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Vol. 4 / No. 4

APRIL 2001

THE WORK FORCE

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

Pricey turnovers!



Photo by Mark Kotzin

**CSEA fights for
better wages
to keep Cortland
County workers
on the job.**

See story Page 3

Have a Turnover!
You're Paying For It!

You might as well enjoy the turnover, compliments of your Cortland County CSEA Workforce because you're paying for it in the end.

Your County Workers want you to know that the County has immediately paid out millions of dollars of taxpayer money in recruitment and training costs due to the extremely high turnover of employees who end up leaving for better paying jobs in surrounding counties. What an incredible waste of your money!

As your dedicated, caring and professional work force who serve you every day, we would rather see our tax dollars kept in Cortland County and appropriately spent on paying workers a livable wage, so we can attract and retain the best and brightest workers to our County. We think it's not fair that the County is paying for the training of workers who can't stay here.

We believe that Cortland County taxpayers and the Cortland County work force deserve better. We don't pay our County workers a decent wage, and we're in need of a better way to pay our County workers. If you have any questions or concerns, please call your County Legislator and let them know how you support CSEA. Please call your County Legislator and let them know how you support CSEA. Please call your County Legislator and let them know how you support CSEA.

CSEA Serving Cortland County
Your Cortland County Work Force
dedicated • caring • professional

Southern Region

CROSSROADS • Your Union Newsletter

• A supplement to *The Work Force* • April 2001 Vol. 5 No. 1



Message from Southern Region President Carmine DiBattista

President George W. Bush has outlined his agenda for the nation under his administration and, just as I had feared, working families, especially those that belong to labor unions, will be under attack the next four years.

Over the last eight years of former President Bill Clinton's administration, the federal government was generally a friend to labor by passing legislation and establishing work standards that protect working men and women.

However, there are now several federal initiatives under consideration by Congress that will harm working families.

Worse, these proposals are likely to get the approval of both houses and be signed by our "compassionate conservative" president.

Contracting Out a Big Threat

The biggest threat to public employees under the Bush administration is contracting out.

Bush's agenda allows for contracting out social services, education and even Social Security — all of which pose a threat to public employees.

First, Bush is proposing to allow faith-based community organizations to apply for federal funding.

What our new president isn't telling you is that religious organizations already get millions of federal dollars for social programs each year.

Increasing the funding for these services will drain dollars away from high-quality, public-sector services and would eventually endanger the number of social services available to us should we face an economic downturn.

But, most importantly, it will lead to the elimination of public-sector jobs — maybe yours!

School Choice

President Bush is also proposing to contract out our children's public schools by establishing tuition vouchers to allow children to attend private school with public funding.

One doesn't need to closely analyze the situation to realize that school vouchers, also known as tax credits, would harm the quality of our public school buildings and of the education our children receive.

Reduced federal funding for our schools also means that public employees will lose their jobs. The first jobs likely to go in New York State will be that of non-teaching staff represented by CSEA.

Poorly maintained buildings, reduced educational programs and fewer jobs will not add up to improved test scores for our children.

For a president who claims his top priority is our children's education, Bush's plan proves to be a slap in the face to the children whose education he wants to improve.

Please See Message on Page 4

Retirement in Jeopardy

Working men and women heading toward retirement also need to be wary of President Bush's agenda.

To "save" Social Security, which does not necessarily need saving, Bush has proposed private accounts be invested in the stock market, increasing the possibility of providing higher returns.

This plan will not only cost nearly \$1 trillion in its first 10 years, but will eventually deplete Social Security's already-dwindling reserves.

Middletown Psychiatric Center Speaks Out Against Proposed Closure

MIDDLETOWN — CSEA led the Middletown community in speaking out against the state's plan to close Middletown Psychiatric Center in 2004.

The Speakout, held March 22 at the Holiday Inn in Middletown, is the latest union action in an extensive campaign to keep Middletown open.

CSEA has fought the state's proposal to close the psychiatric facility since January, when Gov. George Pataki announced in his budget proposal his plan to close Middletown and Hutchings Psychiatric Center in Syracuse.

Turn Up the Heat

In Middletown, CSEA leaders have met with local and state political leaders to lobby against the proposal.

They have conducted a Valentine's 'Day of Rage' directed at Pataki's office, and picketed in downtown Middletown.



Additionally, CSEA Middletown Psychiatric Center Local President Diane Hewitt, CSEA Southern Region President Carmine DiBattista and union staff met with representatives from Orange and Sullivan County-based non-profit, mental health organizations to form a coalition against the state's proposal.

"This proposal is nothing less than an

outrage," DiBattista said.

"The state is trying to divide the mental health workers and non-profits under this plan, and we will fight this proposed closure," he said.

CSEA represents about 275 employees at Middletown Psychiatric Center, including direct-care, clerical support, food service and maintenance workers.

About 420 people are employed at Middletown.

While the state is calling for Middletown's employees and 149

Please See Middletown on Page 4

inpatients to transfer to Rockland Psychiatric Center in Orangeburg.

CSEA vehemently opposes the plan because it would hurt mental health services in Middletown's catchment area of Orange and Sullivan counties.

"This proposal is unfair to the clients, the workers and the community," Hewitt said.

"We live here, work here and shop here. The 'budget pill' Pataki and (OMH) Commissioner (James) Stone are proposing does not cure mental illness — quality care

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This plan would not protect your resources during market downturns, and Bush has indicated he would consider increasing the retirement age to help pay for this program.

Playing with your hard-earned Social Security in the stock market is an attack on working families.

Tax Cut Won't Help

Another Bush plan to help "put money back in our pockets" is also proving to be an onslaught for working men and women.

The proposed \$1.6 trillion tax cut, which will mostly benefit the wealthy, threatens public employees.

This cut, which will really cost \$2.6 trillion, is so large it will lead to deficits and require government services to be cut on all levels to pay for the plan.

Working families will not only see the fewest benefits from the tax cut plan, but they will be the most hurt by cuts in government services.

Worse, many people will ultimately lose their jobs.

Safety and Health Concerns

The new administration's proposals also jeopardize workplace safety for employees.

Congress voted to repeal the ergonomic standards set by the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) during the Clinton administration — a repeal that has the full support of Bush and many U.S. businesses.

These ergonomic standards would have protected workers from becoming one of the startling 1.6 million people injured on the job each year — injuries that cost companies between \$45 million and \$50 million annually and could have been avoided.

We can't afford to play with our safety and our lives in this manner.

Despite this onslaught of anti-labor initiatives, working men and women still hold a degree of power in their voices.

Yours is the voice that government fears the most. I urge all of you to be more aware of all governmental attempts to reduce the power of workers and to vehemently fight it by contacting your congressional representatives and making your voices heard.

As we keep reminding you, you are the only one who can potentially stop these attempts to destroy the labor movement. Become aware and band with others as workers and fight to stop these attacks on working families.

