AFTER SMOOTHING OUT A FEW BUMPS, THE BILL FINALLY BECAME LAW.

A message from state Comptroller Edward V. Regan

Pension supplementation

On Feb. 29, 1988, the Legislature passed, and the Governor approved, legislation which increases the supplemental retirement allowance for 141,978 retirees of the New York State and Local Retirement Systems.

Over the past two year period, I have worked very closely with employee organizations and retiree groups on the issue of pension supplementation. I have supported a higher supplemental benefit because our retirement systems have done well financially, and it seems only fair that some of this be shared with a group that has been hurt by inflation.

State and local government employers, and their taxpayers, have been saving money on pensions for years. With these savings our pension system has addressed taxpayer concerns, making it possible to focus on the needs of our retirees, whose pension payments have been seriously eroded by the cost of living spiral.

Obviously, I am gratified that we have been able to improve this very important benefit. Those retirees who were already receiving the supplemental retirement allowance will receive a greater benefit through the enactment of this legislation. In addition, those former members who retired during 1980, 1981 and 1982, and who have achieved age 62, will receive supplementation for the first time.
DOT BOTCHED IT!

CSEA blisters DOT leadership

By Ron Wolford
CSEA Communications Associate

HORSEHEADS — The state Department of Transportation (DOT) and its commissioner have been lambasted by CSEA Region VI President Robert Lattimer for what he called incompetence, malfeasance and a whitewash of an investigation of CSEA charges of mismanagement and favoritism at the Horseheads DOT subdivision garage.

“If the matter wasn’t so serious in terms of deteriorating labor-management relations,” wrote Lattimer in a letter to DOT Commissioner Franklin White, “it would be laughable, how you reached your convenient findings.”

The finding of the DOT investigation “demonstrates the department is either leaderless or gutless to confront its own managers when they are wrong,” charged Lattimer. “But it only makes our resolve to protect our members in these little DOT fiefdoms that much stronger.”

Lattimer, Local 007 President John Wallenbeck, and Local Secretary Sharon O’Buckley all said the DOT investigation, conducted last fall and outlined in a recently-released executive summary, was a whitewash that was truly unjust and biased in its conclusions.

Lattimer said, and did not even address it as a necessary concern to any solution, our future dealings with you and your department will reflect our recognition of your true attitude.”

Lattimer said the commissioner’s failure to personally check the matter out, instead of sending an underling to assess the low morale and other problems caused by region DOT management, demonstrates White’s ineptitude for leadership. He said Gov. Mario Cuomo and the Governor’s Office of Employee Relations (GOER) would also be informed of the “DOT malfeasance.”

The uproar stems from charges by CSEA of a series of abuses to DOT employees in the Horseheads garage. Complaints included sexual discrimination, favoritism in job selection, destruction of members’ personal property and a long list of other faults attributed to a particularly unruly supervisor. But management appeared afraid or unwilling to curtail the offending supervisor.

CSEA members complained that regional management not only did nothing when informed of the abuses, they transferred one of the other supervisors who complained of the unfairness to a work location 25 miles away. He was later returned after CSEA filed a grievance in his behalf.

One worker actually sat in the workshop for two months without a work assignment because the supervisor would not speak to him, even for work detail.

When DOT headquarters in Albany was informed, they conducted their own investigation, which resulted in the almost categorical defense of the region management. Lattimer responded with his strong letter of protest charging DOT with a whitewash of the situation.

March 21, 1988

THE PUBLIC SECTOR
We need nurses!

By Sheryl Carlin
CSEA Communications Associate

MINEOLA — Overworked, underpaid nurses are struggling, and the health care system is struggling, too, because fewer people are entering the field.

That’s only part of what Rita Wallace, executive vice president of CSEA Nassau County Local 830, said during a state Senate hearing about the increasing nursing shortage on Long Island in particular and nationwide in general.

Wallace, a registered nurse for 45 years, was one of 25 speakers at the hearing hosted by state Sen. Michael J. Tully.

The nursing shortage has caused major problems at many hospitals. Nassau County Medical Center (NCMC), which includes a unit of CSEA Local 830, has been harshly criticized by the state for inadequate staff and care.

Salary was presented as a primary problem for attracting and retaining nursing staff.

“It is interesting to note that already the increasing demand and a decreasing supply of nurses has evoked an unprecedented mid-contract wage increase in Nassau County,” Wallace said. CSEA and the Nassau County executive agreed last year to increase the salaries of nurses in the public hospitals to be comparable to salaries in private hospitals.

Over the years, many nurses have moved into other professions to escape the demands and pressures of nursing. Many have found more money and more desirable hours in public administration, law and business.

Wallace highlighted a variety of issues: difficulty in recruiting and retaining qualified nurses; the need for advancement; the need for more money and less demanding hours; and the movement of nurses to health-care systems outside hospitals.

“We must make nursing an appealing field to enter and stay involved in and salaries of public hospitals must be comparable to private hospitals in order to recruit and retain the best nursing staffs possible,” NCMC Unit President Jack Geraghty, who has two daughters who are nurses, said, “Our nurses are physically and emotionally drained. The chronically understaffed conditions and mandated overtime are causing a morale problem. This situation must be rectified.”

CSEA Local 830 President Jerome Donohue also attended the hearing and expressed hopes that political and public awareness of the problems would lead to solutions.

