FIGHTING ECONOMIC TERRORISM IN ERIE COUNTY
SEE PAGE 3
Wayne County members stand tough

LYONS - Wayne County CSEA members stared down the barrel of a gun in the form of implied threats of layoffs if they did not agree to reopen their contract for give back. But they didn't blink, stood their ground and have received a scheduled wage increase without any layoffs after all.

"We did look down the barrel of the gun, but they blinked," said Local 859 President Ed Williams. "The vote was overwhelmingly against reopening the contract we had worked so hard to achieve."

The county wanted the CSEA county employee unit, the supervisory unit and the county sheriff's unit to reopen their contracts.

After rejecting the reopening request, CSEA members picketed the county legislature budget meeting to protest any plans for layoffs. Union officials attribute their success to the strong unified stand on the union vote and the spirited picketing.

"We know they'll be shooting for job cuts in the upcoming negotiations for next year," said Supervisory Unit President Jane Heidenreich. "But we'll be prepared to show the value of our members' jobs to the community."

Williams, Heidenreich, Sheriffs Unit President Norman Bargerstock and Employees Unit President Cyndy Herman vowed to present a unified front in upcoming contract talks.

Southampton concession demands outrage union

SOUTHAMPTON — CSEA members in the Town of Southampton are outraged at the town supervisor's request for contract concessions barely two months after negotiating a new two-year pact.

The 250 member unit voted unanimously against any concessions at a recent membership meeting with Unit President Ken Malone and CSEA Labor Relations Specialist Tony Soucie.

"If there is a deficit, the town created it and was aware of it prior to completing negotiations," Soucie said. "That was the time to discuss this, not after the contract is signed and in place."

CSEA's analysis shows the budget with a tax levy decrease of more than $300,000. "If there is a deficit, how can the town afford this decrease?" Soucie asked.

Sabina Kulakowski killer gets 25-years to life

The convicted murderer of Cayuga County Social Services Caseworker Sabina Kulakowski has been sentenced to 25-years to life. A Cayuga County jury in February gave Roy Brown, 31, of Syracuse the maximum sentence for second degree murder for the brutal strangulation and mutilation killing of Kulakowski, a CSEA member, on May 23, 1991.

The prosecution said Brown randomly killed Kulakowski because he was angry at Social Services workers for placing his daughter in foster care in 1990.

Onondaga Local 834 members ok contract

Onondaga County CSEA Local 834 members overwhelmingly ratified a new 3-year contract that provides raises in 1992 and 1993. Members voted 2,018 to 834 to accept the agreement retroactive to 1991 without a raise for last year.

Local 834 members in November had rejected a similar proposal that would have phased in raises in 1993.

Law enforcement committee pushes retirement legislation

CSEA's Ad Hoc Committee to Study Local Government Law Enforcement is continuing its work to get a uniform retirement plan for county corrections officers and deputy sheriffs.

CSEA represents nearly 2,000 local government law enforcement employees in 16 counties. Most are corrections officers and deputy sheriffs who, although their responsibilities and duties are basically the same throughout the state, don't have a uniform retirement plan.

The state Assembly has a bill which would keep the two types of workers in a single retirement plan. The bill, A.8838, would provide for a 25-year retirement plan for certain sheriffs, undersheriffs, deputy sheriffs and corrections officers whose employers choose to provide it.

The ad hoc committee is asking CSEA-represented county corrections officers and deputy sheriffs to write their state legislators asking them to support A.8838. Members who are interested should contact their unit presidents for ideas on how to write the letter.

The ad hoc committee members are: James Brown of Cortland County, Matt Flanagan of Rensselaer County, Robert Outhouse of Cayuga County, Michael Bogulski of Erie County and Joseph Santoro of Schoharie County.
In Erie County

**Layoffs hinged on political posturing**

Editor’s note: Erie County employees were taken on a roller coaster ride in February, and it wasn’t fun for any of them. In what one CSEA union leader called an act of “economic terrorism” caused by a hand of Republican legislators, more than 2,300 county workers faced layoffs while county legislators toyed with whether to allow the county sales tax rate to drop back to 7 percent from 8 percent.

By Ron Wofford
CSEA Communications Associate

BUFFALO — Erie County employees are breathing a little easier after the county’s 8 percent sales tax was extended, averting a massive reduction of services that would have included more than 2,300 layoffs.

Hundreds of Erie County CSEA members and others marched on the county legislature prior to the crucial vote over whether to keep the county sales tax at 8 percent or reduce it to 7 percent.

CSEA members and leaders urged retaining the sales tax at 8 percent so normal services could continue.

The crisis began when a bloc of six Republican legislators announced they would withhold casting the needed vote that would allow the county to retain an 8 percent sales tax, unless their property tax reforms were aired. The 8 percent sales tax measure was defeated as hundreds looked on in horror.

State legislation allowing Erie County to maintain the 8 percent rate was due to expire 24 hours after the vote. The county executive, noting a $91 million shortfall if the tax was not extended, announced a “dooms-day” budget plan that would virtually shut down all non-mandated county services. But next day, hours from the deadline, a second vote was held following a promise of compromise by the Democratic caucus, which holds a one-vote majority.

CSEA members said they remain wary of the so-called tax reform measures, which will be voted on in May.

“This was totally uncalled for,” said Stephen Caruana, Erie County Employees Unit president. “Politics was the reason for bringing the county so close to the brink of disaster. Our members and the public deserve better behavior by our county legislators. They put a lot of people through the wringer unnecessarily.”

“Threatening the working lives of county employees was nothing short of economic terrorism by the Republicans who were stalling the budget,” CSEA Region II President Robert Lattimer said. “We were not about to stand by and let vital community services like the libraries be closed, the health department be gutted or the sheriff’s patrols be reduced.”

The county executive threatened 2,381 layoffs of county employees, the closure of all libraries and layoff of all 272 library employees, elimination of $4.8 million in aid to local arts groups, a possible closure of one of three community college campuses, and an end to alcohol, burn treatment and trauma services at three outlets of the Erie County Medical Center.

