is a victory for CSEA," she said, adding that the county is to be commended for recognizing the inequities that were inherent in the 0A and 0B salary steps.

Although the county's stated reasons for making the changes did not include the subject of "pay equity," D'Amico pointed out that the new starting salary scale moves in that direction by enhancing the pay of jobs dominated by female workers.

In addition to impacting the starting salaries of newly hired employees, the action by the county will help increase the salaries of existing employees who may currently be in the reduced salary steps. This is due to a contractual clause

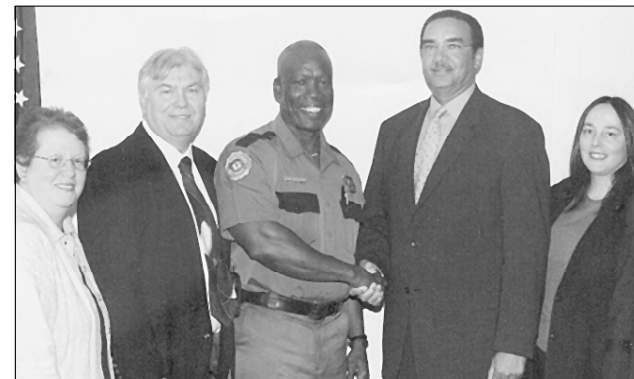
that provides parity for employees in the same job title.

"Pay equity has been a major motivational factor in CSEA's push for changes in salary structure. The clerk titles are a good starting point, but we must continue the fight to include many others," D'Amico said.

According to Deputy County Executive Anthony Cancellieri, the changes were made for the county to become competitive with other municipal jurisdictions.

"We have been saying for years that Nassau's salary structure was making it difficult for the county to hire qualified personnel in many titles, even where pay equity was not involved," D'Amico said. "CSEA would like to see an across-the-board overhaul of salary steps as a way of attracting the best people to the county work force and compensating existing employees at a higher level for the work they currently perform."

Well-Deserved Promotion



Cal Williams (in uniform) shakes hands with Police Commissioner James Lawrence following his swearing in as the newest lieutenant in Nassau's Public Safety Unit. Participating in the ceremony were, from left, CSEA Local 830 President Jane D'Amico; Public Safety Chief Randy Daub; Williams; Commissioner Lawrence, and CSEA Unit Vice President Lisa Sinagra-Tirpak. D'Amico praised Williams for his many years of dedicated service and congratulated him on a well-deserved promotion. She also commended the Police department and Lawrence for taking action on promotions, an issue which CSEA had been pressing for many years.

Message continued from page 1

county in an effort to protect the employees who will move to the new worksite.

We are continuing the fight against the county's postponed plans to consolidate all vehicle repair work under the umbrella of one department of Fleet Services. We are skeptical at best that this plan is workable, cost effective or in the best interests of the departments it is intended to serve. The needs of each department are different, as are the training requirements, clearances and Civil Service job specifications for workers. The same is true for the county's proposal to consolidate maintenance services by moving our employees in the Police Department maintenance area to DPW, a proposal we also believe to be unworkable and are currently

fighting against.

We are also challenging the county on their recently distributed drug and alcohol policy, which they failed to negotiate with the union.

On a positive note, we prevailed in getting the county to adjust their released schedule of holidays for 2005. Under the county plan, employees would have received 14 paid holidays in 2004 and only 12 in 2005. This proposal conflicted with the terms of our contract, which calls for 13 paid holidays each year. Under the county plan, employees would not have been properly compensated at the higher salary rates attached to 2005.

As always, I will continue to keep you updated in the New Year on new developments through this

column, in fliers and at worksite meetings called "President's Forums."

Yours in solidarity,

Jane M. D'Amico, President
CSEA Local 830

Emergency Meeting

CSEA officers meet in emergency session to address the announcement of 300 layoffs by the Nassau Health Care Corporation. Discussing details of a protest rally at NUMC are, from left, NUMC Unit President George Walsh, Local 830 Treasurer Stan Bergman, Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte, Local 830 President Jane D'Amico and AHPECF Unit President Les Eason. The rally was set to be held just after this edition of *The Express* went to press. The next issue will include photos of the rally and the latest details on the proposed layoffs.



Members to Learn About New CSEA Elder Law Plan

A new Legal Services Plan that provides Elder Law services for CSEA Local 830 members will be explained at a special meeting set for Tuesday, Jan. 11, from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the union office multi-purpose room at 400 County Seat Drive in Mineola. The program will feature a presentation by attorney Penny Kassel, an expert in estate planning and elder law administration.

Local 830 President Jane D'Amico is urging people with elderly relatives to attend the program. "Consulting with an attorney is the best cause of action when making decisions on behalf of aging parents, such as placing them in nursing homes" D'Amico said. An attorney can offer valuable advice on protecting assets and other important matters, she said.

Because of limited seating, the local advises early registration. To sign up, call Jewel or Judy at 571-2919 Monday through Friday during business hours.

Why was the plan created?

You and your family have worked a long time to own your home, put away retirement money and provide for children and aging parents. Protection of life savings, the family residence and your children's inheritance can be threatened. Events such as illness or disability requiring long term care can happen to you or a family member at any time.

What can the plan do for me and my family?

The CSEA Elder Law Plan attorneys will:

Meet with you to review your present situation and make recommendations for what you should do;

Prepare necessary legal documents, such as a Will, Power of Attorney, Health Care Proxy, Family

CSEA



Trust or Living Trust;

Counsel you about estate planning strategies, IRA and pension fund planning, guardianships, long term care insurance options and asset protection in case of catastrophic illness.

Why should I take advantage of the plan?

Life events, such as an illness, at any age can suddenly threaten your savings, home and future plans. As a CSEA member, you have access to quality legal advice and services at discounted fees. You should consider using this plan before an unplanned life event may occur.

How much will it cost?

All plan attorneys have agreed to discount their regular fees by 20 percent for CSEA members and their families. Without the benefit of the CSEA Plan discount, these services would cost much more.

See Special Insert in this month's Work Force.

Planning to Retire? Here Are Some Tips

CSEA Local 830 President Jane D'Amico is advising members who plan to retire soon to make sure they receive all of their earned public service credits.



"It would be advisable to put together a complete set of your government service records to present to the Retirement System, especially if you worked for other municipalities within New York state," D'Amico said.

One year of full time employment equals one year of service credit, and other government service within the state might qualify. The amount of an employee's pension is directly related to the amount of service credit.

"All public service must be claimed before you retire or you will lose it. Once you retire, it's too late," D'Amico said.

D'Amico also advised potential retirees that under a new state law they now have up to 30 days after the date a retirement benefit is payable to change their retirement option. The option is the way retirees choose to have their pension paid to them or their beneficiary.

Under the old law, once members chose their retirement option, it was irrevocable after the last day of the month during which they retired.

For more information on retirement options and benefits, visit the following web site: www.osc.state.ny.us/retire/.

April 15 is Deadline For CSEA Scholarships

The filing deadline for CSEA scholarships is April 15. Scholarships offered include:

- The Irving Flaumenbaum Memorial Scholarship, which is \$1,000. Three scholarships will be awarded in the Long Island Region.
- The JLT Award in memory of Charles Foster, which is \$2,500. This scholarship will be awarded to a high school student entering the SUNY system.
- The unrestricted Met Life Award in memory of Joseph D. Lochner, which is \$2,500.

All scholarships are intended for graduating high school seniors who are the children of CSEA members. Students can apply for all three scholarships on one application, which can be obtained at the CSEA office at 400 County Seat Drive in Mineola. The local office can be reached by phone at 571-2919.

A booklet listing all CSEA/AFSCME scholarships, along with requirements and filing deadlines, is also available at the local office.



Coalition of Black Trade Unionists Dinner

Members of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists' Long Island chapter gather at the organization's recent annual fall gala and awards dinner at the Chateaubriand restaurant. Those in the group include chapter President Rudy Bruce, who also serves as a Nassau Local vice president and a Department of Public Works Unit president; Nassau Local President Jane D'Amico; Local 830 Executive Vice President and CBTU officer Les Eason; Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte; Nassau Local Treasurer Stan Bergman and Secretary Bobbi Eisgrau and many others. CBTU's leadership award was presented to New York state Comptroller Alan Hevesi. Receiving the Barbara Jones Service Award were attorney Fred Brewington and Bishop Michael V. Talbert of 1st Church Ministries, Wyandanch.

Member's Husband In Need

Blood Drive Set for Jan. 4 In Search of Marrow Donor

A blood donation and bone marrow testing drive has been set for Tuesday, Jan. 4, 2005, in an effort to find a potential bone marrow donor for the husband of a CSEA member whose life hangs in the balance.

Valerie Markert's husband, Chris, was diagnosed with leukemia in July and the family must now find a suitable donor.

"Please let people know that bone marrow testing only requires a blood test to determine if they are a match for someone in need of a transplant," Valerie told *The Express*.

Said Valerie: "The transplant procedure itself has more than one method of collecting the marrow. One way is from the donor's blood. The process is similar to the collection of platelets. It's not a surgical process."