When we unite as workers, we form a strong voice.

The strength of labor, in every level of government, depends on one thing — you.

Fraternally,

Carmine DiBattista

Middletown Continued From Page 1

does. Middletown Psychiatric Center's care for clients is unsurpassed," she said.

High Scores All Around

State officials claim the 125-year-old Middletown Psychiatric Center needs \$34 million in renovations to pass accreditation standards set by the federal Joint Commission of Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO).

Just weeks ago, Middletown Psychiatric Center passed its accreditation with an unofficial score of 97 percent with no deficiencies.

This score reflects previous scores the facility earned during the accreditation process in 1998 and 1995, and the strong showing will keep the hospital in the top 5 percent of hospitals nationwide.

Middletown has already identified its one need to meet the full JCAHO accreditation — renovating an open client ward into individual bedrooms and upgrading the windows and air conditioning systems in that ward.

These renovations have been projected to cost about \$2 million.

"We would love to know how the state justifies \$34 million in renovations for Middletown," Hewitt said.

"The state refuses to explain it to us," she said.

A Huge Commute

The proposed closure of Middletown will affect many workers at the facility.

If employees were offered jobs at Rockland Psychiatric Center, many Middletown employees would face commutes of 120 miles a day to get to



MPC members sign a valentine to Gov. Pataki.

Orangeburg and back home.

"Many of my members can't afford to drive to Rockland every day," Hewitt said.

"They have families and can't necessarily work that far away from them.

"A lot of employees here also don't drive and there's no public transportation between here and Rockland County. They would have to find other jobs," Hewitt said.

Hewitt added Middletown's staff has always been, and continues to be, dedicated to the clients they care for every day.

"The staff here goes over and above in giving treatment to patients," she said.

"For the state to turn around and propose this closing is like being kicked in the teeth. It hurts. It's not right," Hewitt said.

Tidbits**Will You:**

Find out how to get your affairs in order so you can take care of your loved ones when you're not here!

Need an attorney to help you accomplish that?

Call the Southern Region office at (845) 831-1000 to get names of attorneys in the region who participate in the CSEA member legal services.

Jardine Insurance

Do you need information on low-cost life, disability, auto, homeowners and renters insurance?

Do you want the convenience of paying your premium through payroll deduction?

If so, contact Bill Bennett at 343-1655 or Sandy DiBartolo at 949-2606 for more information.

Both are available to visit your work site to tell members more about Jardine Insurance.

Editor's Note

Do you need help starting a newsletter for your Local or Unit?



Do you need help publicizing an upcoming event, or with dealing with the media?

Southern Region Communications Associate Janice Marra can help you with your communication needs.

Contact her at the Southern Region Office in Beacon

at (845) 831-1000.

Retiring?

Retirement doesn't have to mean staying in the dark!

Join CSEA Retirees to keep yourself informed and involved.

For more information, contact the Local president in your county:

Westchester: Margaret Capriola: (914) 948-1535

Dutchess/Putnam: Harold McKinney: (845) 229-8833

Orange/Ulster/Sullivan: Theresa Sinsabaugh: (845) 986-1286

Rockland: Lee Pound: (845) 634-2756

Rockland County Unit Building Solidarity

NEW CITY —The Rockland County Unit is building solidarity among its members.

The Unit is participating in a union building initiative that is also attracting Units across the Southern Region and the state.

About 25 members from the Rockland County Unit have met with CSEA Labor Relations Associate Gary Cannonier twice the past two months to discuss how to make the Unit a stronger presence among its membership and the county.



The union building program was launched in Rockland to increase union participation and power among the unit's 2,300 members.

Increasing CSEA's voice in Rockland County is particularly important to many members this year. The county will elect a county executive and all of the county legislators.

Rockland County Staff Nurse and 16-year member Debbie Quinn, left, conducts a health screening on assistant network administrator and 27-year member Deborah Oldfield during a recent Information Day and Health Fair at the Robert Yeager Health Center in New Hackensack.

Members discussed their present work and their goals in five union building areas: communication, mobilization, community, labor relations and political power.

"You have to go to the past to get to the present in order to get to the future," Cannonier explained to Unit members at a recent meeting.

"This is a labor movement not just in Rockland County, but across the country. Labor is being assaulted all across the country," he added.

Planning Strategy

The Unit is developing its strategies for increasing its communication with members and increasing its presence in Rockland County.

One way the county unit is attempting to increase union involvement is through communication.

The unit is considering launching a newsletter and a Web site, and communicating with members through e-mail.

"We're still trying to find out how many people have access to e-mail and the Internet," Unit President Georgia Gentile said.

"We want to reach as many people as possible," she said.

The unit is continuing to reach out to its members to become more active both inside and outside CSEA.

The unit recently held an information day and health screening at the Robert Yeager Health Center in New Hackensack.

"We want to become more powerful and effective in Rockland," Gentile said.

"We're trying to decide what works for us and what doesn't so that we can get more people involved in the union here," she noted.

Political Action Corner

CSEA Political Action — Fighting for You

By Jason Haenel
Southern Region Political Action Coordinator

Thanks to the hard work of hundreds of activists, CSEA's Southern Region scored major victories last year in the state Legislature and during the 2000 elections.

Yet this is no time to rest! We are fighting major threats to the jobs and benefits of CSEA members at every level of government. Your help is needed.

Federal Government

The White House and many members of Congress are challenging the basic rights of union members across the country.

Already, groundbreaking ergonomic standards have been repealed, federal labor-management committees dissolved, and other protections eliminated.

We must now fight against a tax give-away benefiting the wealthy, while providing little benefits to working families, and jeopardizing Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid.

We may also be facing our biggest threat in a generation, fighting against "Paycheck Deception" which would effectively strip unions of their ability to fight for you at the federal level.

State Government

As the state legislative session heats up, we are battling several budget proposals that range from consolidating developmental disability regions, to housing youths with adults in our correctional facilities.

While all these issues are important, the governor's plan to close Middletown Psychiatric Center poses an immediate threat to more than 400 jobs.

We are proud of our CSEA leaders and activists for their work in helping keep this needed center open. Thanks to their efforts, all our area senators and Assembly members now oppose this closure.

Now, we must direct our efforts toward the governor and show him we will stand together — not only to protect CSEA jobs, but also to fight for needed care and treatment for those with mental illness.

Local Government

CSEA has been extremely busy in various school districts and municipalities throughout the Hudson Valley. We've fought off charter schools in Mt. Vernon and worked for pay equity in Ulster County.

No matter what the fight or where it occurs, those ultimately responsible for the outcome remain the same — our elected officials.

Now is the time to prove to these politicians they need us as much as we need them.

How? By becoming involved in the upcoming elections.

When we are responsible for electing pro-labor candidates, many problems we currently face disappear.