“We have to constantly monitor all legislative proposals, so that something does not get slipped in that would do essentially the same thing and again bring the county to the brink of shutdown,” Caruana said.

He said the unit’s political action committee is working with Region President Lattimer and PAC Coordinator Roger Sherrrie to be ready for any eventuality.

**Layoffs in Nassau County**

Devastating lives, destroying services

By Sheryl C. Jenks
CSEA Communications Associate

MINEOLA— The number of CSEA members in Nassau County who have been laid off has risen to more than 800 and continues to climb, destroying lives and services throughout the county.

Despite demonstrations and impassioned pleas by employees and the public, the county has been serving walking papers, apparently with little or no thought on the effect the loss of services would have. Based on planned budget cuts, the county will layoff between 4,000 to 6,000 employees.

“IT’s absolutely heartbreaking,” said CSEA Nassau County Local 830 President Rita Wallace. “The county is busy whipping the axe left and right and most of the county workforce lives in fear each day that they will be next,” she said.

The results of indiscriminate layoffs are beginning to show up everywhere.

A patient in the Nassau County Medical Center was abducted and sexually assaulted by a group of men who passed through hallways and under the eye of security cameras without being seen. Five security officers were recently laid off there.

The layoff list has not come through for the Nassau County jail yet, but in an effort to save on overtime costs, the sheriff has ordered non-correctional civilian employees to do the work of correction officers.

“As corrections officers we are now responsible for the care, custody and control of the inmate population, as well as safeguarding the public and fellow employees,” said CSEA Sheriffs Department Unit Executive Vice President Tom Destefano.

The sheriff’s order ignores the difference between the level of training and the fact that corrections officers must pass a test, undergo intensive physical and psychological exams, and in most cases, complete eight weeks of training, including the use of deadly force. CSEA charges.

CSEA has filed suit in state Supreme Court asking that the county be forced to stop the unsafe practice.

Probation employees recently appeared before the Board of Supervisors with black ribbons tied around their badges as a symbol of the death of the probation system in Nassau County.

With more than 100 Probation employees slated for layoff, the county will be ending programs such as home arrest. That will end up costing the county thousands of extra dollars because convicts will now be incarcerated for approximately $35,000 per year instead of put on probation, which costs approximately $1,000 per year.

CSEA professional staff and employees activists have been working hard to ensure civil service rules and regulations are followed for the layoff procedure and that bump and retreat rights are retained.
They zapped the cap

By Daniel X. Campbell
CSEA Communications Associate

AMSTERDAM - Using faces and facts, CSEA zapped the tax cap in Montgomery County. "Our county had a tax cap and we were originally facing about 400 layoffs. But with CSEA's help we zapped the cap and saved the services." China said.

In Montgomery County

LAYOFFS DON'T WORK ...
... PEOPLE DO

I'm Pat Singer, a licensed practical nurse. I work at the Montgomery Manor taking care of the needs of county senior citizens.

I'm a widow with a 16-year-old. My job is very important to me. I earn just enough to get by and not much more. I pay my bills, pay my taxes.

Supposedly, my job is safe. But who will serve you if my job is cut in the future? If I'm laid off, who will take care of the health care needs of the Manor residents now, six months from now, a year from now?

If I'm laid off now how will I pay my bills.

Please save the services -- Zap the tax cap.

Talk to your supervisor today so that we can all work together tomorrow.

Beginning the win in Cayuga County

AUBURN — CSEA has won an important victory in the first round of a battle to kill a lag payroll Cayuga County imposed on its employees last year without negotiating with the union.

CSEA won a grievance filed on behalf of Cayuga County Unit President Kathy Johnson. It is one of more than 300 the union filed for each of the employees whose pay was lagged.

The arbitrator ruled that the county had violated its contract with CSEA when it lagged Johnson's pay and ordered the county to repay the money it took from her pay check. The 10-day lag began last June.

The decision should send a strong message to the county that they "just can't do what they want to; they have to negotiate first," Johnson said.

The arbitrator also ordered the county legislature to rescind the resolution that originally implemented the lag.

For now, only Johnson will see any money, because the other grievances have not been decided.

CSEA is working to be sure the rest of the workers gets back the money the county took in the imposed lag.

While the county is expected to negotiate with CSEA concerning the lag on the rest of the workforce, Johnson warned the county may use this opportunity to try to re-negotiate the lag by using threats of further layoffs and cutbacks.

"I was very happy to see that the integrity of our contract was upheld," Johnson said.

"Now we have to gear up for the next round in this fight," she declared.

In Livingstone County

Public employees fight layoffs

GENESEO - Livingston County workers are struggling to tell the public about the valuable services they provide and to return laid-off members to work.

Our members are very dedicated, and it's not fair to blame them for the country's fiscal problems," said Tammy Macomber, Local 826 president. "We intend to continue educating the public about how our members' jobs provide needed services for our community. We will also point out where money is wasted that could be better used to recall the 21 employees who were laid off at the beginning of the budget year."

Macomber is proud of the support the employees unit members showed for fellow workers who received pink slips.

"More than 200 showed up and picketed at several county legislature meetings urging the lawmakers to avoid layoffs," she said. "They marched in freezing weather and showed plenty of fighting CSEA spirit."

Region VI President Robert Lattimer testified at a budget hearing against layoffs, and CSEA Political Action Coordinator Roger Sherrie helped plan the unit's fight against the job cutbacks.

"We were successful in reducing the number of planned layoffs by more than half," Macomber said. "But we don't think it's fair that any of our hard-working members suffer going jobless."
GOING FOR IT!

Former CSEA member heads for Olympics

By Anita Manley
CSEA Communications Associate

MIDDLETOWN - CSEA members who work at the Ramapo Catskill Library have raised money to help a former co-worker get to the Olympics in Barcelona, Spain, this summer.