Valerie noted that for more information on the different processes and information on bone marrow collection, members can visit www.nybloodcenter.org/1e7.htm.

"I can't stress it enough, it is a matter of life or death for the person waiting for the transplant. Any individual can save a life by taking the time to donate," said Valerie.

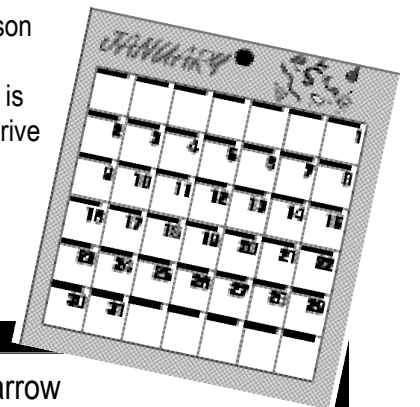
Valerie has been a county employee for 18 years in the accounting section of the Health Department. Chris, 42, and Valerie have two young children. He has been unable to work since July and has spent more than six weeks in the hospital.

According to Valerie's friend, Judy Bejarano, Nassau County assistant director of accounting, bone marrow transplants differ from heart and lung transplants in that a patient does not register once in the transplant bank, wait for a donor match, and then pay for the organ at the time of the transplant. A

blood sample is required first to see if a person can be a potential marrow donor.

CSEA Local 830 President Jane D'Amico is urging members to participate in the blood drive to help save Chris Markert's life.

In the box below is the complete information.



WHAT: Blood Donation & Bone Marrow Testing Drive on behalf of Chris Markert

DATE: Tuesday, Jan. 4, 2005

TIME: 7 am. to 9 pm

LOCATION: Nassau County Police Department Headquarters Building in the Assembly Hall

MORE INFORMATION: Call Marian Haberman, Long Island Blood Services (516) 478-5018

Veterans Corner**Buy a Phone Card to Help our Troops**

By Edward G. Aulman
 Nassau County Veterans Service Agency

"How can I help the troops in Iraq and Afghanistan" is a question I get often. The easiest and quickest way is to go to the post office and buy an operation phone home phone card. Donations begin at \$10, and the cards are given to troops serving overseas. You can help military families by contacting Army Emergency Relief online at www.aerhq.org, Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society at www.nmcrs.org/iraqwar.html, Air Force Aid Society at www.afas.org and Coast Guard Mutual Assistance at www.cgmahq.org.

More Research on Gulf War Illness

The Research Advisory Committee on Gulf War Illness, a committee formed by Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Anthony Principi, is proposing to spend \$60 million over the next four years to monitor and research the health of thousands of Gulf War veterans and their children. The Pentagon reports 100,000 soldiers were exposed to nerve gas when Iraq weapon caches were destroyed. Other soldiers were overexposed to pesticides. Undiagnosed Gulf War illnesses include chronic fatigue, loss of muscle control, diarrhea, migraines, dizziness, memory problems and loss of balance. Gulf War veterans with these symptoms are urged to call the VA Medical Center in Northport at 631-261-4400 or in Queens at 718-439-4300.

Home Depot Wants to Hire Veterans

According to a release from the New York Division of Veterans Affairs, the Home Depot has unveiled a new program to hire U.S. military retirees, veterans and their spouses. The Home Depot hired 10,000 veterans in 2003 and expects to surpass that number in 2004. The Home Depot pledged to work with its military associates to provide transfers in the case of reassignments of duty stations, retirement or separation, depending on store and job availability.

Tricare Region North

Retired military and spouses have a new phone number and web site for any health insurance related questions. The new number is (877) 874-2273. The new web site is www.tricare.osd.mil and www.healthnetfederalerservices.com, which provides information on enrollment and network providers, procedures for filing claims, claim status and history, access to virtual TSC and locations of Tricare service centers and various programs that allow beneficiaries to manage their own care.

EPIC

Veterans with an honorable discharge, a VA rated disability or an income on Long Island of under \$49,000 (married) can enroll in the VA Health Care System and take advantage of \$7 per month prescriptions. Veterans' spouses are ineligible for this benefit. The Elderly Pharmaceutical Insurance Coverage (EPIC) program can save 80 percent of the cost of most medications, if the household income is less than \$50,000 annually. For information, call (800) 332-3742 Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. You can download the application at the New York state Department of Health web site at www.health.state.ny.us/nysdoh/epic/doh-3409.pdf.

Service Disabled Veterans Insurance

Many veterans are applying for and receiving disability ratings from the VA for hearing loss, PTSD or for disabilities associated with exposure to agent orange. Veterans are also entitled to Service Disabled Veterans Insurance. Available for up to two years after receiving the disability rating, this \$10,000 policy can be deducted from their disability payment.

POW Benefit

Gov. George Pataki signed into law Chapter 485 of the Laws of 2004 (Tocci/Larkin) exempting all former prisoners of war, regardless of age, from the payment of motor vehicle registration fees for distinctive plates.

Mandatory Funding's Uphill Battle

From the *Congressional Quarterly* is this note: U.S. Sen Larry E. Craig (R-Idaho) is the new chairman of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee. Veterans' influence in Idaho is limited and Sen. Craig has already expressed skepticism about increased veterans benefits. Maybe this senator needs a junket to Iraq.

Operation Shoebox

CSEA recently collected hundreds of boxes full of personal care and non-perishable food donations and packed them up for shipment to the troops in Iraq. Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte, Maryann Phelps (in front), 4th vice president of the SUNY Stony Brook Local, Candice Wetherell of the Labor-Religion Coalition (in back), Nancy Ianson, 8th vice president of the Nassau County Local, Bobby Rauff, 1st vice president of the Oyster Bay Local, and Steve Abramson, chairman of the Long Island Region Veterans' Committee, show off some of the donations that were shipped to Iraq.

A Message From Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte



Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

I realize that New Year's resolutions are not often kept, even though they may be made with the best intentions. But some resolutions are worth the effort.

The primary thing that we, as union members, should make an effort to do this year is to renew our commitment to ourselves and our families to fight the good fight. By that, I mean the fight for justice and respect. We simply can't afford to give up.

The anti-union, anti-working class attitudes that are so prevalent will no doubt fuel more anti-worker legislation in the days to come. It will be up to every one of us to stay alert, communicate with one another and support one another's struggles.

You may have a contract that protects you from certain managerial abuses, but everyone's contractual rights are revisited every few years during negotiations. Just because something doesn't affect you directly now doesn't make you

immune. None of us is ever immune.

Just as labor protections against overwork, lack of pay and health and safety were implemented years ago, they can also be taken away.

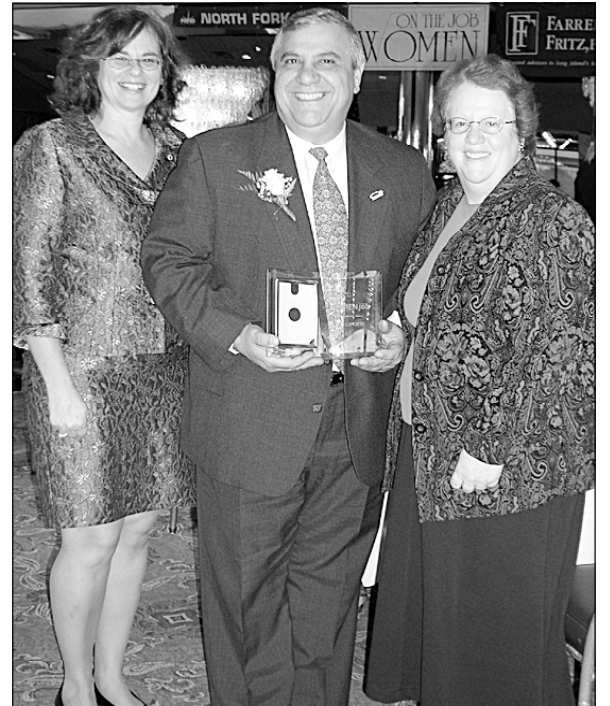
It is up to us to make sure that any attempt to roll back our rights on the job is met with ferocious opposition! Now is not the time to sit comfortably on your couch and let someone else do the fighting.

CSEA, on the Long Island and state levels, is ready to plunge into the fight with you. The question is — what are you prepared to do?

Remember — there is no union without you!

In solidarity,

Nick LaMorte, president
Long Island Region



Nancy Ianson, 8th vice president of the Nassau Local, left, and Nassau Local President Jane D'Amico, right, congratulate CSEA Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte for his award from Women on the Job. LaMorte was named Labor Honoree of the year for defending and seeking to advance the rights of working women. LaMorte is the first man honored by the group for his work in advancing the interests of working women.



2005 Official CSEA Holiday Schedule NASSAU COUNTY EMPLOYEES

The following are the official dates of celebration for CSEA negotiated holidays in 2005 for the current contract with Nassau County.