Having friends on the school board, village, city or town council, or county legislature also prevents many of the fights we might have otherwise.

We can only ensure friends of CSEA are elected if you help.

Your active involvement in the upcoming political campaigns is the best job insurance you could have.

If your job, benefits, and paycheck are important to you and your family, then you must get actively involved in the fight to protect them.

Contact your Unit or Local president for information about your political action committee, or contact me for more information.

Other Activities

Effective legislative and political campaigns require us to understand the issues at stake and have the tools to wage a successful fight.

Here is a sampling of workshops available to help you prepare for any battles you may face in the future.

Contact me to schedule one of these trainings: PAC & GO! Organizing a Political Action Committee; How to Lobby Public Officials; Campaign Activities 101; Volunteer Recruitment Strategies; Charter School Survival Guide; and Paycheck Deception — The Attack on Your Voice.

Informational Picket at Middletown Psychiatric Center



CSEA Statewide Executive Vice President Mary Sullivan, left, with Diane Hewitt at MPC picket.



Crowd at MPC picket.



Mary Sullivan and Middletown Psychiatric Center Local President Diane Hewitt at the informational picket in front of Middletown City Hall.

“We live here, work here and shop here. The ‘budget pill’ Pataki and (OMH) Commissioner (James) Stone are proposing does not cure mental illness — quality care does. Middletown Psychiatric Center’s care for clients is unsurpassed.”

CSEA MIDDLETOWN PSYCHIATRIC CENTER LOCAL PRESIDENT DIANE HEWITT



Micki Thoms (with bullhorn) at MPC picket.



Even the dogs get into action at MPC picket.

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Do you have an article or announcement for *Crossroads*?

Mail or fax to Janice Marra, c/o the CSEA Southern Region office.

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IN TOUCH WITH THE WORK FORCE CSEA President Danny Donohue



New York's labor movement is about to get a shot in the arm that will benefit all working people, including CSEA members, by strengthening the ties between unions in every community throughout the state.

The AFL-CIO's New Alliance (see story on pages 10 & 11) will strengthen and reinvigorate New York's already formidable House of Labor by enabling local unions to work together more effectively. It will also bring real, tangible benefits to CSEA members with our mobilizing, organizing and political action efforts.

We've seen first hand the power of mobilization. Last year it helped us win a good state contract, a COLA for retirees and pension reform that benefits all our members. The New Alliance will enhance CSEA's future mobilizing efforts by making it easier for us to tap into the support of hundreds of thousands of AFL-CIO members all across New York state.

A united House of Labor will also help us welcome more working people into it. The New Alliance will help us change the climate for organizing in New York. By standing strong with our union brothers and sisters throughout the state, we can show employers a united force that will not tolerate the type of vicious anti-union campaigns that have become so prevalent these days.

Finally, the New Alliance will make it possible for us to extend our political action reach and build on our impressive record in the political arena.

The New Alliance will give CSEA members the opportunity to move into the future with a dynamically improved labor movement. Now we have to work together to make sure that happens.

Pictured above, CSEA President Danny Donohue greets AFL-CIO President John Sweeney.

State Police finally answer union's persistent call for upgrades

Like a phone solicitor who won't take no for an answer, CSEA's constant pressure over the years has finally netted more cash for union members who answer the State Police phones.

About 200 communications specialists will each be receiving \$1,500 more a year because union leaders and managers worked together to boost their job titles two grades.

The deal is a by-product of new labor-management cooperation after decades of managers resisting the union's bid for the upgrade.

"We worked hand in hand with management and they spoke eloquently and greatly on our behalf" when the upgrades came before state Civil Service Commission for approval, said Francis Strack, Local president and member of the labor-management committee.

Even New York's top cop shared his support with the civil service commission.

Boosting the salary will keep trained communications specialists on the job, which State Police Superintendent James McMahon said "will ensure all of the citizens of New York State continue to receive the quality service they deserve when they need assistance."

Good starting point

"This is a big win for our members," said Strack, who takes emergency calls at the State Police barracks in Ray Brook, Essex County. "We're happy about the upgrades."

"This is the first movement (from management) we've seen in years and everyone feels this is a start," Strack said.

Communications specialists are the front lines of the State Police.

They may receive as many as 400 emergency phone calls a day from the public, coordinate and dispatch troopers and other emergency services, and even talk to wayward hikers stranded in the mountains.

"Hikers in the Adirondack Mountains up here carry cell phones," explained Strack.

"They get lost and call 9-1-1, which rings here. They say they're lost and are carrying

this camping gear they don't know how to use. And then they ask if we can help them." Strack said.

Strack and his colleagues help identify the hiker's location as best they can, then call state forest rangers to help.

The facts won for more pay

For the communications specialists, it was a torturous, uphill trail that led to the upgrades.

For years, state police brass rejected CSEA's assertions the job was undervalued.

Similar job titles in other police agencies and state departments were paying thousands of dollars more a year.

"This created a morale problem," Strack said.

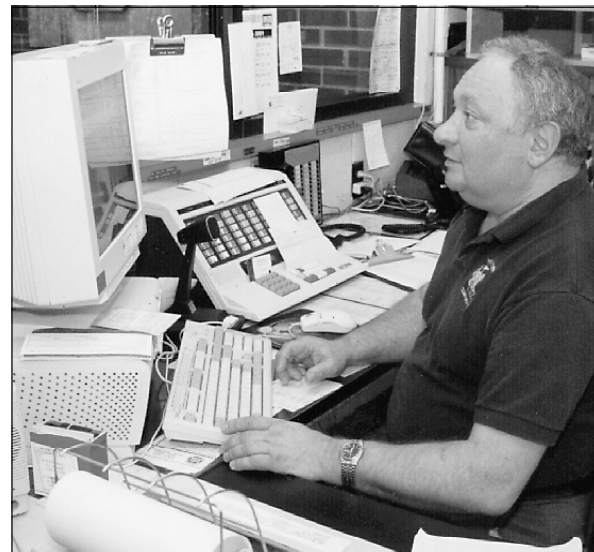
CSEA's research department turned up the

heat two years ago, and with the help of communications specialists across the state, proved the job skills had changed dramatically because of cellular and digital technology.

Armed with salary comparisons and other facts, CSEA members approached the Civil Service Commission again for the upgrade.

"The agency came to bat for us, and that was extremely unusual," said Strack, noting the division's resistance the last 25 years.

"There's no denying that our world, and the means and ways of communicating,



CSEA member and State Police communications specialist Jerry Schlagenhauf was on the committee that worked for years to upgrade the job of communications specialists.

have become much more complicated than when this job was last classified in 1979," said Jerry Schlagenhauf, CSEA State Police Troop A Local president.

"Just think about the cell phone usage explosion. And that's only one aspect. Our upgrade is definitely deserved," he added.