Not only is Donna Miller a tennis champion, she also plays basketball and is a swimmer. What makes this athlete really outstanding is that she competes from a wheelchair.

The number two U.S. singles tennis champion, Miller is on the U.S. World Cup team and is one of four women who will compete in the Paralympics, an Olympic competition for disabled athletes.

In order to qualify, Miller has travelled all over the world. Last summer, she was in Japan where she beat their number one tennis champion.

In 1983, Miller developed multiple sclerosis. Formerly an employee of the Ramapo Catskill Library, she is now executive director and program director of the Western Orange County Center for Independent Living, a federally-funded advocacy agency for the disabled. The agency serves about 1,200 disabled people each year.

The goal of the agency is to promote equal access. “If a service is available to any Orange County resident, it should be accessible to everyone,” Miller said.

Miller also serves on the Governor’s Committee for Accessible Transportation and an Orange County task force for disabled people.

A major bone of contention for Miller is the inequity in the treatment of disabled athletes.

When an able-bodied athlete wins a tournament, she or he wins cash prizes, automobiles, etc. Corporations will sponsor the athlete, providing money for travel and other expenses.

Not so with disable athletes. When Miller began writing to corporations to obtain sponsors, they refused. Miller pays her own way to tournaments.

She does not, however, complain. Friends have been generous, among them her former co-workers at the library.

Library Unit President Carol Cleveland said she read an article in a local newspaper about Miller.

“My father has MS,” Cleveland said. “I thought it would be a good project to raise money for Donna.”

A 50/50 raffle yielded $210 for the “Keep Donna No. 1” Fund. Library employees are planning more raffles and fundraisers to help Miller with her expenses. Local organizations and schools are also helping. Miller recently received a $600 check from the Middletown High School Varsity Club.

Anyone who wants to help can send a check to:

“Keep Donna No. 1”
c/o Jessica DeStefano
77 Sprague Ave.
Middletown, NY 10940.
WASHINGTONVILLE - Cathy Ferrara thought it was just heartburn, but she will never forget the October day "heartburn" landed her in the hospital with what she later learned was a major heart attack.

"They didn't think I was going to make it," Ferrara recalled. "Two-thirds of my heart was destroyed. They had already called in a counselor to help my youngest son deal with my death."

The three-year employee of the Washingtonville School District in Orange County was transferred to Albany for more tests. Her cardiologist then transferred her to Pittsburgh in critical condition. Her only hope was a transplant because of the damage to her heart.

"I had no idea how serious it was," she said. "They had to keep my spirits up."

After a week in Pittsburgh, the doctor told her they had a heart and were going to operate on her immediately.

"Seven and a half hours later, I had a new heart," she said.

Four weeks later, Ferrara was home. "I sometimes think, 'did this really happen to me?'" she said.

Ferrara has been able to return to work already, working in the library rather than as a monitor as she had before the operation.

The experience has Ferrara rethinking her priorities.

"I was so busy crabbing before," she said. "Now, I want to go back to school and work with battered and abused women."

She is grateful to her co-workers for their help. Her CSEA unit sponsored a benefit dance and the teachers collected more than $1,000 for her. Insurance has covered much of her expenses, but she still has bills and is out of work.

She was also able to get extra sick leave thanks to a sick leave bank included in the contract CSEA negotiated.

Her advice to others?

"Don't smoke," the former heavy smoker said.

Except for smoking, Ferrara was in good physical condition according to the medical community's rule of thumb: her cholesterol and blood pressure were normal and she exercised regularly. In fact, just last summer, her physician told her was in excellent condition.

"Take good care of yourself," she said. "and don't ignore symptoms."

CSEA Babylon Clerical Unit President Helene Johnson and Custodial Unit President Patrick Chatterton talk with a reporter.

Babylon units want contract

BABYLON - CSEA members and teachers joined two CSEA school district units in a demonstration at Babylon High School to protest working without a contract.

The members of the Babylon School District Custodial and Clerical units of CSEA Suffolk Educational Local 870 have been working without a contract since June 31.

The employees accepted a mediator's proposal but the district rejected it. CSEA Collective Bargaining Specialist Jim Walters said.

Clerical Unit President Helene Johnson and Custodial Unit President Patrick Chatterton said their work is being devalued.

HORSEHEADS - CSEA members in the Horseheads School District recently ratified new contract.

The contract for the transportation employees unit is now in effect. The two-year agreement includes a salary adjustment, no change in health insurance except for a $2 prescription co-pay increase, improved wage adjustments for leave time and addition of a vision benefit through CSEA's Employee Benefit Fund in the second year.

The contract for the custodial/maintenance/food service employees unit was ratified by the members and was pending school board ratification as this edition of The Public Sector went to press. This three-year agreement calls for salary adjustments, and no additional health insurance contribution except for a $2 prescription co-pay increase and the continuation of the unit's successful labor-management committee.
CSEA fights retaliation against member

NEW ROCHELLE - A nine-year Westchester County employee has charged the county with retaliating against him. Nevelle Kelly, an electrician, reported county officials to the local Affirmative Action board for passing him over three times for promotion. Now, he said, he is the only electrician for the county's pump stations working without an assistant. “I used to have an assistant, until I went to Affirmative Action,” he said.

Kelly often performs dangerous work, he said. Recently, he was called early on a cold, rainy morning to repair a malfunctioning pump station. “I had to climb down into this confined space,” he said. “What if I fell? What if I was electrocuted? There is no one there to help me.”

Labor Relations Specialist Max Neuberger told Kelly to document each time he is expected to work alone. “It’s a case where you have to put pressure on them,” he said. “He should document everything he does that requires an assistant.

“It’s clearly a case of retribution,” Neuberger said. “It’s unproductive to have this man working alone. It’s a case of safety and production.”