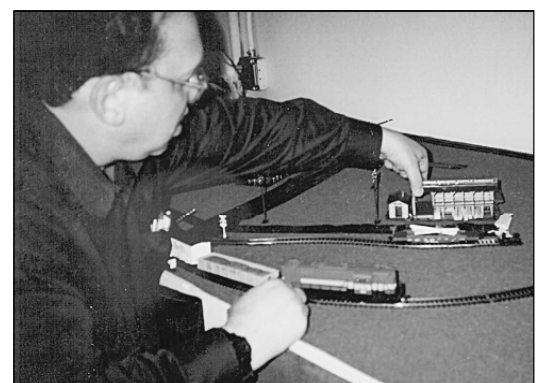
HOLIDAY	DAY	DATE
* New Year's Day	Saturday	Jan. 1
Martin Luther King Day	Monday	Jan. 17
* Lincoln's Birthday	Saturday	Feb. 12
Washington/Presidents' Day	Monday	Feb. 21
Memorial Day	Monday	May 30
Independence Day	Monday	July 4
Labor Day	Monday	Sept. 5
Columbus Day	Monday	Oct. 10
Election Day	Tuesday	Nov. 8
Veterans' Day	Friday	Nov. 11
Thanksgiving Day	Thursday	Nov. 24
Day After Thanksgiving	Friday	Nov. 25
**Christmas Day	Sunday	Dec. 25

* The county will be open the Friday preceding and the Monday following the holiday. The employee will receive a compensatory floating holiday to be taken within one (1) year after the holiday.

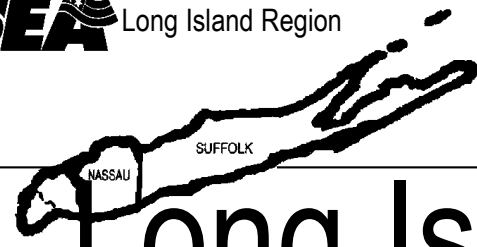
**The county will be closed on Monday, Dec. 26, 2005

If you have any questions regarding the above holiday schedule, please call CSEA at 571-2919.

Holiday Spirit



Getting into the holiday spirit, Local 830 Treasurer Stan Bergman opened his office after work hours for members to see his carefully planned miniature train village. Bergman, a toy train hobbyist, shared some of his collection with visitors during December in his Mineola office.



Long Island Reporter

Suffolk County librarians can find it all



Carol Billotti selects a cassette for one of SCLS' 4,000 Talking Library patrons. Billotti retired last month after 38 years with the system.

BELLPORT — A chemist wants an article that appeared in the American Chemical Society's journal in 1929. A pensioner living on a reduced income wants to stay in touch with family and friends who live a thousand miles away.

Meanwhile, a member of a family that's lived in Suffolk County for 200 years wants to know who lived on her great-great-grandfather's farm in the early 19th century, while a student needs some information for a paper due the next morning but the local library is closed.

Last, a visually impaired woman is looking forward to enjoying a best-selling novel.

These information seekers will be aided by the 60 members of CSEA Local 701 at the Suffolk Cooperative Library System. The library, located in a rambling one-story building on Sunrise Highway's north service road at Exit 55 in Bellport, supports 56 public library systems in the county with books, cassettes and periodicals and the expertise to find information for those seeking it.

The request for the 1929 article came from a patron whose own library was not able to locate the item.

About one-quarter of the items are found in SCLS' catalog, a complete list of library materials. But the journal was not in the catalog, so it was moved along to the Interlibrary Loan section. Interlibrary Loan sent the request to the New York State Library in Albany and the Nassau County system but neither had it.

The next step is OCLC, the Online Catalogue Library Center.

"It goes all around the world and asks if they will send it to us or, if it's a magazine, will they photocopy and send it to us," said Teresa Sanwald, a principal clerk who has worked at the library system for 18 years. "We do the same for them."

The library doesn't borrow books from overseas because usually there is a charge, but it does loan its books overseas.

Please see Librarians continued on Page 3

Free Internet access

The library system is a nationwide leader in enabling library patrons to keep abreast of the Internet and its constantly growing ability to retrieve information.

In 1995, the library created SuffolkNet, which provides Suffolk libraries and 140,000 of their patrons free access

Librarians continued from page 1

to the Internet for research and communication with other subscribers.

That includes high-speed access to a large virtual reference collection of books and articles and free e-mail with a spam filter. It also maintains a content filter to block out objectionable material for youngsters if an individual library chooses.

"We were one of the first to offer these services to patrons," said Louis A. DeRobertis, who manages the library's combination of computer, Internet and telecommunications services. "Our services offer a good start for new computer people," he said. "Say someone gets a computer for Christmas. It takes only a few minutes to sign on and the service is free. They can use the system to find out about workshops for learning to use computers. Seniors are doing well with our system. Seniors on fixed incomes are talking to friends all over the country."

The department, which consists of three full-time and three part-time employees, also advises member libraries on buying computer systems.

The web site is www.suffolk.lib.ny.us.

'Pushing pages'

When libraries are closed, school children and others seeking information are aided by the Live Librarians program, which makes use of the system's virtual reference collection.

It's called "pushing pages." If the patron's request cannot be met, the patron can leave an e-mail that will be answered when the next live librarian takes over.

Talking books serve visually impaired

For Suffolk and Nassau residents who are unable to read because of a visual impairment or are physically unable to go to their own library, SCLS operates the Long Island Talking Book Library. It provides its 4,000 patrons with cassettes of all kinds of books, "just like a library," said Janet Clark, program supervisor.

Users range in age from preschool up to the elderly. "We have everything from children's books to adult best-sellers, love stories, mysteries, histories, humor — anything you find in a local library," Clark said.

1790 census and local polling places

SCLS has been designated a depository library by the federal, state and county governments to collect government documents and studies and make them available to library users.

There is also some material from the Town of Brookhaven, including recent highway studies.

"The government collection is oriented toward consumer problems as well as statistics, health, labor and Congressional information," said Diane Eidelman, government information librarian, who holds master's degrees in American history and

library science.

The collection also has a sizable genealogical section, which includes all the federal censuses from the first in 1790, up to the 1930s, the last one released. The census is only made public 72 years after it was taken.

Suffolk County put voter information on the web, so patrons could call their local library to find out where their polling place was for November's election. "That was a really good thing Suffolk County did," Eidelman said.

An occasional problem is the removal of governmental materials from the web site. Sometimes the reason is political, sometimes it's because a web site administrator decides the public will no longer want information that is 5 years old.

Everything in the government collection can go out to the 56 member libraries so patrons can use them in their own library although most material is used online.

"Part of my job is to let librarians know about these databases the government has released so they can tell their patrons," Eidelman said. "One of our jobs is to maintain public access — free public access — to this information."

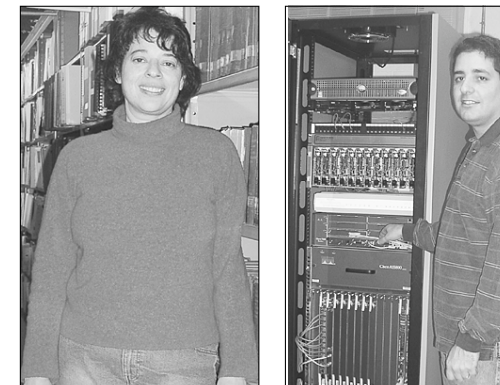
— Charles Michaelson

News

Facts of the Suffolk Stacks:

There are:

- ✓ 56 libraries in Suffolk County Library System
- ✓ 40,000 annual member-library requests
- ✓ 7.3 million books, cassettes, periodicals, videos and other materials held in library system
- ✓ 140,000 library patrons
- ✓ 145,000 books on tape lent annually



Pictured clockwise from top right: Diane Eidelman is shown among the thousands of government documents that SCLS collects and maintains; Louis DeRobertis, shown in the library's computer room, and his staff maintain a vast array of computer, internet and telecommunications equipment; Local officers are shown with several members of the Interlibrary Loan staff. Teresa Sanwald is seated; standing, left to right, are Vice President Debi Groh, Karen Cayea, President Jim Baletta, Kristina Farmer and Recording Secretary Eileen Milewski.



PHOTO OF THE MONTH



With summer now a memory, Town of Oyster Bay Local members in the parks, recreation and beaches division are hard at work making sure structures and equipment will be in good shape when next summer arrives. The crew boarding up a concession stand at Tobay Park to protect it from winter weather includes Rich Figlia, on ladder, and, left to right, Joseph Atitabile, Darren Munson, Gary Bergenstock and Alex Bard, local 4th vice president. Tobay Park, just east of Jones Beach, fronts on both the Atlantic Ocean and South Oyster Bay. The local represents 210 year-round members in the division. During the summer, more than 300 seasonal employees are added to the work force.

Message from Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte



Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

I realize that New Year's resolutions are not often kept, even though they may be made with the best intentions. But some resolutions are worth the effort.

The primary thing that we, as union members, should make an effort to do this year is to renew our commitment to ourselves and our families to fight the good fight. By that, I mean the fight for justice and respect. We simply can't afford to give up.

The anti-union, anti-working class attitudes that are so prevalent will no doubt fuel more anti-worker legislation in the days to come. It will be up to every one of us to stay alert, communicate with one another and support one another's struggles.

You may have a contract that protects you from certain managerial abuses, but everyone's contractual rights are revisited every few years during negotiations. Just because something doesn't affect you directly now, doesn't make you immune. None of us is ever immune.