— Ronald Kermani

WORK FORCE FACTS

Technology has changed the nature of a communications specialist's job at the State Police. For example:

- In 1987, the communications specialists answered 648 calls from cell phones;
- In 1999, that number had grown to almost 500,000 cell phone calls a year.

Voices of the Work Force

"I enjoy the work I do, working with my hands, building cabinets, shelving, counters, whatever is needed here. I also like hunting and fishing and traveling. I enjoyed traveling."

— Rocco Sidari, carpenter, Orleans Correctional Facility. He has worked for the state more than 15 years.



Air National Guard Base firefighters prepared even when the sky falls

SCOTIA — It's got all the comforts of home: a place to sleep, a living room with big-screen TV, a full kitchen and a garage — a very, very large garage.

The Stratton Air National Guard Base fire station is the workplace "home" for two dozen CSEA airport firefighters who work around the clock protecting the base's buildings, grounds,

personnel and mega-million dollar aircraft.

These highly trained professionals are part of CSEA's Division of Military and Naval Affairs (DMNA) Unit and among nearly 100 firefighters serving at four Air National Guard bases across the state.

Their job is to be ready when disaster strikes.

Firefighters were ready in January when a Lear jet carrying three aborted its takeoff at the Schenectady County Airport in Scotia. (Photo at right.)

The plane skidded across a field and crashed through a fence before stopping just a few feet from a busy highway intersection.

"The initial tower report was: 'Aircraft off the runway, three people on board, unknown amount of fuel or unknown victims on aircraft,'" said firefighter Scott M. DeHart, who worked dispatch that afternoon.

"They sounded very nervous so we knew we had something (big)," DeHart said.

DeHart immediately dispatched an emergency team that included firefighters Brian Kissinger, Wayne Handford, James L. Barnes and John F. Driscoll Jr. who joined local volunteer firefighters already on the scene.

"We had to make sure there was no fire or anything like that and make sure the aircraft was shut down," said Driscoll.

Leaking fuel

"We noticed that it was leaking fuel. The wing went through a chain link fence and that's what stopped it from going out onto the road. It crumpled the wing and on each side we had about five to seven locations where fuel was coming out," he explained.

Driscoll estimated the plane spilled about 300 to 400 gallons of fuel before he and his crew contained the leak by placing large rubber buckets under the wings.

Their swift response helped avert a potential explosion from fuel that was leaking onto the plane's hot brakes.



Photo by John Pradelski

Driscoll said the plane's crew helped prevent further damage by shutting down the aircraft before evacuating the plane. He said the crew, which was uninjured, was long-gone by the time the DMNA firefighters arrived.

"Air crews are funny," he joked. "They get nervous when something like this happens."

Never idle

Even when the sky isn't falling, the CSEA members have plenty to keep them busy.

Beside their duties on base, they also respond to area emergency calls through mutual aid agreements with neighboring volunteer fire departments.

It's a job where one never knows what's going to happen next and danger is always just around the

corner. But the team exudes a quiet confidence, relying on their training, experience and each other.

"We face the same dangers as any fireman out on the street. Ours are just a little bit different when we go to the airplanes," said Handford.

"Yeah there is danger out there with the propellers and the hot brakes and everything like that," added Driscoll. "But if you keep your head level and pay attention to what you're doing, it's not really as dangerous as it can be."

Some amenities of home

After the emergencies, it's back to the base.

The team works four 24-hour shifts and one 10-hour shift every two weeks.

When they're on duty, the union members live on base, sharing quarters, meals and camaraderie. Sometimes they share more than they'd like.

"It is a unique situation," said Barnes. "We're here for 24 hours so some of your personal traits are going to come out, like whether you're a loud snorer like I am. It's something you wouldn't get working eight hours with your co-workers and going home at 4 o'clock."

"We're like a family," added Kissinger, who the others say is the best cook on the shift. "We play



Stratton Air National Guard Base firefighters, from left, John Driscoll Jr., Brian Kissinger, Wayne Handford, Scott DeHart and James Barnes.

pranks on each other, we have nicknames for each other, we're like brothers."

Serving their community

When they're off duty and off the base, all five serve their communities as volunteer firefighters.

According to them, it's in their blood and definitely in their hearts.

And while New York state's bravest said they take great personal satisfaction in being able to help, they don't want any rewards and don't want to be called heroes.

"Not one of us is in it for the glory or anything like that," explained Driscoll.

"We do it because we've always wanted to do it and we take pride in what we do," he added.

— Ed Molitor

Voices of the Work Force

"This is a great job. Most of the patrons are wonderful. They want to bring you a cold drink. Nobody bothers you. I really enjoy it."

—George Dale, a part-time employee in the Bayard Cutting Arboretum on Long Island



WORKFORCE FACTS

Firefighter Scott M. DeHart said one of the Stratton unit's most memorable missions is also their most famous.

"There was a helicopter crash 10 years ago during an air show. As a matter of fact you see it on all these 'real live camera' shows. The helicopter that falls out of the sky. That was right here. We responded to it."

Dutchess Community College:

A textbook case in union organizing, member involvement

POUGHKEEPSIE — School spirit has spilled into the union hall at Dutchess Community College.

Dozens of CSEA members are energizing co-workers and strengthening the union's role on campus in an effort that is a model for other union-building efforts at colleges across the state.

"We want to make things better for us," said Judith Grabowski, a graphics specialist at the college and a 16-year union member.

"We're happy to be part of CSEA and like working here, but we want to improve

communication between us and management," she said.

Union-building efforts at Dutchess Community College, which is part of the CSEA Dutchess County Unit, have been underway since late 1999.

CSEA leaders at the college are following the union's model of worker empowerment.

They are taking care of business directly while building strength in the worksite and drawing on CSEA's vast resources to best represent the members, leaders said.

A model of success

Now the college is becoming a model for similar efforts by CSEA members at community colleges across the state.

"We really want to share our ideas with other colleges," Grabowski said.

The first union-building meeting attracted about a dozen members and helped members view CSEA as part of their lives.

"We corrected a lot of misconceptions," said Maryanne Sheehan, a 12-year account clerk and union builder.

A+ for effort

The results are positive, leaders said. A staff newsletter is in the works, members participate in labor-management

committees, six additional shop stewards are being recruited and members attend college board of directors meetings.

"People weren't used to union involvement on campus," said Maryanne Kinsella, 14-year member and research assistant.

"Now, we're doing things such as posting meeting minutes on the CSEA bulletin boards," she added.

The union-building efforts have reinforced CSEA's relationship with management.

"A lot has already been resolved at (labor-management) meetings," Dutchess County Unit President Lizabeth Piraino said.

"We keep bringing more issues to the table, and management is listening to us," she said.

— Janice Marra



Judith Grabowski, left, and Maryanne Kinsella at the CSEA bulletin board at Dutchess County Community College.