Union wants asbestos removal investigated in Saratoga County

ALBANY - CSEA is calling for an investigation into allegations of illegal asbestos removal at three Saratoga County office buildings. “CSEA is asking the state Department of Labor Asbestos Control Bureau for a complete investigation of this situation,” a union spokesperson said. “The health and safety of our members at the worksite is of the highest importance to CSEA.”

The call for an investigation follows a newspaper story alleging that a county employee had been directed to remove asbestos materials bare handed and asked about the improper removal; the story alleged that Saratoga County officials provided incorrect and inaccurate information to the Saratoga County CSEA Unit leadership, the union is prepared to seek legal action against the county administration,” a union spokesperson said.

County officials vehemently deny the allegations and are trying to portray the county employee, who is out on workers compensation and facing disciplinary charges in an unrelated matter, as a “disgruntled worker.” However, two other county employees, who want to remain unidentified, have corroborated the first worker’s allegation that asbestos was removed illegally by county workers.

CSEA smoking over 'no smoking' at JCC

WATERTOWN - CSEA officials here are "smoking mad" at Jefferson Community College officials who recently imposed a unilateral ban on campus smoking, without negotiating with the union.

Early last fall, the college board of trustees passed a resolution banning smoking in any indoor campus building, CSEA Labor Relations Specialist Stephen Ragan III said. The ban applies to both different asbestos removal project, indicating all materials had been properly removed.

"If Saratoga County representatives knowingly provided incorrect and inaccurate information to the Saratoga County CSEA Unit leadership, the union is prepared to seek legal action against the county administration,” a union spokesperson said.

Ragan hopes the Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) will overturn the ban based on a recent PERB decision in a similar case involving the unilateral imposition of a smoking ban at Massena Memorial Hospital.

The PERB decision rescinded the ban because the hospital violated the Taylor Law by failing to negotiate the change with CSEA.
Privatization? Dumb!

Whenever a dumb idea comes along, you can almost bet that a politician will hatch it or latch onto it. Take privatization of public services, for instance.

Privatization is a dumb idea. But a lot of politicians would like to take credit for the concept and a heck of a lot more climb on the contracting-out bandwagon all the time for political expediency.

The truth is, privatization is a gimmick. In some cases it may bail out cash-strapped governments in the short-run but will inevitably bury them with cost-overruns and disintegrating services. Privatization simply doesn’t work, except for the private contractors who reap a quick windfall for themselves and leave government holding the bag the moment profits dry up.

Public service provided by public employees is a system that has stood the test of time. It remains the most effective and most efficient system for delivering services the public wants and needs.

The latest, perhaps dumbest yet, contracting out idea comes from the state Senate Advisory Commission on Privatization, which wants the state to sell off huge chunks of public service programs to private industry.

Among other things, the committee wants private industry to be allowed to bid for all state programs and services and wants localities to turn garbage and trash systems over to private operators.

And, believe it or not, Gov. Mario Cuomo was quoted by the Associated Press as going right along for the ride.

"We'll sell anything," said Cuomo. "You make me an offer."

It looks like Cuomo would gladly be the chief auctioneer of public services to big business opportunists. "Make me an offer," Governor? Public service and public employees did not put the state in the fiscal mess it is today - mismanagement and poor political decisions did.

Experiences all over the country prove over and over again that going private is no way for governments to cut costs. The city of Albany found that out recently when it fired its mechanics and contracted out vehicle maintenance work. Albany ended up with higher costs, shoddy work and a red face. Los Angeles privatized management of its vehicles and wound up with huge cost overruns and its fleet of vehicles in a state of disrepair. When Philadelphia contracted for private medical services for city jails, costs increased by 751 percent in two years.

Government leaders better think long and hard before selling the farm to privateers. Politicians can sell the services but they keep the responsibility. When a privately-run program or service turns sour, or becomes too costly for the public to accept, or is simply abandoned by private industry because it is no longer profitable, taxpayers will demand their elected officials take action. Unfortunately, they will find it difficult to respond because when they sold the farm they also sold control.

At CSEA, we will continue to work with governments to help them deliver public services at the highest level for the lowest cost, something that privateers, driven by profits, can never achieve.
CSEA/AFSCME delegates aiming for Democratic National Convention.

CSEA is supporting Gov. Bill Clinton in the Presidential race.

Important information The Empire Plan for CSEA members.

CSEA's mortgage program is gearing up to help home buyers.

Important updates on the elections of CSEA Board of Directors and delegates to the AFSCME Convention.

CSEA retiree news.

It's time to plan for Worker Memorial Day.

CSEA benefits in Spanish.

New Region II office opens

NEW YORK -- CSEA Region II has moved to new offices in New York City. The new address is:

CSEA Metropolitan Region II office 40 Fulton Street 22nd Floor New York, NY 10038-1850 Telephone: 212-406-2156 Fax: 212-406-2296

CSEAP offers new booklet

If you use a computer 20 or more hours per week, you'll want to read a new publication that provides answers to safety and health questions. "VDT Health Update," a new brochure published by the Clerical and Secretarial Employee Advancement Program (CSEAP), addresses concerns about a wide variety of safety and health issues related to intensive computer use. Some of the topics covered are:

- whether visual symptoms experienced by some are permanent;
- special considerations for eyes after age 40;
- ways to be comfortable at the terminal without spending money;
- computer work and pregnancy; and
- concerns over low-level radiation.

If you want to obtain a copy, call CSEAP at (518) 457-6306 or write to:

CSEAP Department of Civil Service Building 1, Room 165 W. Averell Harriman State Office Building Campus Albany, NY 12239

Applications available for Flaumenbaum scholarships

Applications for the Irving Flaumenbaum Memorial Scholarship for the children of CSEA members are now available.

CSEA awards 18 Flaumenbaum scholarships annually, with three awarded in each of CSEA's six regions, to graduating high school seniors who are children of CSEA members.

Summer school for union women scheduled

The Northeastern Summer School for Union Women will be held July 19 to 24 at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst.