Senator Tully said, “The crisis is here and the need for state action is here. And the need for local action, as far as raising salaries, is absolutely here ... the bottom line is money.”

Wallace called for federal and state legislation to provide: recruitment and retention strategies for nurses; funding of educational opportunities for nurses; recognition systems; identification of sources of potential nurses; weekend, night and progressive education programs; and reimbursement for nurses under Medicare.

Wallace also explained that CSEA will fight passage of an “Entry Into Practice” legislation. Instead, the union will push for legislation to permit associate degree or diploma graduates to be ‘grandfathered’ not only in title, but also with a baccalaureate degree.

“The entry into practice legislation would only grandfather nurses who currently hold baccalaureate degrees,” Wallace said. “We also want those nurses who have been out there, getting their clinical experience on the job, to be granted their baccalaureate degrees and be given access to a master’s program.”

She noted that precedents were set in the legal and teaching professions.

“We must follow up here,” she added. “The focus should be on getting clinically competent practitioners to remain at the bedside. And we must reward them with higher salaries.”

CSEA Region I President Danny Donohue has taken a strong stand regarding the treatment of nurses who are overworked and underpaid in the public hospitals.

“This problem has been ongoing and we need some solid solutions,” Donohue said. “We must make nursing an appealing field to enter and stay involved in and salaries of public hospitals must be comparable to private hospitals in order to recruit and retain the best nursing staffs possible.”

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JACK GERAGHTY, NCMC Unit president, looks over fact sheets with his daughters, Mary Helen Bernhardt, left, and Barbara Hoey Geraghty, both of whom are nurses.
An open letter from
William L. McGowan

With our current contract with New York state about to expire, I know that many of you are concerned with the status of negotiations. Although I cannot give you the specifics because we agreed to a news blackout when negotiations started, I want to assure you that our teams, backed up 100 percent by our staff, are doing an excellent job in representing your interests.

Right now we are in coalition negotiations — meeting jointly to negotiate items of common interest such as salaries, health insurance and other benefits — for the Administrative Services Unit, Institutional Services Unit, Operational Services Unit and the Division of Military and Naval Affairs.

As soon as a tentative agreement is reached, you will be informed through the news media, The Public Sector, mailings and special informational meetings.

Rest assured that we are united in our efforts and are working to get the best possible contract for you.

Fraternally,

William L. McGowan
President
Civil Service Employees Association

Moving the message

The CSEA logo is being carried through the streets of Albany, Schenectady, Rensselaer and Saratoga counties on 50 buses of the Capital District Transportation Authority this month. It's a reminder to the public that we're "working with you."

'87 Empire Plan major medical claims due before March 31

All 1987 Empire Plan Major Medical claims must be submitted before March 31, 1988, to:
Metropolitan Life Insurance Company
CPO Box 1600
Kingston, New York 12402-0600

Major medical claim forms may be obtained from your agency's personnel or business office or from Metropolitan Life Insurance Company.

Please be certain to have your doctor or other provider fill in all information asked for on the claim form and sign it. If the claim form is not filled out by the provider, all bills submitted must include all information asked for on the claim form. Missing information will delay the processing of your claim.

Should you have any questions concerning your claim, you may call the following toll-free number at Metropolitan:
Within New York state — 1-800-942-4640
Outside New York state — 1-800-431-4312
By Charles McGeary
CSEA Communications Associate
UTICA — A plan by the state to contract out some mental health services in the Utica area to a private organization has been blocked by fierce opposition from CSEA.

CSEA charged the state would have relinquished control of mental health services if it had been allowed to turn over an admissions program for chronically mentally ill people to Catholic Charities, a private organization. The state had planned to allow Catholic Charities to function as an inpatient component at Mohawk Valley Psychiatric Center (MVPC) here.

MVPC CSEA Local 434 President Bud Mulchy says CSEA was staunchly against the plan from the start.

"We had an obligation to the clients, to our employees and to the community to stop this ill-conceived contracting out plan," Mulchy says. CSEA used several methods in fighting the proposal, including public protests by MVPC employees, cooperation with county officials who also opposed the plan and negotiating with state Department of Mental Hygiene officials.

CSEA Central Region President Jim Moore, who was directly involved in efforts to resolve the issue, says it was important to take a strong stand against the contracting-out plan.

"Programs that affect the care and treatment of the mentally ill should be created and administered by the New York state Department of Mental Hygiene," Moore says.

Both Moore and Mulchy praised Oneida County Executive Jack Plumley for opposing the contracting-out plan. Plumley refused to authorize county funding of private sector positions while pressuring the state to accept its responsibility to administer and fund the unit.

An agreement was recently negotiated whereby the state will retain responsibility for the admissions program at MVPC while Catholic Charities will be involved only in an outpatient clinic off the grounds of MVPC. Additionally, a stenographer position assigned to that unit will be a state employee.

Negotiations also resulted in creation of three full-time halfway house aide positions for a mentally ill chemical abuser (MICA) outpatient project. Mental hygiene therapy aides at MVPC will be promoted into the grade 12 halfway house aide positions. The state also agreed to consider establishing a regional MICA program outpatient unit at MVPC.

"I hope we sent a message to any private agency that thinks about coming to get our jobs," Mulchy says. "I promise them they will have a hell of a fight on their hands."

ALBANY — CSEA has filed an Improper Practice charge against the Unified Court System over its refusal to allow New York City State Employee CSEA Local 010 President Vincent Martusciello to participate in contract talks.