"Linguini-like" mold no match for CSEA members

HAVERSTRAW — CSEA members recently helped solve a growing problem in the North Rockland School District — linguini-like mold that invaded several classrooms and threatened the school schedule.

While inspecting the roof of the 40-year-old elementary school building, workers discovered mold caused by moisture had seeped inside forcing the evacuation of five infested classrooms, several offices and the library.

Linguini where?

"It looked like linguini up there," CSEA North Rockland Unit President Jim Rudolph said about the spores sprouting in the rooms.

"The whole library was covered and we couldn't use several of the classrooms. Our immediate problem was relocating the kids without disrupting them," Rudolph said.

No classes missed

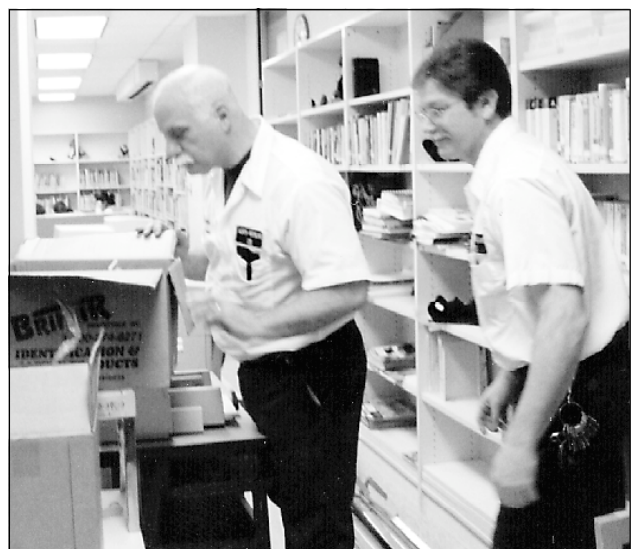
Students didn't miss a day of school. "The custodians came in, moved the kids and began cleaning up almost overnight," head custodian and six-year CSEA member Jim Meakin said.

Outside contractors removed the mold, which was tested and found not harmful.

CSEA members removed the debris and replaced damaged fixtures during the evenings and weekends.

"We went right behind the contractors to clean up," Meakin said. "So, we were able to do it quickly."

Rudolph said he is proud of his Unit's



CSEA members and school custodians Jim Rudolph, at left, and Jim Meakin pack library books at an elementary school in the North Rockland School District.

efforts to solve the problem with minimal inconvenience.

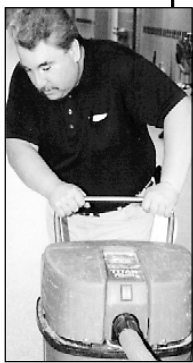
"These people are so good at what they do," Rudolph said about the CSEA members.

— Janice Marra

Voices of the Work Force

"I love working with the kids and talking with them. Some of the kids have problems, and I talk with them and let them know someone cares about them. I always offer a helping hand."

— Tony Migliozi, custodian, Saratoga Springs school district



The shrill sounds of life are music to his ears

The full-throttle wail of a newborn touches off a smile that consumes CSEA member Tim Jaccard's face.

He'd rather hear the screaming than the deafening silence that envelopes a newborn abandoned by its mother and left for dead in a Dumpster or toilet.

Jaccard has seen those horrific sights the last few years as an ambulance medical technician in Nassau County.

But now Jaccard is hearing the glorious screeching of newborns more these days because of a new state law Jaccard lobbied hard for which shields women from arrest if they leave their newborn babies in a "safe haven."

Since July, the Abandoned Infant Protection Act has saved the lives of scores of abandoned babies statewide, including several in Jaccard's community.



CSEA member Tim Jaccard and other CSEA members teach medical workers and counselors how to proceed when mothers and their babies arrive at designated safe havens. "The women who abandon these babies fear authority. They see no way out so they do the unthinkable," he said.

"We want to save lives. We want to see these babies in a safe place instead of in a garbage can or toilet bowl," Jaccard said.

This law saves lives

Shortly after the safe haven law was passed, Jaccard convinced a young, expectant mother to come to one of the designated hospitals, sign in as Jane Doe, and leave her baby in that safe environment after the birth, without fear of prosecution.

"That woman was frantic on the phone," Jaccard recalled.

"She did not want that baby and she did not want anyone to know about it. The safe haven gave her an option," he said.

"The women who abandon these babies fear authority. They see no way out so they do the unthinkable," Jaccard said.

Training the professionals

While the law is also in its infancy, Jaccard and other CSEA members are

teaching medical workers and counselors how to proceed when mothers and their babies arrive at the designated havens.

A recent training workshop on Long Island was sponsored by Jaccard's Children of Hope Foundation, a service group Jaccard founded that provides a 24-hour hot line to try to convince pregnant women or frantic new mothers not to kill their babies or abandon them in unsafe places.

Life-saving alternative

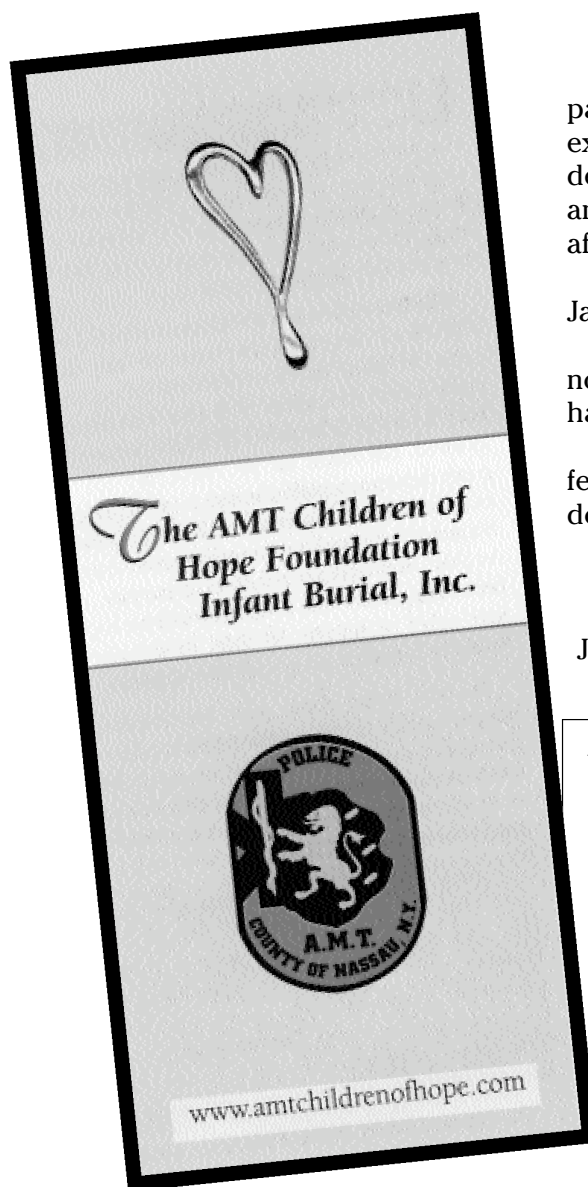
Dr. Bella Sillichia, a CSEA member and director of the suspected child abuse and neglect evaluation program at Nassau University Medical Center, said, "I think (the training program) is wonderful. Having dealt with child abuse for years, I see this as another great step forward to protect the children."