How to request political, ideological refund on dues

CSEA members who object to the appropriation of a portion of their dues for political or ideological purposes unrelated to collective bargaining can obtain a rebate.

How to request refund from CSEA

The CSEA political refund amounts to 3 percent of the dues collected in 1991. Under the union's rebate procedure, individual refund requests must be submitted in writing by certified or registered mail addressed to:

CSEA Treasurer Civil Service Employees Association 143 Washington Avenue Albany, NY 12210

CSEA refund requests will only be accepted during the month of March.

Individual requests only must be submitted; lists of members are not acceptable. Each request for reimbursement must be typed or legibly printed and include the individual's name, home address, Social Security number and CSEA local number. The request must be signed by the member.

How to request refund from AFSCME

Member who object to AFSCME's international union, expending a portion of their dues for partisan political or ideological purposes may also request a refund from AFSCME.

Under AFSCME's rebate procedure, reimbursement requests must be made individually in writing between April 1 and April 16. Requests must be typed or legibly printed and include the member’s name, Social Security number, home address, AFSCME local and council number.

The individual request must be signed by the member and sent by registered or certified mail by the member to:

International Secretary-Treasurer AFSCME International Headquarters 1625 L Street NW Washington, DC 20036

The international secretary-treasurer calculates the per capita payment equivalent that was used for partisan political or ideological purposes during the fiscal year and refunds that amount. Requests to CSEA and / or AFSCME must be renewed in writing every year.

Applications, including official high school transcripts and proof of SAT or ACT scores, are due April 15. Application forms are available from CSEA local presidents, region offices and headquarters. The winners will be selected in June.

For more information, contact Denise Futia at CSEA Headquarters by calling 1-800-342-4146 or 518-434-0191.

For more information, contact Dale Melcher at the School of Labor Studies at the University. The cost for the program is $332 for a double and $352 for a single.
ALBANY — CSEA/AFSCME will have at least 37 candidates on the Democratic primary ballot on April 7 pledged to support Arkansas Gov. Bill Clinton.

If successful in the primaries, the candidates for delegates and alternates will support Clinton at the Democratic National Convention in New York City in July.

Another handful of CSEA and AFSCME members are running as delegates to support Nebraska Sen. Bob Kerrey and Iowa Sen. Tom Harkin.

In order to vote for CSEA and AFSCME delegates in the primary, voters must first select Clinton, then vote for the number of delegates allowed. A formula that allows for distribution of delegates among the highest vote-getting male and female candidates will determine who actually attends the convention as a delegate.

In order to vote in the April 7 primary, voters must be registered by March 13.

Below is the latest list available, as this issue of The Public Sector went to press, of the CSEA and AFSCME members who are on the ballot as Clinton delegates/alternates.

1st Congressional District: Kenneth F. Cavanaugh (alternate)
2nd Congressional District: Gene Davis
4th Congressional District: Marie Ardell
5th Congressional District: Leslie V. Eason (alternate)
6th Congressional District: Charles Hughes
7th Congressional District: Gladys Camacho (alternate)
8th Congressional District: Michael Ballesteros (alternate)
10th Congressional District: Louis Albano
11th Congressional District: Louise Debow (alternate)
12th Congressional District: Leo Jesse Jackson
15th Congressional District: Elizabeth Cruse (alternate)
16th Congressional District: James Edey
19th Congressional District: Guido Menta (alternate)
21st Congressional District: Josephine LeBeau
22nd Congressional District: Robert Leibowitz
23rd Congressional District: Mary E. Sullivan
24th Congressional District: Daniel F. Donohue
25th Congressional District: Betty Jo Johnson
26th Congressional District: Rolland Thomas (alternate)
27th Congressional District: Francine A. Turner (alternate)
28th Congressional District: Theron Joseph VanDyke (alternate)
29th Congressional District: Thomas D. McNabb
30th Congressional District: John Anthony Paeno
31st Congressional District: Robert L. Leonard
32nd Congressional District: Mary K. Saxon
33rd Congressional District: Dorothy Jones

The following CSEA/AFSCME members are running as delegates for other Democratic candidates:

Kerrey delegates:
11th Congressional District: Todd Reisman
24th Congressional District: Annette Terani
31st Congressional District: Jerry Prince

Harkin delegates:
11th Congressional District: Winifred Ross
24th Congressional District: Ann Marie Polinsky
31st Congressional District: Joseph P. Papillo

CSEA member to run as Bush delegate

CSEA has at least one member running in the Republican primary. In the 8th Congressional District, Joseph P. Papillo is running as a delegate for George Bush.

Don't forget to vote April 7, 1992 The New York State Primary
A friend of labor

"Governor Clinton, throughout his long tenure as governor of Arkansas, has always received the support of AFSCME."

"Our Council has always felt that Bill Clinton is a friend of labor and a friend of AFSCME ... Bill Clinton has run for Governor seven times. All seven times, he's had the endorsement of the Arkansas AFL-CIO."

"Governor Clinton is 'in touch' with working people ... becoming a member at large of AFSCME in the early 1980's ... We have a governor who is willing to stand shoulder to shoulder with working men and women as a member of organized labor."

BILL CLINTON wants to create 200,000 new jobs right now by spending the first two years of the new highway bill funding immediately. And create still more jobs by cutting interest rates and providing low-cost mortgages to 500,000 young families.

BILL CLINTON wants to give middle class taxpayers a 10 percent tax cut, and pay for it by raising rates on people earning more than $200,000 a year.

BILL CLINTON wants to cover every American with health insurance provided by their employer or the government.

BILL CLINTON favors pre-school for every child who needs it; a national examination system to push elementary and secondary school students to world-class standards in math and science; a nationwide apprenticeship program to build job skills for high school students not going to college, and a domestic GI bill of college assistance for any student who wants it.