CSEA President William L. McGowan last fall appointed Martusciello, a state court employee working in New York City, to serve on a 10-member CSEA negotiating committee.

The appointment was made, McGowan noted, "to give the committee geographic balance." CSEA represents approximately 3,600 non-judicial court employees throughout New York state.

Martusciello later participated in various planning sessions and in actual negotiations which commenced Feb. 19. But then on Tuesday evening, March 15, he was suddenly notified by a special messenger sent to his home that he would not be granted leave time to attend sessions scheduled the following three days.

That action, said McGowan, violated the union's right to represent court employees because "no employer can dictate to us who can and who cannot be at the bargaining table.

"We have a duty and an obligation to make sure all our membership is represented. Denying Martusciello's participation also denies representation to the 700 court employees his local represents," McGowan said.

The Improper Practice charge filed with the Public Employment Relations Board claims that, by interfering with the union's selection of its negotiators, the Unified Court system was involved in "bad faith bargaining...inherently destructive of the employees' Taylor Law rights."

The charge specifically cites actions by Presiding Justice Milton Mollen, Appellate Division, 2nd Department, and Chief Clerk John Cahill, Appellate Term, 2nd Department.
CSEA pushes for better safety and health enforcement

ALBANY — Maintenance workers ordered to use their bare hands to rip asbestos off boilers and pipes, a county highway department worker tragically killed when a roller tipped over on him, employees forced to use dangerous pesticides, were just a few stunning examples that CSEA Lobbyist Demi McGuire recently brought to the attention of state legislators in a call to toughen enforcement of health and safety standards for public employees in New York state.

McGuire, along with Jim Corcoran, the union's director of safety and health, spoke at a joint meeting of the state Assembly committees on Labor and Governmental Employees. The committees are considering reform of the Public Employee Safety and Health (PESH) Act to make it more effective.

McGuire and Corcoran noted that CSEA is “jammed to overflowing with hundreds and hundreds of complaints that have been received from our membership throughout the state during the past two years” and cited numerous examples of safety- and health-related violations that have gone uncorrected.

They also listed various corrective actions that could be taken:

* Inspectors should have the authority to act immediately in situations of imminent danger.

“Presently,” McGuire explained, “investigators have to go back to the office and ask their supervisors, who then have to call Albany for a decision.”

The union representatives also took to task the 48-hour waiting period before an inspection is conducted.

“It does not take 48 hours to be overcome by fumes in a confined space or to have a ditch collapse,” explained McGuire.

* More inspectors so that complaints are handled faster.

“The response to complaints has been very slow and completion of investigations drags on for months or even years,” noted the lobbyist.

*A graphic example is the first complaint CSEA made against OGS (Office of General Services), alleging violations of the Right-to-Know law and exposure of workers performing maintenance on the Health Department Lab's ventilation system in the Corning Tower building of the Empire State Plaza. This complaint was filed in August of 1986. The final report was not released until December of 1987."

* Update safety and health standards so that they better reflect what public employees do.

Current standards are primarily industrial and do not, in many cases, apply to the vast majority of public sector workers.

CSEA is also demanding that more teeth be put into enforcement because, the legislators were told, “time after time, public employers who are ordered to correct dangerous conditions will do nothing.”

History project to start

YONKERS — The Yonkers School District will be among the first in the state to pilot a labor history program compiled and funded by AFSCME.

CSEA Deputy Director for Local Government Affairs Ron King said the course material will be ready in time to coincide with a recent mandate by the state Board of Regents to include labor history in junior and senior high school social studies curriculums.

AFSCME Labor History Program Consultant Mike Donovan said the program was set up to “counter-balance” the problems labor has today.

“We're trying to catch students early so they won't have a negative image of unions,” he said.

Donovan is associated with Cornell University, Empire State Labor College, the International Brotherhood of Teamsters and Michigan State College.

A CSEA representative will participate in the class, which will culminate with an essay contest with prizes to be awarded by CSEA.

“The thrust of the course is to teach that unions are democratic organizations working within a democratic society,” Donovan said.
Senate limits lie detectors
But CSEA members already have some protections

When the U.S. Senate recently voted to dramatically restrict the use of lie detector or polygraph tests on employees in private industry, it was a victory for all working people.

But with some exceptions, the worker protections that were approved have long been in place for CSEA members and many other public employees.

In New York, the Taylor Law provides some coverage to public employees against polygraph testing on employment matters, according to CSEA Deputy Counsel Jerome Lefkowitz.

“The Public Employee Relations Board (PERB) has held that management cannot unilaterally impose lie detector tests as part of disciplinary proceedings without negotiating the issue with the union,” he explained.

“We haven’t encountered many problems in this area,” added CSEA Deputy Director for Local Government and School District Affairs Ronald King.

Deputy Director for Local Government and School District Affairs Ronald King does recall an incident in a Long Island school district where the administration was preparing to use lie detector tests to intimidate employees.

“CSEA stepped in and questioned the legality of the tests,” he said.

Although it is not a common hiring practice among most public employers, new job applicants can be required to submit to lie detector tests. Neither the Taylor Law nor the union can prohibit a procedure, Lefkowitz pointed out.

“A similar protection for private sector employees is included in the Senate bill,” he noted.