Just as labor protections against overwork, lack of pay and health and safety were implemented years ago, they can also be

taken away.

It is up to us to make sure that any attempt to roll back our rights on the job is met with ferocious opposition! Now is not the time to sit comfortably on your couch and let someone else do the fighting.

CSEA, on the Long Island and state levels, is ready to plunge into the fight with you. The question is — what are you prepared to do?

Remember — there is no union without you!

In solidarity,

Nick LaMorte, President
Long Island Region

Nick LaMorte

Donations from Home

CSEA recently collected hundreds of boxes full of personal care and non-perishable food donations and packed them for shipment to the troops in Iraq.

Packed along with the toothpaste, snacks and lip balm, some members' children and grandchildren included special handwritten messages of support and inspiration. Members also included board games and phone cards for those few moments of leisure.

It took many hours for CSEA members to pack and load all of the goods, filling nearly two, 2 1/2-ton Army trucks.

"Our whole conference room was filled to overflowing, reflecting the warmth and generosity of the CSEA membership," Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte said. "It also showed the great work that our Veterans' Committee did in getting the word out to collect everything."

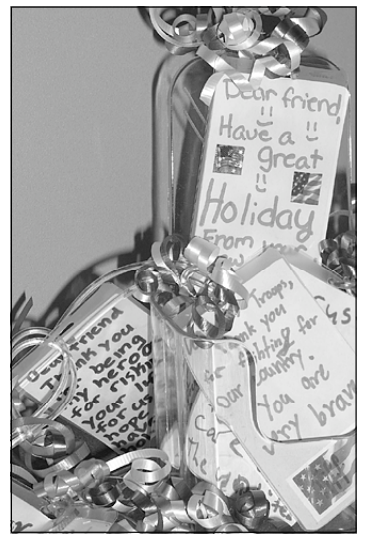
The drive was led by Veterans' Committee Chairman Steve Abramson of the Long Beach Unit, Nelson Gutierrez, 2nd vice president of the Pilgrim Psychiatric Center Local; Willie Gwynn, 2nd vice president of the Long Island DDSO Local and Maryann Phelps, 4th vice president of the SUNY Stony Brook Local.

"We felt that it was important to let the troops know we are thinking about them, and spread some holiday cheer from the people back home," said Phelps. "It's important for their morale to know that we are standing behind them, especially at a time when they're probably missing home so much."

The goods were shipped through the New York Army National Guard, 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry Division, based out of Farmingdale.

"The response to our call for donations was overwhelming," LaMorte said. "We really hope that our soldiers will feel our sincere appreciation. Thanks to everyone who contributed."

— Rachel Langert



Some members' children and grandchildren included heartwarming hand-decorated holiday cards in the shipment.

Left to right, Steve Abramson; Bobby Rauff, 1st vice president of the Oyster Bay Local and Maryann Phelps, 4th vice president of the SUNY Stony Brook Local were swamped with donations for the troops.



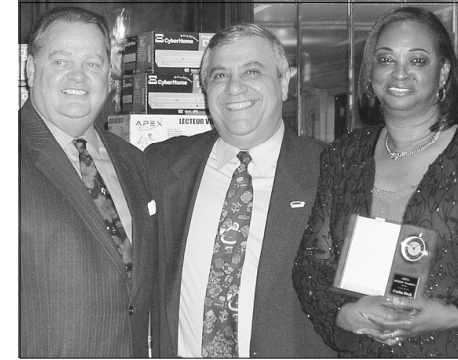
Inside Reporter

Long Island Region Celebrates the Season!

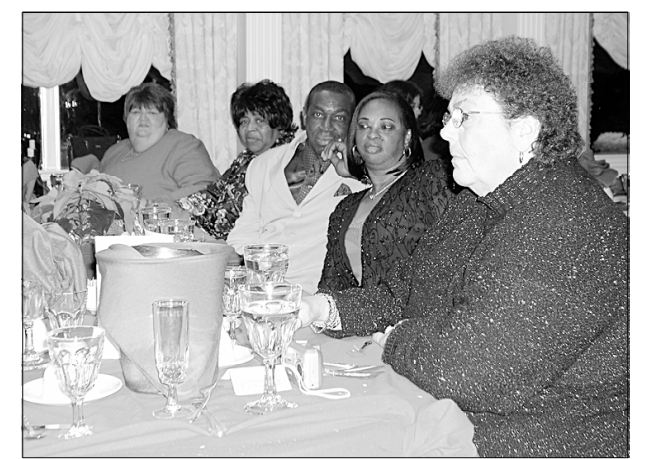


Clockwise from top left: CSEA President Danny Donohue, Shirley Baker, Long Island Developmental Center (LIDC) Local 430 executive vice president, Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte, Willie Allen, president LIDC, Rutha Bush, LIDC Local treasurer and Verna Morant, local secretary, receive the award for the local signing up the most PEOPLE members this year; Lee Reynolds (left), co-chairperson of the Long Island Region Social Committee, and statewide Treasurer Maureen Malone toast the holidays; Pat Fisher, Local 852 executive vice president, joins the buffet line. Behind her is Dan LoMonte of Local 882; Ken Dash of Local 830 didn't let a little thing like a cane keep him off the dance floor. His partner is Valerie Ciaramella, also of Local 830; From the Brookhaven White Collar Unit of Local 852, are, seated from left, Donn Larsen, Mike Kobasiuk and Bob Brandow and, standing, Meg Shutka and Joanne Fago; Among the members of the Long Island Region Social Committee, which made the arrangements for the gala evening are, from left, clockwise, Meg Shutka, Local 852; Lee Reynolds, committee co-chair, Local 865; Debbie Nappi-Gonzalez, Local 614; Laura Gallagher, committee co-chair, Local 618, and Barbara Maniscalco, Local 330, and President Nick LaMorte.

Clockwise on page 5, from top left: Cheryl Palmer, statewide PEOPLE coordinator, reads names of Long Island Region locals



with more than 10 percent of members participating in CSEA's federal legislative fund-raising campaign. Leading the applause are CSEA Statewide President Danny Donohue, left, and Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte; LIDC-LIDDSO Treasurer Rutha Bush with Nick LaMorte and Danny Donohue. Rutha signed up the most people into the PEOPLE program this year; The PEOPLE cup, for bringing most new members into the union's fund-raising drive for federal legislation during the last campaign year, is held aloft by Rutha Bush of Local 430, chairperson, and Andre Sigmone of Local 016. With Region President Nick LaMorte, left, Statewide President Danny Donohue, right, and Statewide PEOPLE Coordinator Cheryl Palmer, behind Donohue, are Stanley Bergman, Local 830; Shirley Baker and Verna Morant, Local 430; Nancy Ianson, Local 830, and Carol Low, Local 614; Social Committee member Kevin Ray of Local 330 counts receipts from sale of raffle tickets. Dozens of prizes were contributed by locals and vendors; Region Secretary Lee Reynolds really had her work cut out for her at the holiday party. She had to raffle off all those items; Catherine Custance, Dora Wilson, Willie Allen, Rutha Bush and Millie Lucas were among those attending the gathering; LIDC-LIDDSO members Willie Gwynn 2nd vice president, Richard Giovanetti 1st vice president, and Verna Morant secretary; Presidents LaMorte and Donohue also recognized the many years of hard work contributed by the members of the Nassau Retirees Local. From left to right: Nick Pollicino, former Local 919 President (next to Danny), Jack Geraghty, former Local 919 vice president and Sid Miron, former Local 919 treasurer (shaking Nick's hand).



PEOPLE power reigns in Long Island Region again

COMMACK — For the second consecutive year, the CSEA Long Island Region has been honored for enrolling the most new members in Public Employees Organized to Promote Legislative Equality, CSEAs fund-raising program for federal political action.

During the 12 months from Sept. 1, 2003, & AFSCME's to Aug. 31, 2004, 460 members from the region joined PEOPLE, the union's voice in federal government.

The region has seven locals and one unit that won recognition from CSEA for having at least 12 percent of their members participating. The honored locals are Long Island State Employees, Long Island Judiciary, Pilgrim Psychiatric Center, Long Island Developmental Center and Sagamore Children's Psychiatric Center, SUNY College of Technology at Farmingdale, SUNY Stony Brook, SUNY Old Westbury and the Village of Lindenhurst Unit of the Suffolk County Local.

"The region PEOPLE Committee has been working very hard to achieve these awards," said Cheryl Palmer, CSEA's PEOPLE coordinator.

The program's spark plug in the Long Island Region is nine-year committee chairwoman Rutha Bush of the Long Island Developmental Center Local, who won recruiter of the year from CSEA. Other committee members are Andre Sigmone, Long Island State Employees Local; Richard Lorde, Long Island Inter-County State Park Local; Millie Lucas, Pilgrim Psychiatric Center Local; Shirley Baker and

Verna Morant of the Long Island Developmental Center Local; Carol Low, SUNY Stony Brook Local, and Stanley Bergman, Nancy Ianson, Robert McLaughlin and George Walsh of the Nassau County Local.