BILL CLINTON proposes cutting $100 billion from the Pentagon budget beyond the Bush cuts for a peace dividend of health insurance and education improvements while maintaining a strong defense system.
Empire Plan major medical claims must be submitted before April 1

All 1991 Empire Plan Major Medical claims must be submitted before April 1, 1992, to:

Metropolitan Life Insurance Company
CPO Box 1600
Kingston, NY 12402-0600

Major Medical claim forms may be obtained from your agency’s personnel/business office or from Metropolitan Life Insurance Company. Please be certain to have your doctor or other provider fill in all the 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 the information asked for on the claim form. Missing information will delay the processing of your claim.

If 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

Empire Plan's new Mental Health, Substance Abuse Program

What if... How APM Works
My drinking becomes a problem at work? • Better Benefits When You Use APM
My daughter takes an overdose? • Lower Benefits When You Don't Call APM, You Don't Use A Recommended Provider
My wife has a problem but she won't get help? We can help. Give us a call.
The treatment program I've found costs too much? 1-800-446-3995

Your New Benefits for Mental Health and Substance Abuse

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of treatment for Mental Health and Substance Abuse</th>
<th>New Benefits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Network Coverage</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inpatient</td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mental Health unlimited when medically necessary</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Substance Abuse 3 stays per lifetime</td>
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<td>More approved case-by-case</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outpatient</td>
<td>None, use mental health visits below.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mental Health $15 copayment per visit</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Substance Abuse $5 copayment per visit</td>
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<td>Unlimited When medically necessary</td>
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<td>when medically necessary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annual per Lifetime Benefit Maximums</td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annual Deductible</td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ambulance Deductible</td>
<td>None</td>
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<td>Ambulance Service</td>
<td>None</td>
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</tbody>
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All benefits apply to treatment determined medically necessary by APM.
Owning a home gets easier

CSEA kicks off new Home Buyer's Program

"You do not have to run a survey to know that there are thousands of CSEA workers across New York state that would take part ..."

This is a typical comment among more than 1,000 received at CSEA headquarters in response to a recent Public Sector survey testing member interest in CSEA establishing a Home Buyer's Program.

As a result, CSEA President Joe McDermott is going ahead with plans that will immediately make $100 million in mortgage loans available to qualifying CSEA members.

"A special fund is available to help you buy a home or even refinance your home," McDermott explained. "What's more, the program is not limited to first time home buyers only."

CSEA was the only labor union to express interest in the program which could make available as much as $500 million to boost home ownership among the rank and file.

The money is provided through a special agreement among CSEA, the Excelsior Capital Corporation and GE Capital Mortgage Insurance.

Advantages for CSEA members are many:

* Competitive interest rates.
* Qualify for a home loan with only 5 percent down. (Eligible low/moderate income families may only need 3 percent cash while the remaining 2 percent can be a gift (for example, from a family member) or even an unsecured loan.
* No minimum loan requirement.
* Borrow up to 95 percent of the value of the home.
* 30-years' fixed-rate mortgage with no prepayment penalty.
* Borrow closing costs.
* Flexible ratio of housing expenses to monthly expenses.

Although the program is limited to CSEA members only, you do have to meet certain financial eligibility standards. And, to better prepare you for the responsibilities of owning a home, interested applicants must attend a four-hour Home Ownership Education Program.

Times; dates and convenient locations will be announced.

For more details, fill out the form below and mail it today.

Please note that if you previously responded to the CSEA Home Mortgage Program Survey, your name is automatically placed on the mailing list for the CSEA Home Buyer's Program.

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Yes, I am interested in the CSEA/ADVANTAGE HOME BUYERS PROGRAM

Please send me more information.

(Please Print)

Name ___________________________ Social Security # ___________________________

Address ___________________________ City __________ State ______ Zip __________

Home phone ___________________________ Annual household income is $ __________

I am employed by ___________________________

I am a resident of ___________________________ County ___________________________

Signed: ___________________________

MAIL TO:
CSEA/Advantage Home Buyer's Program
143 Washington Avenue
Albany, NY 12210

March 1992 13
Ballots for the election of CSEA delegates to the AFSCME Convention will be mailed April 1.

The convention will be June 15 to 19 in Las Vegas, Nev.

Delegates will be elected on a regional basis. Each CSEA region will elect the number of delegates to which it is entitled on the basis of membership strength in accordance with AFSCME and CSEA Constitutions.

Sample ballots will be published in the April issue of The Public Sector.

Candidates were nominated by region at regional meetings last month. Nominations were made both for individuals and by slates; that is, a number of individuals may appear on the ballot as running together or under a particular designation. Candidates nominated by slate will appear on the ballot in the order in which they are nominated.

The ballot will allow candidates who are on a slate to be elected individually, separate from the slate.

Expenses for delegates for transportation, room and board at the AFSCME Convention will be paid by CSEA.

AFSCME delegates election schedule

April 1 — Ballots mailed.
April 9 — Replacement ballots may be requested if original is not received.
April 22 — Deadline for receipt of ballots (8 a.m.).
May — Publication of election results in The Public Sector.
May 2 — End of protest period.

ALBANY — The deadline for nominating petitions for the election of the CSEA statewide Board of Directors is March 13.

Under the union’s open election procedures, any member in good standing can have his or her name placed on a ballot by obtaining the required number of CSEA member signatures on an official petition form.

In order to be eligible, a candidate must have been a member in good standing of CSEA since June 1, 1991, and have continuously paid membership dues since then. In addition, he or she cannot be a member of a competing labor organization and cannot be serving a penalty imposed by the CSEA Judicial Board.

In the State Division, a candidate needs petitions signed by at least 10 percent of eligible voters in the local he or she wishes to represent. Not more than 450 signatures are required.

Educational locals which share a representative require valid signatures calculated on the combined number of eligible voters in all educational locals in their particular CSEA region. Not more than 450 signatures are required.