The Nassau University Medical Center, which employs 1,000 CSEA members, has been designated as one of the safe haven hospitals.

CSEA members have rallied to help Jaccard and the Children of Hope Foundation.

Many CSEA Locals, the CSEA Long Island Region, and the region's Women's Committee donated money and needed baby care items at holiday parties.

"Now our prayer is the money can be used for education on safe havens so less money will be needed to fund burial plots," said CSEA Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte.



AMT Children of Hope Foundation Infant Burial was founded by the Nassau County Police Ambulance Medical Technicians to save the lives of as many newborns as possible and to give those who could not be saved the identity and dignity every human being deserves. The hot line, in cooperation with the Long Island Crisis Center, is 516-679-1111. For more information, visit the Web site at www.amtchildrenofhope.com

— Sheryl C. Jenks

CSEA PALS keep Congress in touch with NY

CSEA is training a small army of members to make sure Congress doesn't forget New York.

With the political complexion of Washington changing, the union is making sure New York's congressional delegation knows how labor feels about key issues such as Social Security reform, paycheck protection and the federal budget.

CSEA's federal Political Action Liaisons (PALs) are the union's link to every federal lawmaker from New York.

With this daunting task ahead, dozens of new and seasoned PALs recently honed their lobbying skills and learned some new ones at a three-day training program in Albany.

Good lobbying skills are crucial and the PALs learned how to arrange appointments with lawmakers and how to persuasively discuss the issues.

"I learned more skills on how to really go in and meet with the legislators and congressmen and the training was very fruitful because we really got into the way that we should conduct ourselves," said Carol Backstrom, a 14-year PAL and member of CSEA's Bronx Psychiatric Center Local.

"There were certain things that we were taught this time that I have used already and they worked," she added.

Need the facts

The training gave the PALs a chance to bone-up on some of the big issues the union is facing.

"When we have the facts of the issues like Medicare, Social Security, privatization and the tax cut, it helps us be more educated lobbyists," said Tom Warzel, a 10-year PAL and member of CSEA's SUNY Buffalo Local.

"We're able to then disseminate that information not only to our legislators, but also to the members we go out and educate about the issues," Warzel said.



Tag team approach

CSEA monitors federal legislation with the help of its international union, the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME).

When legislation that will affect CSEA members starts moving through Congress, AFSCME tips CSEA off and the PALs go to work.

"It may be that one of our congresspeople or senators here sits on one of the vital committees, or may even chair one of the committees that this piece of legislation has to go before as it moves on through the process," said CSEA Director of Political Operations Ed LaPlante.

"This is an opportunity for our PAL to reach out to their lawmaker and tell them our position on that piece of legislation," he added.

Constant contact is key

LaPlante said CSEA PALs have many chances to influence legislation and it's important they maximize every opportunity.

"What's important is that they establish a rapport with the congressperson so it's just not when it comes down to crunch time that they reach out and communicate. They have to establish a relationship so when our PAL calls into the legislator's office, they know right away it's CSEA and they also know that

person represents the interests of all our members across the state," he added.

Landscape is changing

In the wake of the recent election, the PALs job may be more important today than ever before.

"The playing field for the next four years is going to be the federal government," said CSEA Western Region

President and Federal Issues Committee Vice Chair Flo Tripi.

"The new administration is going to be setting policies that are not union-friendly and because of that we need to train our people how to deal with the particular directives that are going to come down," she said.

"With a new administration in Washington that has no love for labor, we're going to be more involved on the federal level by establishing a very strong political action liaison network," said CSEA Southern Region President and Federal Issues Committee Chair Carmine DiBattista.



Polishing their skills

Talking to members is just as important as talking to lawmakers.

Each PAL left the training program with an action plan that includes getting five other members to write letters and make phone calls to their representatives on federal issues.

The PALs will also speak about these issues at local CSEA meetings and try to get more members involved.

— Ed Molitor

Despite billions of dollars, NYers still financially hurting, report says

Gov. George Pataki's proposed \$83 billion state budget doesn't reduce the number of people living in poverty and again ignores the state's "substantial social investment gap," an analysis by a union-supported think tank shows.

The Fiscal Policy Institute (FPI), which CSEA helps support, said the modest economic recovery hasn't touched most New Yorkers, who continue to be buffeted by inflation and taxes.

"New York State has both great wealth and great poverty," said Frank Mauro, director of the FPI.

Highs and lows on economic barometer

According to FPI's analysis of the proposed state budget, New York is the only state with one of the 10 highest poverty rates and one of the 10 highest per capita income levels.

The state has the widest income gap between rich and poor. FPI figures show the median household income in the state since 1989 has gone from \$3,500 above the U.S. median to \$758 below.

Pataki and state lawmakers can reverse the poverty trend and the frayed social network by restoring the purchasing power of the minimum wage, Mauro said.

Of all the high-wage states, such as New Jersey and Connecticut, New York has the lowest minimum wage relative to average wages, he added.

The institute also recommended the state bolster its unemployment insurance system, provide better support for low-wage workers and cut regressive taxes.

"We can help low-wage workers move up the income ladder by offering cheap transportation options to help them get to work, making affordable child care more available and increasing welfare grant levels," Mauro said.



The Empire Plans' Home Care Advocacy Program

CSEA-represented state enrollees and their eligible dependents covered by the Empire Plan can call the Home Care Advocacy Program (HCAP) at 1-800-638-9918 to arrange paid-in-full home care services and/or durable medical equipment and supplies from an HCAP-approved provider.

Diabetic supplies and ostomy supplies can also be obtained at no cost.

Enrollees/dependents must call HCAP before receiving HCAP-covered home care services and/or equipment and supplies.

If HCAP is contacted, but an HCAP provider is not used, non-network benefits will apply.

EXCEPTIONS: Enrollees can contact the carrier directly for diabetic supplies (except insulin pumps and Medijectors) or ostomy supplies at no cost.

HCAP authorization is not required if members contact the following carriers directly:

- **Diabetic Supplies** (except insulin pumps and Medijectors), call National Diabetic Pharmacies at 1-888-306-7337;

- **Ostomy Supplies** call Byram HealthCare Centers at 1-800-354-4054;

Network Coverage: (When you call HCAP and use a network provider) Contact the Home Care Advocacy Program at 1-800-638-9918 to find an HCAP approved provider and precertify services. Preauthorized services that are provided by HCAP network providers are no cost to an enrollee.