The Long Island Developmental Center Local was honored as the CSEA local with the most new PEOPLE members statewide, with 65 percent of the local's members belonging. "We tell our members why PEOPLE is crucial to working people," said Bush, the local's treasurer.

She gets PEOPLE's message out at information fairs, holiday parties, picnics and region activities. "We're pretty busy year round," said Bush, who attends about 25 events per year.

There are two levels of participation. VIP Club members contribute \$1 a week or \$2 a pay period, while MVP Club members give \$1.93 a week or \$3.85 a pay period. All contributors receive a jacket with the PEOPLE logo as a thank you for participating.

Bush became involved 10 years ago when Republicans in Congress proposed taxing accrued vacation and holiday time. "That was one of things they were trying to do to us and I didn't want that to happen, so I was interested and got involved," she said.

Bush added that Gene Townsend, the previous committee chair, and Palmer motivated her to want to educate members about PEOPLE's importance in their lives.

Rosanne Cassidy, center, holds jacket she got after joining PEOPLE at the Long Island Judiciary Local's recent holiday party at Nassau Supreme Court. With her are Cheryl Palmer, left, CSEA PEOPLE coordinator, and Rutha Bush, Long Island Region PEOPLE committee chairwoman.



Nassau County members take a dip for a worthy cause

LONG BEACH — Kevin McCarthy, a member of the Nassau County Municipal Employees Local's City of Long Beach Unit, launched a polar bear club with a friend at a New Year's Eve party several years ago.

"We decided to start a polar bear club on our own," said McCarthy, a water purification plant operator and 17-year CSEA member. "The Coney Island polar bears go into the water on New Year's Day. We decided to do it a little differently and go in on Super Bowl Sunday."

McCarthy and his friend, Pete Meyers, went into the ocean on Super Bowl Sunday in 1998. "We started with the two of us and it's grown to about 1,000 people," he said.

The Long Beach Polar Bear Club is holding its next swim on Super Bowl Sunday, Feb. 6, 2005. The polar bears will jump into the frigid Atlantic while another 1,500 or 2,000 people — dry and warmer — will watch from the boardwalk.

The air temperature is usually 25 to 30 degrees, and the ocean temperature is usually around 38 or 40 degrees. "It's refreshing, exhilarating — two words that come to mind," said McCarthy. "It's not for the faint of heart. Most people dive in and splash around. Ten seconds is a long time for a lot of people. For me, I like to stay in a little longer."

About 20 CSEA members are among those taking the plunge. Among them is Steve Abramson, a 27-year Long Beach employee who'll be jumping in for the fifth time this year. "We wait for the biggest wave, jump in and get out," he said.

Several years ago, Pattie and Mike Bradley, who had lost their young son, Paulie, suggested the swim become a fund-raiser for the Make-a-Wish Foundation, which tries to make the wishes of terminally ill children come true. McCarthy and Meyers agreed and the polar bears have responded with great generosity. In the past four years, the

polar bears have donated \$150,000 to the foundation, raising about \$77,000 in 2003 alone.

"It's all through sales of sweatshirts, T-shirts and donations," said Bill McCarthy, Kevin's brother and 3rd vice president of the unit. "You can't take two steps without spotting someone with a polar bear sweatshirt around here."

After the swim, many polar bears and spectators head for the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1384 clubhouse. The VFW members provide refreshments, and sweatshirts and T-shirts with the polar bear logo are sold. "It's a community service," said Abramson. "The VFW loves helping the polar bears out."

In October, the Long Beach Catholic Regional School, the organization representing the city's Catholic schools, awarded its Community Service Award to the two original polar bears. "That was a big honor," said McCarthy.

He invited all CSEA members to join the polar bears on Super Bowl Sunday.

"I'd like everyone to come down and enjoy a nice dip in the ocean and bring donations and make this a big civil service employee day," he said. "It would be great to have everyone from all over Long Island come."

More information about the club is available from its web site, longbeachpolarbears.org.

SEFA drive approaching goal

COMMACK — The State Employees Federated Appeal (SEFA) was approaching its \$500,000 goal for Long Island as the campaign entered its final days, said Region President Nick LaMorte, co-chairman of the drive on Long Island.

"There is a pool of 22,000 state employees in Nassau and Suffolk counties, but the sad part is that not everyone contributes," LaMorte said. "What could we raise if everyone participated?"

The employee contributions support many charitable organizations on Long Island.

CSEA is the largest union representing state employees in Nassau and Suffolk counties. Last year, state employees contributed \$476,000 to SEFA.



Giving thumbs-up for SEFA drive on Long Island are, left to right, Andre Sigmone, Karen Johnson and Marty Godek of Local 016; Nick LaMorte, co-chair of the drive in Nassau and Suffolk; Karen Holmgaard, Nassau County courts; Pat Herlihy, Suffolk County courts; Ben Calderone, Local 430, and Karen Johnson, Local 016.

Around the Region

Calendar of Upcoming Events: January 2005

- 1 - Region Office closed — New Year's Day
- 10 - Women's Committee Meeting — 5:30 p.m.
- 11 - PEOPLE Committee Meeting — 5 p.m.
- 17 - Region Office closed — Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- 18 - Health & Safety Committee Meeting — 5 p.m.



- 19 - Region Exec. Board Meeting — 5:30 p.m.
- 27 - Local 430 Shop Steward Meeting — 5:30 p.m. — Ronnie Oliver 495-1802



LaMorte honored

CSEA Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte was honored recently for his efforts to help women achieve pay equity and respect in the workplace, by the advocacy group Women on the Job.

LaMorte was named Labor Honoree of the year for the three decades in which he has been defending and seeking to advance the rights of working women and families.

It was the first time since the advocacy group was formed in 1981, that it has honored a man for his work on behalf of women's rights on the job.

Pictured with Nick is Lillian McCormick, executive director of Women on the Job.

Local 016 Labor-Management meeting

COMMACK — The recent statewide Department of Motor Vehicles labor-management meeting went quite well, said Local 016 Treasurer Sandy Richardson, who represented department members from the region at the Albany meeting.

"We covered an awful lot of ground and, hopefully, we'll have good results from it," said Richardson, the local's shop steward in the department's Amityville office. "It was a

very productive meeting."

Richardson, who also represents CSEA members employed by motor vehicles departments in the union's five other regions, and Bob Dillon of CSEA's contract administration department attended the meeting.

2005 Entertainment Books available to Nassau, Suffolk County members for the holidays

COMMACK — CSEA members in Nassau and Suffolk counties can again buy copies of this year's Entertainment Book through the Long Island Region.

The books have many discount coupons for restaurants, shops and theaters on Long Island.

"They are a great holiday gift," said Lee Reynolds, co-chairperson of the Long Island Region Social Committee.

Members can pick the books up in person for \$20 at the CSEA Long Island region office at 3 Garet Place in Commack.

"If anyone wants them shipped, there will be an additional \$5 for the shipping fees," Reynolds said.

For more information, contact Reynold at (516) 752-6503.



Holiday Celebration

Above, Darrell Midgette, left, and Oscar Hodges, right, among the winners of raffle prizes at the Hempstead Village Unit's party, are congratulated by John Shepherd, president of the unit and Local 882.



At right, Ruth Roberson, left, and Selina Leonard fill their plates from the buffet at the holiday party given by the Hempstead Village Unit of Local 882.



The local 882 election committee (flanked by the local's secretary and executive vice president). From left to right: Eileen Milewski, secretary, Michele Toscanini, Vivian Lorper, Teddy St.George, Linda Hoff and Debi Groh, executive vice president.



CSEA wins improper practice charge

WEST BRENTWOOD — As a result of an improper practice charge filed by the CSEA Pilgrim Psychiatric Center Local, the union will be able to defend a member in a disciplinary hearing.

The member was charged after an investigation.



Dora Wilson

Despite many requests by CSEA, facility management refused to provide the evidence to the union, making it impossible to defend the accused. The local filed the improper practice charge.

"We got tired of them refusing," Dora Wilson, local president, said.

The day before a hearing was to be held in Albany on the charge, management ended its eight-month standoff and turned over to CSEA its evidence against the member.

"Now, we can properly defend the member," Wilson said.

Southold strikes back

SOUTHOLD — CSEA members in the Southold unit have been fighting for a fair and equitable contract for some time by keeping the heat on management, including conducting numerous demonstrations at Town Board meetings.

At a recent meeting, town officials got under the members' skin when the board and supervisor voted to give themselves big raises despite the objections of many area residents and CSEA.

Unit members decided to fight back. Southold Unit President Kent McCarthy and Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte sent out a scathing letter to the editor to local weekly newspapers stating their opposition to the officials' raises. The unit also purchased an ad that hit the stands the day before Thanksgiving. The text of the letter of the editor appears at right.

"We just felt it was important that not only the town officials, but the homeowners as well understand what an outrageous move that was," LaMorte said.

"These members have been without a contract for nearly two years. The town has insisted on what would amount to a cut of our members' health insurance benefits, and then they turn around and enrich themselves on the backs of our members. We will keep fighting for fairness on our members' behalf. Enough is enough!"