CSEA’s Board of Directors has adopted the following election schedule:

March 13 — Deadline for nominating petitions to be received at CSEA headquarters (5 p.m.).
April 7 — Deadline for declarations (8 a.m.); deadline for confirmation of name as it will appear on the ballot (noon). CSEA headquarters. Candidates or proxies may attend as observers; address labels available for mailing campaign literature.
April 20 — Deadline for receipt of campaign articles for The Public Sector; deadline for campaign literature to be submitted to CSEA headquarters for distribution (5 p.m.).
May — Publication of campaign articles in The Public Sector.
May 18 — Ballots delivered to post office for mailing.
May 26 — Replacement ballot may be requested if original is not received.
June 8 — Deadline for return of ballots (8 a.m.). Election results will be announced after the count. Candidates will be notified by mail.
July — Publication of election results in The Public Sector.
Nolan retires after decades as activist

AUBURN - For the past 24 years, Bruce Nolan has been a staunch supporter of CSEA, holding office at nearly every level of the union, giving his all to the union.

Recently, CSEA members gathered to give something back and pay tribute to Nolan, who recently retired after more than 37 years of service. Nolan, 56, was a service foreman for the City of Auburn Water Department, and had been president of CSEA Cayuga County Local 806 for the past 21 years.

At the time of his retirement Nolan was the most senior local president in the region, CSEA Central Region President Jim Moore said.

Before becoming a local president, Nolan was City of Auburn unit president for three years, and has also served on the regional executive board and CSEA's Board of Directors. He has also served on several committees, including his recent position as chair of the statewide Convention Committee.

At his retirement dinner, CSEA statewide Officers Irene Carr and Dan Donohue spoke of Nolan's commitment to CSEA, and Donohue presented him with a special CSEA retirement watch. Nolan's successor, Beverly Centers, then presented him with a trip for two to Florida as a retirement gift from the local. Local Treasurer Thomas McNabb was the toastmaster and emcee for the evening.

Nolan became active in the union when it first organized in Auburn in 1968. At the time, city employees were not making any progress in wages or benefits, he said.

"If we were going to get anywhere with the City of Auburn, the union would be the one to get us there," he said. Since then, he has never regretted his choice to support CSEA. "My work in the union has been very rewarding."

Moore agreed.

"Over the last 20 years there has not been a more positive representative of CSEA members than Bruce Nolan," he said. "He's always been there when the union needed him. He will be missed."

Nolan loves retirement but says he'll miss his CSEA involvement. It's not going to end, however, because Nolan plans to join as a CSEA retiree.

Sol Bendet remembered

Solomon Bendet, active in CSEA for more than 45 years, died late last year after decades of union activism.

He began his civil service career in the state Banking Department and served as president of CSEA New York City State Employees Local 010. He later served as president of the CSEA Metropolitan New York Conference, which later became CSEA Region II. Mr. Bendet also served as statewide vice president of CSEA prior to his retirement.

Continuing his activism in retirement, Mr. Bendet served as president of CSEA New York Retirees Local 910. He served for many years as Region II representative to the CSEA Retiree Executive Committee.

He is survived by his wife, Sally, who attended many CSEA retiree activities with him.

"Sol was always fighting for things he thought were right and didn't care if he made enemies," Local 910 President Irene Hills said. "What's good enough for the higher ups is good enough for the common people, was Sol's creed. He thought everybody should get the same."

Donations in Sol Bendet's memory may be made to the National Jewish Center for Immunology and Respiratory Medical Facility, 1400 Jackson St., Box 61269, Denver, Col., 80206.
CSEA is planning its annual observation of Workers Memorial Day on April 28. Workers Memorial Day is an opportunity to focus attention on workplace safety and health and to honor those who have lost their lives on the job.

The AFL-CIO chose April 28 for the observance by the AFL-CIO because it's the anniversary of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), which regulates safe working conditions in the private sector.

In New York, public employees are protected by the Public Employee Safety and Health (PESH) Act which is enforced by the state Labor Department. CSEA was instrumental in the passage of that act in 1980. There are 27 other states that have no safety and health protections at all for public employees.

Public employees perform dangerous work every day. Even with PESH protection, many CSEA members have lost their lives on the job over the years. Sadly, 3 CSEA were killed in the past 12 months.

Aside from people getting hurt and killed in the line of duty, CSEA is also concerned about occupational disease and that will be the focus of CSEA Workers Memorial Day activities this year.

The recent controversy surrounding the evacuation of Building 8 on the State Office Building Campus in Albany (see page 19) is a dramatic example of how working conditions can make people sick.

More often, however, people may not even be aware of how their work environment and substances in their workplace are hurting them.

Since many occupational diseases do not show up until years after the exposure, it's often difficult to identify the cause and take steps to prevent exposure. Although all employers are required to record all work-related illnesses and injuries, only a small proportion of diseases really are reported.

Exposure to toxic chemicals in the workplace can be a direct cause of occupational disease. All working people have a right to know what chemicals they may have to work with or be exposed to in the workplace. All chemicals entering the workplace must be clearly labeled and workers must be trained in their proper use. Workers must be provided full detail about the chemicals in their workplace upon request.

But chemicals are not the only cause of occupational illness. Infectious disease, poor job design and stress are also major hazards for millions of American workers.

CSEA will provide details on how CSEA locals can participate in Workers Memorial Day activities in the coming weeks and in the April edition of The Public Sector.

CSEA PEOPLE sets new member record

CSEA President Joe McDermott has voiced his thanks and confidence in the increased participation in the PEOPLE program.

In 1991, PEOPLE set a new record for membership, with 1,502 members joining PEOPLE.

PEOPLE is Public Employees Organized to Promote Legislative Equality, the federal political action committee of CSEA's international union, AFSCME.

McDermott recently announced record-breaking contributions of $273,877 to PEOPLE in 1991. In addition to the money raised by individual contributions, $1,857 came through efforts at statewide CSEA conferences and $3,386 was raised at the CSEA Annual Delegates Meeting. Many local and regional fund-raising efforts added to the total.