If public employees are being investigated on criminal charges in the workplace, they also cannot be compelled to take a lie detector test.

“They can refuse under the Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination,” said Lefkowitz.

“Exercising this right cannot be used against them by a public employer.”

A similar protection for private sector employees is included in the Senate bill.

Although it is not a common hiring practice among most public employers, new job applicants can be required to submit to lie detector tests. Neither the Taylor Law nor the union can prohibit such a procedure, Lefkowitz pointed out.

“That’s one area where the Senate’s private sector protection would be ahead of what public employees have,” he said.

The Senate bill would ban the use of lie detectors in private sector pre-employment and random testing.

The accuracy and reliability of lie detector testing has been controversial for decades. The principle under which they work was developed in the 1800s. The actual technology has been in existence with very little change since the 1920s.

Congress has been considering limits on the use of lie detector testing for about 25 years. The approval of the Senate bill is the farthest that legislation has ever gone. The House of Representatives has already passed its own version.

It is expected that if a House-Senate conference committee is established to come up with a compromise bill that retains most of the Senate provisions, then President Reagan will sign it into law.

Is ‘Big Brother’ listening in?

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Is ‘Big Brother’ listening in?

Is the state eavesdropping on the private conversations of its employees? Maybe, maybe not.

But the capability is certainly there and CSEA says that’s enough to justify concern.

The possibility that state employees might be targets of surveillance in the workplace was raised when Ottaway News Service revealed the state Inspector General’s office has ordered electronic recording and transmitting equipment. The Inspector General’s office is the agency empowered to investigate allegations of misconduct in several state agencies.

Inspector General Joseph Spinnelli, a former FBI agent, was quoted in the Albany Times Union newspaper as saying the equipment is for “investigative assistance through totally legal means,” but would not elaborate.

“We wouldn’t do that,” Spinnelli said when asked if his agency would eavesdrop on employees or plant “bugs” in state agencies.

But CSEA President William L. McGowan wants more answers before he’s satisfied the state has not nor does not plan to illegally monitor the conversations and actions of state employees in the workplace.

“We have been unable to substantiate how this equipment will be used,” says McGowan. “We feel it could violate the rights of state employees.”

McGowan says he’s concerned that constitutional and civil rights of innocent employees could be violated if the equipment is illegally or improperly used.

“If state workers are doing something wrong,” on the other hand, he says, “then they should get the goods on them and send them to jail, like everybody else. There should be no exceptions.

“But,” he adds, “you don’t go sneaking around and doing that kind of stuff (secret surveillance of innocent, uninvolved employees).”

McGowan says in addition to being unethical and demoralizing, use of the equipment on unsuspecting innocent state workers without notifying the union might be a violation of the CSEA-state contracts and could violate the state Taylor Law as well.

“We’re keeping our eyes on this situation; we’re checking all the ramifications,” he says.

The surveillance equipment, being purchased from a Florida company, Audio Intelligence Devices, will enable the state to monitor and record conversations up to several hundred feet away and could also be used to “tap” a telephone line.
The aftermath of disaster:

Safety drills

SMITHTOWN — When CSEA member Jim Carthy staged a surprise evacuation drill in the municipal services building of the town’s landfill, he was in for a surprise himself.

"Once the alarms were sounded, every man was out of the building within 56 seconds," Carthy said. "I couldn't believe it."

Many of the employees are still haunted by the memory of a methane explosion nearly four years ago that turned the facility into a raging inferno and severely injured four young employees.

Although the union had complained about methane, an odorless, colorless gas, in the building, proper precautions weren't taken. The explosion occurred because methane had collected in the building and a ventilation system that should have removed it failed to work.

The building was reopened last year, and all employees were given a tour and a complete orientation on the new, state-of-the-art alarm system. John Trent, an assistant civil engineer and member of the CSEA safety committee, instructed the members on how to use the system.

"John gives each new employee the same tour," said William Maccaro Sr., president of the Smithtown CSEA Unit and Suffolk County CSEA Local 622. "The employees have to know how to sound an alarm and to react if they hear one."

On May 4, 1984, no alarms sounded to warn the men of the dangerous methane gas which had filled the building overnight. When they opened the building, the gas ignited.

Maccaro and his family live with the nightmare daily. His son Billy was in that explosion and suffered the worst burns. He has endured 13 operations and skin grafts, and more will follow.

The three other men injured in the fire have returned to work for the town. John Landower and Vito Lasurdo now work in parks and recreation, while Frank Detelich is with the highway department.

Maccaro Sr. said the alarms can mean the difference between life and death for employees. He congratulated Carthy, Trent and safety committee members John Gleason and Bobby Kobler "for working toward preventing any other accidents."

Carthy said the drills will occur about four times a year.

"The employees must respond and respond quickly," he said. "Every time an alarm is sounded the employees have to think as though it's the real thing and get out of the building immediately."

CSEA Region I President Danny Donohue commended the men and the town for cooperating with the drill program.

"No one will ever forget the pain and the tragedy caused by that explosion four years ago," he said. "What happened to those boys should never have happened. We have to make sure that nothing like that ever happens again."

"Once the alarms were sounded, every man was out of the building within 56 seconds."

— Jim Carthy

REMINDERS — William Maccaro Jr.'s jacket and some of the debris from the 1984 explosion reminds workers of the disaster which injured four workers.
Elliott Olin, a regional attorney for the CSEA, advised members to contact the union immediately if they received information about asbestos.