Letter to the editor:

While everyone deserves fair pay and respect for their work, a recent move by Southold town officials is a smack in the face to the town's CSEA employees. It is unconscionable that the supervisor and Town Board members voted to give themselves 33 percent and 14 percent raises respectively! It is an affront to every homeowner, as well as to the hard working CSEA employees who provide essential services every day.

Stop the foul play!

Nicholas LaMorte, CSEA Long Island Region President

Kent McCarthy, CSEA Town of Southold Unit President

LET'S TALK TURKEY
Stop the Foul Play!

The Town of Southold supervisor just gave himself a **33 percent raise**;
Town board members gave themselves **14 percent raises**;
They got the gravy and left the bones for front line CSEA workers.

IT'S NOT FAIR.
(A message from CSEA Southold Town workers who provide essential services every day.)

Nick LaMorte,
CSEA Long Island Region President
Kent McCarthy, Southold Town Unit President

Holiday Happenings

At right, Supreme Court Justice Leonard Austin, foreground right, enjoys the Judiciary Local's holiday party with local members, left to right, Jeff Goodstein, Ignatius Muscarella, Thomas Speziale and Fred Hirsh, the justice's law secretary.



Below, arriving at Judiciary Local's holiday party, held at the Supreme Court building in Mineola, are, left to right, Jeannette LaBeglia, Susan Tran, Mary Stevens, Christine Morton and Roz Vinnick. They work at the Department of Mental Hygiene's Legal Services office in Mineola.

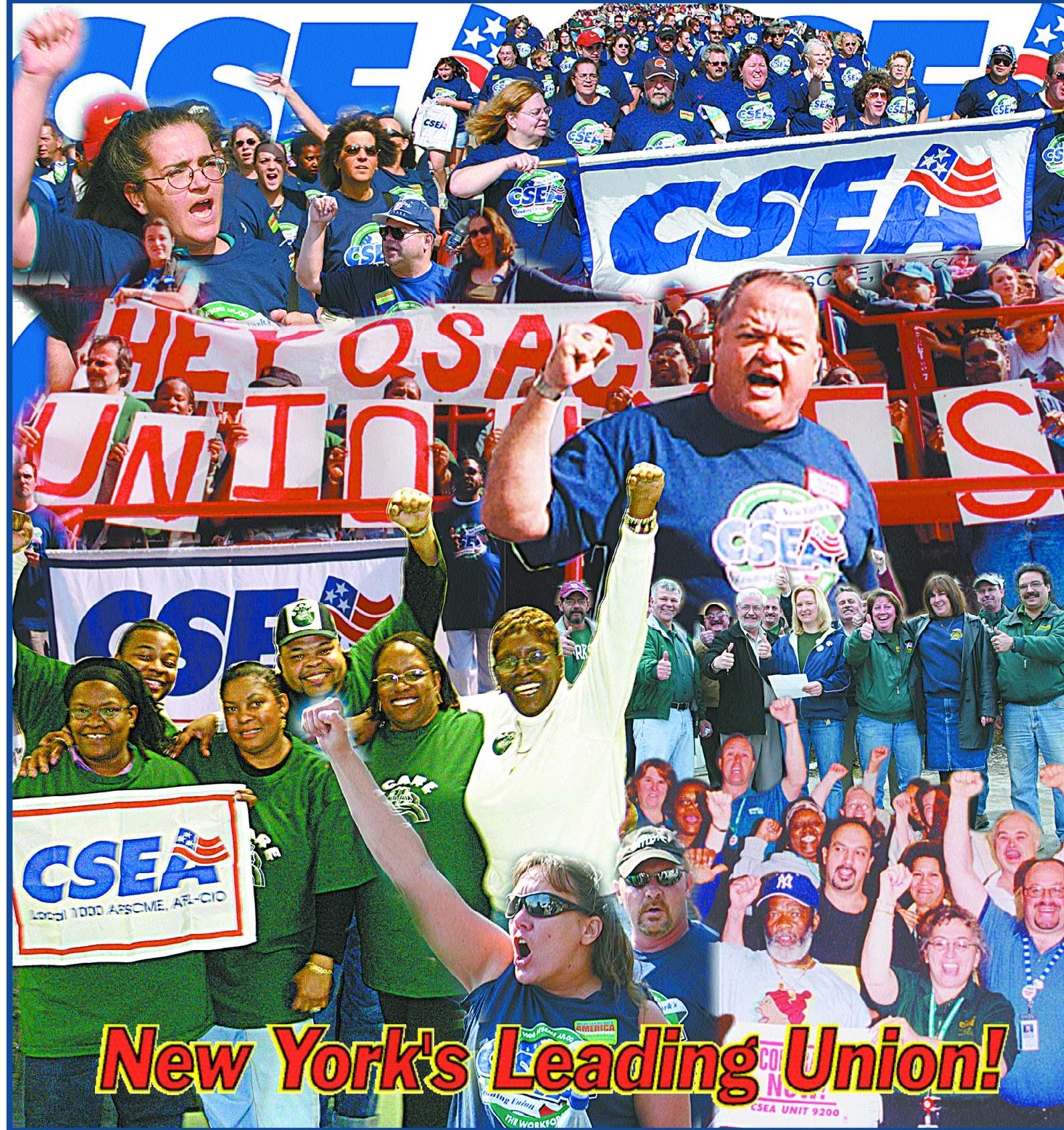


Above, Village of Hempstead Department of Public Works employees and public officials are shown with food DPW workers collected to provide Thanksgiving dinners for 58 needy families. Shown with the Local 882 members are Dan Simone, third from left in front row, wearing light shirt, general supervisor; Bob Clark, assistant superintendent; Mayor James A. Garner, in suit, holding sign; Perry Pettus, deputy mayor and village trustee, and Harry Dickinson, DPW director. DPW workers were planning to run another collection for food for Christmas dinners.

At right, the Village of Hempstead Unit of Local 882 joined officials in collecting items for Operation Shoebox. Shown with some of the items for service men and women serving in Iraq are, left to right, Harry Ransom, the village's director of human relations; Assessor Delphine Chambliss; Mayor James A. Garner; Stacey Hogan, assistant assessor and secretary of the CSEA unit; Gary Kornova (standing), 1st vice president of the unit, and George Sandas, superintendent of parks and recreation and a CSEA member.



The State of Our Union 2005



New York's Leading Union!

A message from CSEA President Danny Donohue

As New York's leading union, CSEA has earned a reputation for fighting for what's right and winning. This past year was no exception. CSEA's continued success fighting the good fight all across the state is proof positive that our hard work, our solidarity and our determination make for a winning combination.



Fighting the good fight for our rights and benefits

Negotiating fair and just contracts is one of the cornerstones of any great union. And CSEA has earned a reputation as a union that gets results for its members while working with employers to find mutually agreeable solutions to the many challenges that contract negotiations present.

Nowhere was that more apparent than in Schenectady County this year where CSEA took the lead with innovative contract solutions that others said couldn't be done. As a result, CSEA members and taxpayers alike are paying less for prescription drugs because CSEA paved the way for lower priced Canadian drugs. The Schenectady County contract is the first of its kind in the state. CSEA led the way on this issue and you can bet others will follow in the months and years to come.



Once again, CSEA led the way with a state contract agreement that is second to none. CSEA members overwhelmingly ratified the four-year pact, which includes raises in every year of the agreement and no significant changes in health insurance coverage. The state contract addresses the issues that CSEA members said were important, and the strength of the ratification vote is a true measure of appreciation for the CSEA negotiating team members who worked so hard to get the job done.

Despite difficult financial and political times all across the state, CSEA has

persevered to win good contracts throughout our nearly 1,200 local government, schools and private sector bargaining units. Many of these successes came after contentious fights in places such as Morrison-Crothall, the laundry and housekeeping unit at Westchester Medical Center; the City of White Plains; Western Suffolk BOCES; the New Lebanon School District; Dunkirk Schools; Starpoint Schools; and Westchester, Otsego, Warren and Orange counties.

Orange County negotiations provided a reminder why no union member, CSEA or otherwise, should ever take their contractual benefits for granted. Contract talks between the CSEA unit and Orange County management started out painfully slow. But when the county executive tried to take away workers' coffee breaks, things really perked up. The issue united and mobilized the membership which took to the streets demanding that county officials give them a break in their protracted contract fight. Once management saw the CSEA negotiating team had the solid support of the entire membership behind them, coffee breaks were reinstated and a fair contract quickly followed.



These were just some of our many contract successes this past year. In the years ahead, we will continue to fight for fair contracts that recognize the value CSEA members like yourselves bring to your jobs and your communities every day.

Fighting the good fight for workers' rights

As union members, we're fortunate to have the right to speak out on behalf of ourselves and our co-workers. But we also have a responsibility to speak out on behalf of those who can't speak for themselves. CSEA has lived up to that responsibility with great success this past year, organizing a number of workers in the private sector.

We welcomed new members at Clarkson University, a private college in Potsdam. Workers there had tried a number of times to organize with other unions, but without success. When they approached CSEA, they explained that other unions had wooed them with pizza and beer, but had little else to offer. In contrast, CSEA offered Clarkson employees all the training and support they needed. We helped bolster their courage and resolve and showed them the right way to win a voice at work.