Non-Network Coverage: (When you don't call HCAP or use non-network provider)

If an enrollee does not call HCAP for precertification before receiving home care services, durable medical equipment or supplies and/or if he or she chooses to use a non-network provider, they will pay a much higher share of the cost.

The first 48 hours of home nursing care per calendar year are excluded under non-network coverage.

After members meet the basic medical deductible (\$175), United HealthCare pays up to 50 percent of the HCAP network allowance for covered services.

To learn more about the HCAP, call 1-800-638-9918.

The Empire Plan NurseLine open 24 hours

The Empire Plan offers health information and education to CSEA state enrollees and their eligible dependent's 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Enrollees can contact the Empire Plan NurseLine toll-free at 1-800-439-3435 to learn more about:

- Minor illnesses or injuries;
- Chronic conditions;
- How to prepare a list of questions to ask your doctor;
- How to choose the right care for your situation.

By calling the number, members can speak to a registered nurse who can answer questions.

Members can also choose to listen to audio messages about more than 1,000 topics such as child health and development, men's health, women's health, and nutrition, among other subjects.

To listen to the audio tapes, enter PIN number 335 and a four-digit topic code printed in the Empire Plan NurseLine brochure which was mailed to enrollees' homes during the summer.

For a copy of the brochure or more information about the NurseLine program, call 1-800-439-3435.

Limited Time Offer: \$25,000 of term life coverage with no medical questions

**Protect your family's future by enrolling
for low-cost term life insurance.**

CSEA makes it easy for all actively at-work members to make sure their families will have money in case they are no longer there to take care of them.

For a limited time, CSEA members can apply for \$25,000 of coverage as part of CSEA's Security Life Premier Plan.

This term life insurance is affordable and provides extra benefits not offered by other ordinary insurance plans.

Special features of the Security Life Premier Plan include:

- ☛ **Up to triple benefits if you die accidentally while working at your CSEA job;**
- ☛ **You may receive a onetime lump sum benefit if you have a terminal illness;**
- ☛ **Coverage for accidental death and dismemberment;**
- ☛ **Premium waiver benefit;**
- ☛ **Coverage continues regardless of age, subject to membership and policy requirements;**
- ☛ **Additional 10 percent benefit if you die in a motor vehicle accident while wearing a properly fastened seat belt.**

Applications and a brochure explaining all the Security Life Premier Plan details will be mailed to all CSEA members who don't have life insurance coverage.

Complete the applications, sign and mail. When the application is approved, the premium is automatically deducted from your pay.

This offer is available only to actively at-work CSEA members until May 31.

After that, medical information is required to obtain this valuable member benefit.

If you already have life insurance, watch your mail for an offer to increase your coverage.

**For more information, call JLT Services
toll free at 800-929-6656.**

2001 CSEA ELECTIONS Info

Local, Unit elections scheduled for 2001

Elections will be conducted for all Local officers, for delegates and for all Unit officers

The term of office for all current Local officers, delegates and Unit officers expires June 30, 2001. Public sector officers and delegates will be elected to four-year terms. Private sector officers and delegates will be elected to three-year terms.

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 which have been created according to the Local Constitution and By-Laws. In Locals which 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 which have been created according to the Unit Constitution and By-Laws. In Units which 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:

3 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.

3 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.

3 Candidates who withdraw from a slate must complete a Slate Withdrawal Form.

More detailed information about election slates will be available from Local and Unit election committees.

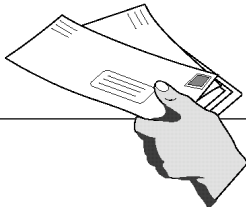
Attention: Local, Unit presidents Did you send Election Committee Data Form to CSEA headquarters?

During early February, members of registered Election Committees received 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 receiving the completed committee form from the Local or Unit president.

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



Nominating procedure for small 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 for potential candidates for office 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.

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.

You must 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.



More informative.
More interactive.
More convenient.



Now CSEA state and participating local government members covered under the CSEA Employee Benefit Fund (EBF) can download or view online benefit plans and access other important information about your coverage.

The screenshot shows the CSEA Employee Benefit Fund website. At the top, there is a navigation menu with links for Member Benefits, The Workforce, Labor Links, News Releases, CSEA Web Sites, Career Resources, Safety & Health, and CSEA Constitution. Below the menu is the CSEA logo and the text 'CSEA LOCAL 1000, AFSCME, AFL-CIO'. A banner image shows a group of diverse people. The main heading is 'Welcome to CSEA's Employee Benefit Fund'. The page is organized into several columns with green headers: 'EBF History', 'View and Download Benefit Plan Booklets', 'EBF Local Government Dental Plans', 'EBF Local Government Vision Plans', 'Conditions for Local Government Negotiations', 'Contact Us', 'More EBF Local Government Benefits', and 'EBF Benefits Advantages'. Each section contains brief text and a 'More info' link. The 'Contact Us' section includes phone and email information and links to regional pages.

www.csealocal1000.net

Just the start of exciting changes online for CSEA members!

CSEA's Constitution & By-Laws are now available on CSEA's Web site.

Western Frontier

Official publication of **CSEA Western Region**

6



• A supplement to *The Work Force* • April 2001 Vol. 4 No. 1

WESTERN REGION 6 CALENDAR

March 8	Rochester Labor Council
March 10	Civil Service Training - ECC Buffalo
March 13	PAC West Buffalo Labor Council
March 14	PAC East
April 7	Civil Service Training Monroe Community College Rochester
April 9, 10	Danny Donohue - Region 6
April 10	Buffalo Labor Council
April 25	Local Government/State Executive Meetings Statewide Board of Directors Buffalo Labor Council Awards Dinner
April 28	Region 6 Executive Board
May 8	Buffalo Labor Council
May 10	Rochester Labor Council
July 11	Local Government/State Executive Committee
July 12	Board of Directors
August 11	Region 6 Picnic
Sept. 28 & 29	Region 6 Meeting - Niagara Falls

Western Region Sunshine Fund gives a helping hand where needed



For years the Western Region Sunshine Fund has allowed concerned region members to provide assistance to fellow members and their immediate families in time of crisis or catastrophe when other forms of assistance are unavailable or insufficient.

"The fund grants aid to members only from fund-raising events and donations, not from dues money or Local, Unit or region rebates," said Kathy Button, chairperson of the fund committee.

"The fund makes disbursements based on availability of funds, and the committee's determination of need and a written request that meets established criteria," she added.

Aid for member families affected by fire loss or long-term illness are typical of the assistance the Sunshine Fund gives. Aid is limited to Western Region members.

Fund-raising activities for the fund have included walkathons, auctions, cookbook sales, 50/50 drawings, passing the hat, and other events.

"We urge Locals and Units to think of the fund when they are having other activities that can serve as fund-raisers," said Button.