Plumber Bob Michalski, who has had asbestos-related lung disease, said, "I never felt sick or anything, and I don't smoke, but I got it. I don't feel sick today, but I do get shortness of breath at times, the last 8 years," he said.

Regional Safety and Health Specialist Harold Robertson Jr. explained the union’s position on asbestos.

The employees were assured by MFC that all employees will be given a second opinion at Mt. Sinai Medical Center, which is a metropolitan state hospital.

Workers at the facility were given the opportunity to have their asbestos-related lung disease tested.

The MFC tests include meeting with a physician to compile a written history of occupational exposure and blood work. Finally, a pulmonary technician using special equipment measures the individual's lung capacity, plethysmograph, and identifies any breathing difficulties. The full exam takes about 90 minutes.

The employees were assured by MFC management that each worker tested would be provided a formal report to determine whether asbestos was present or not. CSEA regional safety and health specialist Harold Robertson Jr. reminded the employees that the facility must keep on file for 30 years a report on the conditions under which employees were exposed to asbestos.

"I think it means something for the employees to know that the management here at MFC cares and is doing something to help them," Wertheimer said.

George Boncoraglio, a regional attorney for the CSEA, explained the union’s position on asbestos.

"We have always been concerned with the health of our members," Boncoraglio said.

By Ron Wofiers
CSEA Communications Associate

ALBION — Concerns about exposure to asbestos on the job have members of Albion Correction CSEA Local 131 worried about possible future health problems and wondering why it's so difficult to get management to do what's right about the situation.

For 20 years, employees have been monitored for past exposure and how long it might be before their health would start showing some effects of exposure.

Plumber steakmfiters Mike Rutkowski and George Snell said asbestos is on everything. "This stuff just hangs loose," Snell said.

The facility has older buildings that are laden with asbestos-covered piping. The facility has not signed up for the state's program to detect whether employees have been exposed to asbestos.

"I think it means something for the employees to know that the management here at MFC cares and is doing something to help them," Wertheimer said.

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Who do you think will be the next president? Why?

VIVIAN SEMAGO
Taxation and Finance Local 690 Region IV
"I think our Governor Mario Cuomo will be the next President of the United States. His expertise in resolving issues of great importance, his ability to respond to issues with a great deal of knowledge on every level, be it national or international, shows that he has the experience to do the job."

RALPH STRAFACE
Westchester County Local 860 Region III
"Gary Hart, because he has the guts to come back into the race. NOTE: Gary Hart recently stepped out of the presidential race a second time."

SHIRLEY MATLICK
Nassau Retirees Local 920 Region I
"It's a very difficult question. A lot of the experts think Bush will be. I hope they're wrong. Whoever the next president is, I hope he'll protect the rights of elderly citizens."

RAFAL STRAFACE
Westchester County Local 860 Region III
"Gary Hart, because he has the guts to come back into the race. NOTE: Gary Hart recently stepped out of the presidential race a second time."

DOROTHY PRINCE
Rochester Psychiatric Center Local 420 Region VI
"Jesse Jackson, because we need a change in politics and in everything else."

GREGORY VEGA
Manhattan Psychiatric Center Local 413 Region II
"None of the candidates that I've seen show me that much. I'd like to see Donald Trump run because he gets things done."

EUGENE EVANS
Syracuse State Employees Local 013 Region V
"I feel Jesse Jackson can win it because he's straight to the point on a lot of issues."
By Anita Manley
CSEA Communications Associate
POUGHKEEPSIE — If you’ve ever sailed on, swam in, picnicked by, fished in, driven by, flown over or seen pictures of the beautiful Hudson River, you know why it’s the pride of New York state.
John Famelette is proud of it also. And because he wants to keep the river beautiful and clean, Famelette is an active volunteer member of Clearwater, an educational and environmental activist organization which works to protect the quality of the river while educating the public about the need to preserve our natural resources.
Famelette, a member of the Poughkeepsie City School District Unit of Dutchess County Educational CSEA Local 867, has been a Clearwater member (there are 10,000 members!) for seven years.
He works as chief electrician for Clearwater’s annual Great Hudson River Revival, a two-day festival held each summer in Westchester County. Famelette estimates he and his crew will work about a week wiring booths for food vendors and seven stages in preparation for the celebration.
“After working the revival for so many years, it makes you appreciate the Hudson River and realize how delicate the environment is,” says Famelette. “Clearwater has had the power to pull people together and work as one group.”
This year the 11th annual Great Hudson River Revival will be held June 18 and 19 at Westchester Community College. The two-day festival will feature continuous entertainment by folk singers and dancers, craftsmen, storytellers, boatbuilders, naturalists and community activist groups.
Attendance each year breaks the previous year’s record. Nearly 30,000 people attended each day last year.
The Clearwater organization is busy throughout the year, lobbying in Albany and Washington for funding and clean water legislation, monitoring industry compliance with pollution discharge regulations and presenting public education programs.
One of the organization’s most popular events in the Hudson Valley area is the “classroom of the waves” program which takes place on the sloop “Clearwater,” a 106-foot replica of a 19th century sailing craft. More than 50,000 children and adults have learned about the Hudson River on board this floating classroom.
Famelette says an organization like Clearwater relies on the activism of its members.
“We can always use help for our festival,” he says. “For instance, people will be needed to assist the handicapped, to help design and set up displays, staff booths, help with food preparation and serving, sign painting, site constructions and pre-festival work.”
Anyone interested in joining Clearwater and/or volunteering to work on the revival can obtain information by writing to Clearwater, 112 Market Street, Poughkeepsie, N.Y. 12601.
ROCHESTER — Black History Month brought a week of cultural events and exhibits to the Rochester Psychiatric Center last month.