Also this year, a group of CSEA Metropolitan Region activists helped more than 400 mistreated workers at the Quality Services for the Autism Community (QSAC) in Queens win dignity and respect with CSEA. The QSAC workers, who help autistic and developmentally challenged individuals, got no overtime, routinely had their hours cut and had been intimidated or fired for trying to organize a union. After more than a year of perseverance, courage and commitment they won their union and recently bargained their first CSEA contract. Meanwhile, the CSEA activists who helped them found a new appreciation for their own union in the process. They said the QSAC workers' struggle made them better leaders by reminding them what it's like not to have a union or the respect you deserve.

SUNY Purchase food service employees won their fight for a voice on the job with the help of students, the community and New York's Leading Union behind them. We're proud of all of these victories and we're committed to help many more unorganized workers find their voice with CSEA in the years ahead.

We owe a great deal of our organizing victories to the dedicated CSEA activists who lent their time, energy and expertise to the campaigns. They became personally involved in CSEA's commitment to organizing because they realize it



is essential to organize if we are to maintain our hard fought rights, benefits and wages. They know it builds and strengthens our union when more workers stand together to speak with one voice. I offer each of these activists my sincere thanks and appreciation.

Fighting the good fight for our future

An active, involved and well-informed workforce translates into better services to the public. At the same time, an active, involved and well-informed public is vital to ensure the continuation of the services we provide. Time and again, in county after county this year we've rallied community support to protect our members' jobs and the services we deliver.

One of our toughest fights this past year has been the fight to save public health care. Years of neglect and inadequate funding from the federal and state governments have left essential public health care in critical condition. As frustrated localities opt to simply give up and pull the plug on publicly operated facilities, CSEA is fighting to preserve public health care services across the state.

This fight is real and there have been casualties like Oswego County's Andrew Michaud Nursing



Home, which lawmakers sold to a not-for-profit operator despite a hard-fought CSEA campaign to save the facility. The fight continues at places like Mt. View Health Care Facility in Niagara County and the Montgomery County Meadows, and we've had victories in Madison, Broome, Oneida, Steuben and Ontario counties where CSEA was able to rally community and political support to save vital public health care services.

CSEA also secured \$30 million in the state budget to help at-risk public health care facilities through the end of the year. But it is clear more





comprehensive health care reform is long overdue to ensure the future of public health care in the state. Ensuring fairness and a future for public health services will remain a top priority for CSEA in the year ahead.

County after county face crushing budget realities due in large part to the overwhelming burden of Medicaid constraints.

We are seeing results from an innovative partnership with the County Nursing Facilities of New York to address the critical health care worker shortage across the state. Through a federal grant we are helping bring career advancement and skill enhancement to current and future workers. Since the program began, several workers have completed formal education to become licensed practical nurses and registered nurses, helping ease staffing shortages.

CSEA prides itself in preparing our members for the future by giving them the tools they need to achieve success in their careers as well as the tools to make sure our union remains a leading force in the labor movement. From the many CSEA-sponsored education and training programs presented at locals and units across the state to CSEA's ambitious new Leadership Education and Development (LEAD) program, our commitment to education continues.

At the grassroots level, I'm proud to report that one of our most successful and eagerly

anticipated programs, the CSEA Schools Conference sponsored by the Nassau and Suffolk Educational locals will celebrate its tenth anniversary this year. Nearly a thousand school support staff from all over Long Island — from teacher's assistants to clerks and custodians — turned out in force for last year's conference to learn more about their jobs, themselves and their union.

On a broader scale, I'm very proud to report that CSEA has launched an ambitious new initiative to ensure our union will change and grow to be even stronger and more effective for the next generation of members. CSEA's new LEAD program is designed to help equip CSEA members and activists who already have the fire and determination, with the knowledge and skills needed to develop into our next generation of leaders. Taught by both CSEA staff and outside experts, this hands-on program is giving



participants the knowledge and experience they need to meet the challenges we will face together in the future.

On the topic of leaders, the presidential election may be over, but our work for a better America must continue. We should all be proud of the way we stood up for the America we believe in. Now it's up to us to carry forward the energy, involvement and activity we demonstrated during the campaign and demand responsible action by our elected officials on the serious issues that face our nation. Clearly, we remain a nation divided and we must work at finding common ground.

Danny Donohue



CSEA's new Legal Services and Elder Law plan

Need a lawyer? Call us!



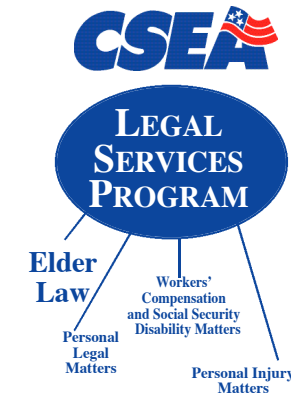
Dear Brothers and Sisters,

CSEA is proud to introduce an exciting new addition to our CSEA Legal Services program to benefit you!

The **Elder Law Plan** provides you with access to reasonably priced, quality legal services for a wide range of issues that could affect you, your family and your assets.

Every day, more and more of us are faced with devastating emotional and financial decisions that affect the well-being of family members and our own quality of life. Often, being prepared by seeking and following some good advice and simple steps before a crisis can make all the difference in our lives. No matter who you are, or what your circumstances it is never too early to be prepared.

The **Elder Law Plan** is the latest addition to the **CSEA Legal Services Program** which provides you with a full range of services for all your personal legal needs from personal legal matters to Workers' Compensation and Social Security Disability to personal injury. All services are provided statewide by a panel of CSEA-approved attorneys who will represent your interests at substantially discounted rates. CSEA's own Legal Department oversees the program and our own General Counsel works diligently with the program attorneys to ensure that highest standards are met.



CSEA Elder Law expert Len Koldin and CSEA General Counsel Nancy E. Hoffman conduct a training session at the 2004 Women's Conference.

Access to the program is just a toll-free phone call away. Call CSEA at **1-800 342-4146** and **select the option for the CSEA Legal Services Program**. I urge you to call today for your own peace of mind and the well-being of your family.

In Solidarity,

Danny Donohue, President



CSEA Elder Law Plan — for you and your family

Why Was the Plan Created?

You and your family have worked a long time to own your home, put away retirement money, and provide for children and aging parents. In the blink of an eye, your life savings, the family residence, and your children's inheritance can be threatened. Events such as illness or disability requiring long-term care can happen to you, your spouse, your child or your parent at any time.

As a CSEA member you are entitled to legal consultations, guidance, document preparation and, where needed, representation pertaining to estate planning and Medicaid eligibility. The events and circumstances in each person's life set the stage for decisions that have to be made.

This is where the experience and knowledge of attorneys who specialize in elder law, estate planning and Medicare/Medicaid eligibility becomes invaluable.

What Can the Plan Do for Me and My Family?

The CSEA Elder Law Plan attorneys will:

- Meet with you to review your present situation and make recommendations as to what you should do immediately.
- Prepare necessary legal documents such as Will, Power of Attorney, Health Care Proxy, Family Trust, Living Trust.
- Counsel you with respect to estate tax planning strategies, IRA and pension fund planning, guardianships, long-term care insurance options, asset protection in face of catastrophic illness.
- Represent you in the Medicare/Medicaid application process, probate and estate administration.

Why Should I Take Advantage of the Plan?

Whether you are over 50 or not, life's events can threaten your savings, your home, and your plans for the future at any time and without

warning. As a CSEA member you have access to quality legal advice and services at discounted fees. It is in your best interest to consider using this Plan now before something happens that you did not plan for.

Available services include:

- Low cost wills, powers of attorney, health care proxies tailored to protect family assets and homesteads
- Reduced fee trust agreements, deeds, Medicaid eligibility services
- Crisis related consultations
- Non-crisis related consultations and pre-crisis planning
- Ongoing annual trust services
- Information and publications
- Educational seminars

How Much Will it Cost?

All Elder Law Plan attorneys have agreed to discount their regular fees by 20 percent for CSEA members and their family. Fees vary depending on the geographic area of the participating attorney. Without the benefit of the CSEA Plan discount, these services would cost you much more.

Plan attorneys will provide you with quality services and expertise consistent with the other plans in the CSEA Legal Services Program.

Some definitions to help you through the legal maze:

WHAT IS ELDER LAW?

Elder Law combines several traditional bodies of law such as estate planning, public benefits entitlement, health care, guardianship and probate, to name a few.

As we live longer, accumulate more, and look forward to the time when we can travel, play, not work full time, enjoy our children and grandchildren, certain realities set in: we need to be sure that our personal and financial needs are taken care of and we need to recognize that the best way to do this is to plan ahead, using competent expertise and guidance. That's where the CSEA Elder Law Plan, our newest members-only benefit offered through the CSEA Legal Services Program, comes in. Pre-planning insures that our wishes will be followed, our needs taken care of, and our quality of life preserved and passed on to those we love.

WHAT ARE ADVANCED DIRECTIVES?

A good will, a power of attorney and a health care proxy: These three documents, commonly referred to as "advanced directives" should be in place for every adult, regardless of age, marital status, gender, job classification, earnings or savings.