The fund committee also includes Region Treasurer William Stanton and Carol Thornton, a CSEA activist from Yates County.

Written requests for aid are to be made on forms available from the region office and must be signed by the Local president before submission.

They should be mailed to Sunshine Fund Committee, CSEA Western Region, 482 Delaware Ave., Buffalo, NY 14202.



Karen Delaney, left, and Pamela Watson, center, present a cookbook the Western New York DDSO Local Women's Committee printed to Sue Sinclair. The cookbook contains recipes from members across the state and sells for \$8.

Region's Women's Conference focuses on fighting sweatshops;

Rep. Slaughter is luncheon speaker

ROCHESTER — Sweatshops and how to fight them, with a theme "Our Gain Is Not Worth Their Pain," was the focus of the recent annual Western Region Women's Conference, co-chaired by Judy DiPaolo and Elaine Timm.



Western Region Women's Conference co-chairs Judy DiPaolo and Elaine Timm.

A sweatshop is defined as a usually small manufacturing establishment employing workers under unfair and unsanitary conditions.

But workshop attendees learned far more about the inhumane practices of sweatshop employers worldwide, as well as the world trade, political and economic implications of the practice.

"Fighting sweatshops is a subject that is near and dear to my heart, and the women's committee did a fine job in putting together a great program," said Region President Flo Tripi.

"And we were very proud to have U.S. Representative Louise Slaughter as our luncheon speaker," Tripi added.

Check the label

A kickoff workshop "Sweatshops 101" by Maria Whyte, executive director of the Buffalo Coalition for Economic Justice, defined what sweatshops are, where they are, and why union members should care.

The women's committee also brought home how close consumers are to sweatshop products. Attendees were asked to check the clothing they were wearing to see where it was made.

Our Gain Is Not Worth Their Pain

"Fighting sweatshops is a subject that is near and dear to my heart, and the women's committee did a fine job in putting together a great program."



Above, Western Region President Flo Tripi presents a certificate of appreciation to guest speaker U.S. Rep. Louise Slaughter, at right.

At right, Maria Whyte, director of the Buffalo Coalition for Economic Justice, conducts "Sweatshops 101" workshop.



A

short "fashion show" with member models wearing tags identifying the sweatshop country of origin, showed how sweatshops exist in many countries.

"It was very surprising to some members to find out their clothes were made in countries where sweatshops are operating," said DiPaolo.

"And that sweatshops exist right here in our own country, not just in the Third World and developing countries," she added.

Networking and information

More useful information about sweatshops was delivered by Marvin Mich, Rachel Mich and Julie McCaffery of the New York State Labor-Religion Coalition.

A panel "Working Against Sweatshops" by students from Nazareth and St. John Fisher Colleges and SUNY Buffalo also provided a wealth of data and networking information.

Rep. Slaughter, of the 28th Congressional District, praised CSEA for its members' political astuteness and singled out President Tripi for her longtime involvement in labor's political action movement.

Slaughter complimented the women's committee on its timely conference subject and told participants about the importance of staying involved.

Victor Schools Bus Driver Honored

Victor Central Schools bus driver Grace Carmel has been presented with a plaque by representatives of Utica Mutual Insurance Company for her quick actions to avoid an accident on the New York State Thruway.

Carmel was driving a passenger van with two students on board when she crested a hill and saw traffic stopped ahead.

As she braked, Carmel saw in her rear view mirror a large truck bearing down on her. She maneuvered the van onto the right shoulder, avoiding a collision.

The large truck collided with a lumber truck that was in front of Carmel's school bus, causing injuries.

"I am confident that Grace Carmel's defensive driving actions saved not only her life, but the lives of the students who were in her charge. We are very proud of her actions," said Darren Everhart, director transportation for the school district.

See Page 12 of This Month's
THE WORK FORCE
For Western Region
Activities Scheduled for
Workers Memorial Day

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REGION 6 TREASURER

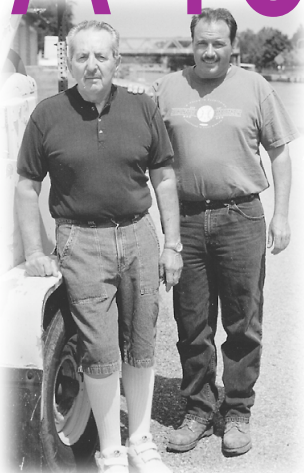
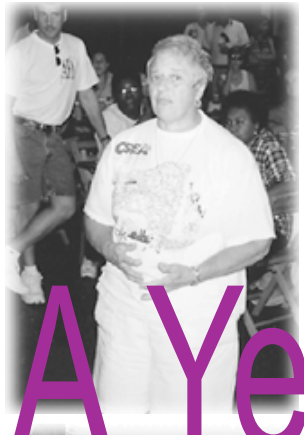
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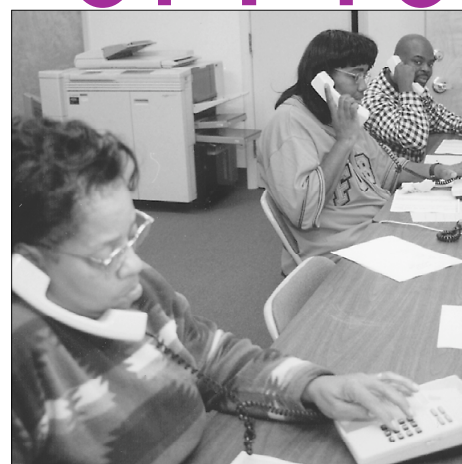
2000 - 2001



Clockwise, from top left, Geneva Schools picket helped gain a new contract; retiring Western Region President Bob Lattimer was honored for his many years of CSEA service; Jim Volpone succeeded Flo Tripi as Monroe Unit president; the annual Western Region picnic was the first forum for new President Tripi to speak to members; the Stranges — two generations on the Erie Barge Canal; Retiree activist Dorothy Kothen upon receiving the CSEA Dan Webster Retiree Mission Achievement Award; Monroe County Local President Bernie Giambra and her mother, Concetta Giambra — a 50-year CSEA member with original charter; Organizing win at Livingston County Nursing Home; Erie Local donated to local food pantry at holiday.



A Year of Progress



Clockwise, from left, Chautauqua ARC organizing activists and staff at Chautauqua Unit holiday party; Industry activists spoke out against OT; Buffalo-Niagara retirees Local 903 members picketed outside Buffalo Federal Office Building to protest George W. Bush's Social Security policy announcement; Wayne County members waged campaign to keep CHHA viable; 1st Vice President Kathy Button, President Flo Tripi and Kathy Albowicz at OMH hearing in Buffalo; many staff and activists went across the country to help Gore campaign; phone banking volunteers during/before election; a new sign with map of all 14 counties in the Western Region was installed outside the office by President Flo Tripi.