Members of CSEA Local 420 at the facility played roles in both the planning and production of the programs.

"I’m sure it was enriching and educational for all concerned," said Local 420 President Geraldine Wiggins. "It was really great, and we plan to make next year’s show even better."

On the planning committee with Wiggins were Local 420 members Millard Griffin, James Hall, Dorothy Prince and Lentory Johnson, who is also on the center’s affirmative action advisory board.

GUEST SPEAKER Dr. Ahvay Orara talked on "Cultural Diversity and Treatment of Psychiatric Patients" at Rochester Psychiatric Center.

LOCAL 420 MEMBER Robert Broomfield sang “The Greatest Love” during the Black History Month program.

NEXT YEAR’S program celebrating Black History Month will be even better, promised planning committee member Lentory Johnson.

LOUISE HAWKINS, a member of Local 420, sang the spiritual “Move on a Little Higher” during the program.

ROCHESTER PSYCHIATRIC CENTER’s day care kids enjoyed the Black History Month program along with center employees.
Contract for Nassau

Salary increases of 5.5 percent and 5.75 percent highlight the tentative contract agreement negotiated by CSEA for 14,000 Nassau County employees.

"I urge all members to ratify this agreement," said CSEA Nassau County Local 830 President Jerome Donahue. "The best provisions are the money and the retention of fully-paid health insurance premiums."

Donahue also noted:

• Improvements in the dental and optical plans;
• More meal money;
• Increased uniform allowance;
• Higher differential pay.

The pact, which goes to the membership for ratification March 30, is retroactive to Jan. 1, 1988.

"The pact is a good one and we expect it will be ratified on March 30," added CSEA Region I President Danny Donohue.

Math — made easy

Is math holding you back in your job? Do you suffer from math anxiety whenever you come across a numbers problem?

If yes, then CSEA SWEEP can help you with a new math refresher course.

The following questions are typical of the material that will be covered — see how you do by checking your answers with the correct results below.

1) After an internal organizing effort, Local 007 increased its membership from 400 to 500. What was the percentage of the increase?

2) Jesse saves 3/50 of his income in a retirement account. If his annual income is $15,000, how much will he have saved after nine months?

3) Jesse’s wife saves 4.5 percent of her income for retirement. If she saves $810 for retirement, what’s her annual income?

4) If Local 777 has 720 members and represents 800 workers, what percentage of the workers are members?

5) Thirty-six of Local 777’s 720 members hold union positions. What fractional part of the membership have union positions?

If you got less than three of the answers correct, the CSEA SWEEP math refresher course may be just what you need.

The program covers concepts and problem solving related to fractions, decimals, percents, table and graph reading, and beginning algebra. It is free and open to all workers represented by CSEA.

Participation is on a first-come, first-served basis. If you do not register in time for this spring’s program, you will be put on a waiting list for next fall. To register, fill out the coupon below and send it to:

CSEA/SWEEP
Education & Training Department
143 Washington Avenue
Albany, New York 12210

Time is short, so act now!

Name __________________ shift __________________ to __________________

Region ______ Local ______

Work Address: __________________ Home Address: __________________

Work Phone ( ) Ext. __________

Home Phone ( ) __________

Yes! I’m interested in the CSEA SWEEP Math refresher course!

SUNY hospital failed to properly control TB outbreak

SYRACUSE — A New York state panel that investigated an outbreak of tuberculosis at SUNY Health Science Center Hospital found the hospital failed to limit the spread of the disease and neglected to notify staff and public health officials in Onondaga County of the risks of the infection.

CSEA represents more than 1,200 hospital workers who are members of Local 615. As reported in the previous issue of The Public Sector, union officials expressed concern about mismanagement of the TB outbreak and a delay in releasing information about the health threat and subsequent testing.

In a report released March 15, the panel convened by state Health Commissioner David Axelrod described a series of communication breakdowns that prevented the county health department and the hospital staff and administration from learning about a patient who had tuberculosis that triggered the outbreak until months after it was diagnosed.

So far, one nurse has contracted the disease and two more have shown signs of the disease since a TB-infected woman was admitted to the intensive care unit in July. Of the 45 staff members who worked with the patient, 29 show evidence of exposure.

March 21, 1988
Humans versus machines

CSEA protests plans to replace hearing reporters

By Kathleen Daly
Associate Editor

ALBANY — A small item tucked in the state budget for the next fiscal year could cost 12 hearing reporters their jobs with the state Division of Parole.

But CSEA doesn’t plan to let that happen. The union, which represents 11 of the hearing reporters, discovered the budget item would increase spending for electronic recording equipment, including video recorders, and result in the July 1 layoffs of the employees.

Instead of accepting the decision, CSEA is fighting back. A grievance has already been filed protesting that the action would violate the terms of the Administrative Services Unit (ASU) contract. An improper practice (IP) charge may also be filed.

Secondly, CSEA is using its legislative clout. CSEA President William L. McGowan has sent letters to all state legislators. He has also written a letter to Division of Parole Chairman Ramon J. Rodriguez.