Without these advanced directives, not even your spouse, parent, or child can act on your behalf.

A **Will** is a directive that tells others exactly what you want to happen with your property when you pass away. A Will only comes into play when you pass away and it provides instructions to others as to your wishes.

The more specific and comprehensive your Will in terms of setting forth your wishes, the better for your family and the Probate Court in terms of carrying out your wishes. A good Will is very important.

Second, a **Power of Attorney** is crucial. This document gives specific authority to someone you designate to take care of your financial affairs, should you become incapacitated from doing so on your behalf. A Power of Attorney only lasts while you are alive and it serves to insure that



Presentations about CSEA's new Elder Law Plan have been held across the state.

should you be unable [by illness or absence] from conducting your own affairs of a financial nature, someone you have chosen can step in for you. It doesn't have to be an incapacitating illness to make a Power of Attorney important; a long trip abroad or absence from home for other reasons could also make this document valuable to insure that all your financial matters can be handled appropriately in your absence.

Third, a **Health Care Proxy** is also crucial. Only your designated Health Care Agent, named by you in a Health Care Proxy, can step in when you are unable or incapacitated, to make decisions regarding your own health care. Without such a document naming a Health Care Agent, your medical care and treatment will be determined by doctors and health care administrators, not by your family or other loved ones who know what your wishes are.

WHAT IS LONG TERM CARE?

Long-term care generally refers to assistance with activities of daily living such as eating, bathing, dressing, and moving about. For some, assistance can be had at home; for others, the only viable option is non-home based care in some form, such as assisted living or skilled nursing home care.

According to recent surveys, two out of five people over 65 will require some form of long-term care during their lifetime. The average stay in a nursing home is just under three years. The average cost of nursing home care in New York state currently varies from \$6,000 to \$10,000 a month, depending on geographic region.

Long-term care encompasses

more than just nursing home care; it includes care received at home, in an adult care facility, or in an assisted living facility. Taken together, **these long-term care options cover almost 50 percent of our aging population today!**

Medicare, which covers persons 65 and over, does not pay for custodial care in a nursing home or for long-term home care. Medicaid does pay for this type of care. For Medicaid to cover long-term care, however, there are strict financial eligibility requirements that can devastate your life savings, leave your spouse with limited resources on which to live, and certainly leave nothing for your children or grandchildren.

WHAT IS ASSET PROTECTION PLANNING?

Asset protection planning is focused on insuring that each individual has the opportunity to plan for their future in a way that best reflects their circumstances, both in terms of their family and their finances. The loss of one's life

savings does not have to happen if there is advance planning with a quality expert who knows the applicable law and stays on top of the everchanging rules. Even if a family member is already in a long-term care facility, it is never too late to protect remaining family assets.

HOW DOES THE ELDER LAW PLAN WORK?

All you need to do is call the CSEA toll free number [1-800-342-4146] and follow the prompts to the CSEA Legal Services Program, Elder Law Plan. Or, just consult the list on the back page to learn who the expert CSEA Elder Law Plan attorneys are in your area and make an appointment directly with one of those attorneys for a consultation. You can then decide whether you wish to engage the attorney to help you with the advanced directives discussed above or with any other planning options that are appropriate for your circumstances. Our Elder Law Plan attorneys have all agreed to discount their fees by 20 percent for you and for any of your family members, including children, parents, and spouses.

We cannot state loudly enough how important it could be for you to take that first step to consult with one of the Elder Law attorneys near you.

Everyday, everywhere lives are turned upside down, unexpectedly and irrevocably. The difference that some pre-planning makes, more often than not, turns out to be the most important aspect of how a family survives such an event.



Elder Law expert Len Koldin is surrounded by members with questions after a recent training program.

ELDER LAW PLAN ATTORNEYS

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REGION 5 Syracuse Area

Len Koldin
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1-800-851-0022

REGION 6 Rochester Area

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1-800-533-8826

Elder Law



Elder Law presentations are available for locals and units by calling the Legal Department in Headquarters, extension 1426.



LEGAL SERVICES PROGRAM

Personal Legal Matters
Workers' Compensation and Social Security Disability Matters
Personal Injury Matters

MEMBERS ONLY PROGRAM INFORMATION

1-800-342-4146

or

Go to the CSEA website at www.csealocal1000.org and then log on to the members-only area where you will find the link for the Legal Services Program.

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Local 1000, AFSCME, AFL-CIO
143 Washington Ave., Albany, NY 12210

Danny Donohue, President

Hurt on the job? Personal injury? Can't work? What do you do?

CSEA's other Legal Services can help you in many ways

WORKERS' COMPENSATION WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Workers' Compensation is a form of insurance paid for by your employer

It provides:

- Full coverage for all medical care for your work-related injury.
- Partial wage replacement for temporary or permanent loss of earnings.
- Special compensation for loss or partial loss of the use of a limb.

- You do not have to lose time from work to be eligible for Workers' Compensation.

- Just notifying your employer when injured does NOT begin a Workers' Compensation claim.

- If you are a State worker, calling the State's 800 number only reports the accident to the employer — it does NOT begin a Workers' Compensation claim.

- Why you should file a claim

- It costs you nothing to file.
- Your health insurance will not pay medical costs for injuries that happen at work.
- You have **two years** to file a claim from the date of the accident or a physician tells you your medical problem is related to your work. (Occupational disease).
- Once established, a Workers' Compensation claim entitles you to the medical benefits and weekly payments for a minimum of 18 years, and possibly for life.
- Also, cash awards for injuries to the extremities are available, even without lost time.

- What is covered by Workers' Compensation

- **Work-Related Accident:**
An event arising out of and in the course of employment that results in injury to the worker.
- **Occupational Disease:**
Medical problems or injuries that are the result of the type of work you do and occur over a period of time.

- Examples of Occupational Disease:

- Carpal Tunnel Syndrome • Tendinitis • Hearing Loss • Asbestosis
- Respiratory problems due to *identified* chemical or hazardous substances.

- Legal representation at every hearing

Unrepresented injured workers often do not understand what is transpiring at the usual five to ten minute hearing, let alone at a trial hearing that is longer and involves testimony. Consequently, unrepresented workers often do not get all they are entitled to. The CSEA Legal Services Program provides an attorney to represent you at hearings, obtains available medical documentation, answers your questions, and fights to insure that you get all of the benefits the law provides in the way of medical coverage and cash compensation.

- Steps to obtain coverage:

- Obtain emergency medical treatment if needed.
- Report accident to supervisor within **30** days of the accident.
- Place yourself under the care of a physician who treats Workers' Compensation patients.

Call CSEA's Legal Services Program at **1-800-342-4146** and follow the prompts to access information and referrals to other CSEA Legal Services attorneys.

PERSONAL INJURY/THIRD PARTY CLAIMS WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- If you sustain a *personal injury* as a result of an accident caused by someone else's carelessness, you may have the right to seek monetary damages for injuries that were caused by that other party's negligence.

- The injury does NOT have to be work-related. CSEA members and their families can utilize the CSEA Legal Services Program for non work-related personal injury claims.

- Some examples of covered accidents include:

- Motor vehicles — auto accidents
- Pedestrians struck by a motor vehicle
- Bicycles, boats
- Slip (or trip) and fall downs
- Dog bites
- Construction work
- Defective or unsafe products
- Medical malpractice

- This CSEA Program covers you from claim through lawsuit, if necessary.

- Many factors must be considered in determining the monetary worth of a personal injury claim or suit:

- The results of investigations.
- The amount of the defendant's insurance coverage.
- The full extent of your injuries.
- The full extent of your lost wages and medical expenses.
- Your age and the degree of permanent disability, if any.

- Important to Remember

Depending on who the potential defendant(s) may be and the type of claim, there are varying statutes of limitation (the time in which a lawsuit commenced) that apply. Some statutes are as short as 90 days. Therefore, it is in your best interest to call as soon as possible after the accident. If the injuries were caused by a car accident, no fault filings must be made within **30** days to protect your medical and wage benefits.

SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY BENEFITS (SSDB) WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- What are the Benefits of SSDB?

Without reaching the normal retirement age (65 or older, depending on date of birth), a person unable to work because of a disability whether physical, mental or both, may receive a **monthly payment in the same amount** they would have received at their normal retirement age, regardless of their current age. Workers between 18 and 31 need not even have been contributing to the Social Security system, but at age 31 and older, a minimum number of qualifying quarters are necessary. Most workers meet this requirement easily. After completing two years of eligibility for SSDB payments, the worker becomes eligible for **Medicare**, regardless of age.

- Social Security Disability Benefits provide monthly payments to workers who meet the Social Security Administration's definition of "disabled."

- Every disability from which you suffer from, *not just on-the-job accidents*, is considered by the Social Security Administration in determining your eligibility for benefits. Consequently, even hereditary conditions or the results of aging are considered.

- Eligibility requirements:

- You must be unable to do "any substantial gainful work" due to a physical or mental impairment which has lasted or is expected to last for at least one year.

- As a general rule if you are over age 30, you must have worked five out of the last ten years preceding the onset of the disability and have contributed to Social Security.

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