“Despite the fact that we are asking you to prevent reduction in the current fiscal budget for the Division of Parole, we feel you will agree that the electronic equipment cannot replace dedicated and competent state employees who have provided this important task,” McGowan wrote the legislators.

Rodriguez has yet to respond to McGowan’s letter, in which the CSEA president requested detailed information about the plan to replace hearing reporters with electronic equipment.

The discussion hasn’t ended there, said CSEA statewide Political Action Chairman Joseph Conway.

“We’re very encouraged,” he said. “We’ve lobbied everyone who’s anyone.”

The response to the lobbying has been positive, Conway said, and he’s confident the hearing reporters’ jobs will be saved.

Meanwhile, CSEA staff is working through other channels.

CSEA convinces town to sign pact

By Daniel X. Campbell
CSEA Communications Associate

GLENVILLE — Glenville town officials found that they had a tiger by the tail recently and wisely decided to enact a new contract with CSEA rather than battle the angry union.

“We had a contract,” CSEA Field Representative Kate Luscombe explained, “but the new board did not want to honor it.”

The unit originally agreed to a new two-year pact providing its 22 clerical, water treatment and maintenance members with a 5.5 percent increase in 1988 and 6 percent in 1989. The union members ratified the pact on Dec. 29, and managements representative pledged town board passage on Dec. 30. But that vote never occurred, and the new town board, which took over Jan. 1, wanted to return to the table.

“CSEA used a recent PERB decision against the City of Saratoga Springs to make its claim that the town had a contract with CSEA, and that by refusing to either accept or reject the agreement on Dec. 30, the town board had imposed a contract on itself,” Luscombe said.

Angry CSEA members picketed a recent meeting of the new town board and then packed the town meeting hall to complain about the board’s action.

The board went into executive session and after a half hour of discussion, reconvened and passed the contract retroactive to Dec. 30.
Special elections set to fill vacancies on CSEA's statewide Board of Directors

Ballots will be in the mail April 15 for the special election to fill a pair of vacancies on CSEA's statewide Board of Directors. Being contested are board vacancies from Chautauqua and Westchester counties.

Eligible voters may obtain replacement ballots beginning April 22 by contacting Marcel Gardner at CSEA Headquarters, 143 Washington Avenue, Albany, N.Y. 12210. The toll-free telephone number is 1-800-342-4146 or (518) 434-0191.

Candidates will, as usual, be afforded an opportunity to observe all aspects of the tabulating process, such as the picking up and opening of ballots, etc.

Candidates, or proxies with written authorization from candidates, who wish to observe the tabulation may do so between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. at CSEA Headquarters, Albany.

Ballots will be counted on May 5 following the noontime deadline for their return. Results will be published in The Public Sector. The election protest period ends May 16.

All candidates were given an opportunity to submit statements and photographs for publication in this edition of The Public Sector. The statements and photographs as submitted are printed below.

The remarks are the personal statement of the candidate and are not to be construed as reflecting the opinions or beliefs of The Public Sector or CSEA, Inc.

Chautauqua County

James R. Smith

A member for 17 years, I have served as an officer and a negotiator for three contracts in Chautauqua County. Consequently, I am familiar with the members' concerns. If elected, I pledge to bring these concerns before the Statewide BOD and do my best to let our voices be heard.

James Kurtz

I wish to thank everyone who signed my nominating petitions. It has been my pleasure to serve the members of Chautauqua Local 807 for six years as your Representative to the Board of Directors of the State Association. I appreciate your support and pledge to continue efforts on your behalf.

Lewis County

Joyce P. Rice—(Unopposed)

Westchester County

Edward F. Carafa

(No statement or photo submitted)

Grace Ann Aloisi

The Board seat vacancy for Westchester Local 860 is important and the 11,000 members need dependable, reliable representation. I have served the Local for 16 years, the past 9 as an officer. This position would enable me to continue my dedication and commitment to Local 860 on the statewide level.

Sullivan County

Thomas Schmidt—(Unopposed)

Assemblyman Barbaro to deliver keynote speech at Region VI political action seminar April 8, 9

NIAGARA FALLS — Assemblyman Frank J. Barbaro (47th District) will be guest speaker at a luncheon during a two-day CSEA Region VI Political Action Seminar April 8 and 9 at the Niagara Falls Hilton Hotel.

Barbaro, chairman of the Assembly Labor Committee since 1980, will speak at the seminar luncheon at 12:30 p.m. April 9. He has been honored for his efforts in behalf of working people by numerous organizations, including CSEA and AFSCME.

CSEA members interested in additional information concerning the two-day seminar should contact the CSEA Region VI headquarters, (716) 886-0391.

March 21, 1988
Publication of this list is meant only as an aid to you in selecting a dentist whose fees will be the same as our schedule. We do not recommend or control the quality of a dentist's work, nor are we in a position to verify or refute the opinions of a dentist reviewing another's work.
“Everyone was so thoughtful, so wonderful,” he remarked. “I just want them to know how much I appreciate all my friends in CSEA.”

AFSCME was the largest and fastest growing union in the AFL-CIO last year. According to 1987 per capita figures released recently, we gained 40,995 new members last year, bringing membership to a yearly average of 1,063,990 (the full year total does not include school employees who work only 10 months).

YOU CAN FIGHT CITY HALL say members of the Ithaca City Unit of CSEA Local 855 Tompkins County. Angered by the lack of a contract, city employees protest at a recent council meeting: (1-r) Ray Knuutila, “Doc” Livingston, Unit President and President Local 855; Robert Simpson, Jackie Merwin, Bill Maker, Karin Anderson, Edie Rohrer and tiny, but dedicated, Heather Morgan. About 240 City of Ithaca employees have worked without a contract since Dec. 31 and went to impasse with city management Dec. 14.

Spillman has been awarded the designation as “Top Gun” for his work in bringing credit to his county, according to Parks, Recreation, and Forestry. Spillman was selected by representative Charlie Scott, son of CSEA Region IV North Country Field representative Charlie Scott. Young Scott is a member of the first All-Academic Team of the Champlain Valley Athletic Conference. He was selected for his 95 grade point average and outstanding athletic abilities.

“Working for the school district has been a pleasure,” says Fredericks. “Hard to leave after 32 years, but life is too short.”

All in the family

What do Mark Mead and Brian Campbell, sons of CSEA Region IV President C. Allen Mead and CSEA Region IV Communications Associate Daniel X. Campbell have in common?

Both are winners of four-year scholarships, $500 per year, to LaSalle Institute in Troy. The students will have to keep 90 grade point averages to keep the awards in effect.

Their dads say “they will.”

Kudos also to Charlie D. Scott, son of CSEA Region IV North Country Field Representative Charlie Scott. Young Scott is a member of the first All-Academic Team of the Champlain Valley Athletic Conference. He was selected for his 95 grade point average and outstanding athletic abilities.

Body Break

Erie County CSEA Local 815 members can now enjoy a Body Break three times a week. Body Break is a series of kicking, bending, and stretching exercises performed while sitting in a chair. It takes place during lunch hour and is led by an instructor from the Empire State Ballet. No special workout clothing is needed. Participating members say the sessions relieve tension and provide a “healthy energizer” for alert, productive afternoons.

Special kind of guy

Sam Fredericks says the golf courses are beckoning, so after 32 years of service, he will retire from the Eldred School District in Sullivan County.

A bus driver/custodian for the past three decades, Fredericks has lived his entire life in this area which borders Pennsylvania on the Delaware River.

“If I get out of the service, I needed a steady job,” he said. “I heard there was an opening here and figured I’d try it.”

His wife also works for the school district as the transportation supervisor.

“Young Scott is a winner of four-year scholarships, $500 per year, to LaSalle Institute in Troy. The students will have to keep 90 grade point averages to keep the awards in effect.

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Winter Carnival’s "Top Gun"

Erie County CSEA Local 815 member Charles Spillman has been awarded the Top Gun designation as employee of the month in the county’s Department of Parks, Recreation, and Forestry. Spillman was selected for his work in coordinating the successful Winter Carnival held in the county’s Chestnut Ridge Park.

Spillman, a 16-year employee of the department, displayed creativity, commitment, leadership and hard work in bringing credit to his county, according to Parks Commissioner Joseph X. Martin. Spillman received his award from County Executive Dennis Gorski.
NIAGARA FALLS — A visit to Lowell Kammer’s home is more like a trip to “Annie-land.”

Kammer, 28, is a member of Niagara County CSEA Local 832 and a bona fide fan of the fictional character Little Orphan Annie.

His home is adorned with memorabilia, from portraits to cartoons to play programs to ashtrays and music books. His collection covers all aspects of the wide-eyed orphan, from the comic strip of the 1920s, the radio show of the 1930s, the Broadway show of the 1970s and the movie and plays of the 1980s.

What’s the root of his obsession with the little redhead?

“My interest began after seeing the stage musical locally,” Kammer recalled. “At first I just started loading up on everything related to Annie in general. Then I decided to make order of the chaos and research. Although my current interest is on the musical, the collecting covers all points.”

During his research, Kammer discovered he is not alone in his affection for Annie. He found a fan club based in Cedar Knolls, N.J., and has since become friends with many club members. They exchange visits around the country to see local productions of the play.

He has seen the production about 25 times so far, and, as he was being interviewed for this story, was about to embark on a trip to Michigan to see another.

“I’ve traveled as far north as Grand Bend, Ontario, Canada, and as far south as Miami, Florida. Florida’s Little Annie, Renee Shields, and her family gave me a Christmas to remember,” he said. “So far, a rough calculation says I have covered roughly 7,000 miles at least to see the show.”

Kammer teaches piano on the side, and this interest has also furthered his Annie ties.

“Meeting people has also gotten me spots on telethons playing piano for these children I meet,” Kammer said. “I drove as far as Bedford, Michigan, for one telethon to play for Sarah Charley, who was Annie in Windsor, Ontario, with the Windsor Light Opera Association.”

On the job at Nioga Library System,

Kammer is a library page. He’s worked there for seven years and recently became a permanent part-time employee. He is now working to become full time. The CSEA affiliation at the library was one of the job’s main attractions, he said.

In the past, Kammer had other collection favorites, but the Annie fascination seems to have taken permanent hold.

“It is a never-ending, tireless hobby that rejuvenates itself every day,” Kammer said. “I wake up every morning surrounded by pictures of these children I’ve logged thousands of miles to see, and if I had it to do over again, I would. Each new show is special, and each new find at an antique show breathes new life into Annie for me.”