During 1991, more than 5,437 members, including retirees and staff, contributed to CSEA's PEOPLE fund-raising drive.

McDermott has expressed his appreciation to the region and local officers and member activists for their support.

CSEA Local 1000 PEOPLE hopes to play a major role in helping AFSCME to amass a war chest large enough to help elect a U.S. president who will be sensitive to the needs of public employees. Other goals include putting representatives who are sensitive to public employee issues in the Senate seats up for election and filling the House of Representatives with labor's friends and allies.

PEOPLE funding will help CSEA in its efforts to be involved in this summer's Democratic and Republican national conventions.

FOLLOWING UP...

Articles published in The Public Sector often generate letters from members and other interested readers. Some of those letters contain additional information concerning the original article. The following are excerpts from two such letters.

"I read your article on tuberculosis in the Public Sector (December 1991), I am glad that CSEA is taking this issue seriously and is actively attempting to address this problem. I have been working with the CSEA local representing county workers here in Onondaga County...In my opinion the county has under-played the risk to these workers and others and has not adequately involved employees at the medical examiner's office or CSEA in investigating the problem or in proposing solutions. Your article leaves out resources which could be valuable for your members. These resources are the councils on occupational safety and health (COSH groups) and the Occupational Health clinics in the New York state network...."

MICHAEL B. LAX, M.D., M.P.H. Medical Director, CNYOHCC 550 Harrison Center - Suite 300 Syracuse, NY 13202 (315) 464-6422

"I noted with interest your round-up of congressional successes in the January issue of the Public Sector (CSEA/AFSCME Scores Victories In Congress). It goes without saying that union support made a critical difference in passage of the unemployment benefits extension bill, as well as the other important legislation you mention.

We will need your support again this year if Congress is to pass the Workplace Fairness Act... It is high time the United States recognized that anti-labor policies not only hurt American workers and their families, but are also responsible in large part for the continued decay in our nation's economy and industrial capacity."

TED WEISS Member of Congress 17th District New York

March 1992
A SU SERVICIO

GUÍA DE SERVICIOS Y BENEFICIOS PARA LOS MIEMBROS DE CSEA

Capacitación y entrenamiento
CSEA le puede ayudar a prepararse para los exámenes a fin de ingresar a puestos del servicio público, proporcionándole textos de estudios a bajo precio y prestandole gratuitamente cintas de video.

CSEA también organiza talleres de instrucción para los activistas sindicales que desean tener un conocimiento más profundo de sus responsabilidades como tales.

Para solicitar los formularios de pedido de folletos u obtener información sobre los talleres que ofrece el sindicato, llame a la oficina principal de CSEA al 1-800-342-4146. Para pedir información sobre las cintas de video, diríjase a la oficina regional de CSEA de su localidad.

Jubilación
Si piensa jubilarse pronto, es importante que elija la opción más apropiada del sistema de Jubilación para Empleados.

Si utiliza los servicios del asesor en jubilaciones de CSEA, usted podrá planificar el estilo de vida que llevará cuando se jubile, tomando en cuenta los gastos que tiene previsto hacer.

Para obtener más información, llame al 1-800-366-5273.

Para obtener información general sobre la jubilación y la inscripción a los planes de jubilación, diríjase al Departamento de Jubilados ubicado en la oficina principal de CSEA: 1-800-342-4146 o (518) 434-0191.

Para hacer preguntas de carácter técnico sobre los beneficios de jubilación (por ejemplo, requisitos que se deben llenar para canjear vacaciones por dinero u otros beneficios, transferir la afiliación) y pedir formularios para solicitar la jubilación y formularios para calcular el monto de la jubilación, diríjase a: New York State and Local Retirement Systems, llamando al (518) 474-7736.

Los empleados estatales de más de 50 años de edad y sus esposos/as pueden participar en DIRECTIONS, un seminario de preparación para la jubilación que dura dos días y medio y cuenta con el patrocinio de CSEA. Para obtener más información, llame al (518) 486-1918.

United Buying Service (UBS)
Usted puede obtener grandes ahorros en la compra de artículos de consumo por medio del servicio de descuentos del sindicato. UBS utiliza el poder de millones de miembros para negociar descuentos en la compra de una amplia gama de productos de las marcas más conocidas, desde automóviles hasta aparatos electrodomésticos, aparatos de video, muebles y muchos artículos más. Este programa es gratuito para los miembros de CSEA y no se cobra por servicios. Para hacer un pedido o solicitar información sobre precios, llame al 1-800-877-4UBS. UBS también ha instalado una línea directa de información sobre un número limitado de ofertas especiales al mes. Estas ofertas sólo están a disposición de los miembros de CSEA. Para pedir la lista de los precios especiales, llame a la línea directa: 1-203-967-2883.

Quejas y sanciones
Si usted desea presentar una queja, diríjase inmediatamente al encargado de quejas de su localidad o al dirigente sindical de su trabajo. Si no logra ponerse en contacto con dichas personas, diríjase al Presidente de la Unidad de CSEA o al Local o al Especialista de Relaciones Laborales en la correspondiente oficina regional de CSEA. Si cree tener razones fundadas para presentar una queja, hágalo cuanto antes.

March 1992
ALBANY — CSEA recently won an important court decision in its challenge to the state’s patchwork implementation of the secretary I and secretary II reclassifications. A state Supreme Court judge upheld CSEA’s claim that the state’s agency-by-agency reclassification dates were arbitrary and capricious.

Unfortunately, CSEA members will probably not see any immediate benefit because the state is appealing the decision. When the state announced its secretarial reclassification process in August 1989, it said employees who applied for upgrading prior to Dec. 31, 1989, would be paid at their new level retroactive to Oct. 26, 1989, after their application was approved. But many employees had different retroactive dates based on their agency’s budget situation.

The judge ruled this approach was not valid because employees doing the same job are being treated differently based solely on where they work.

From the start, CSEA has been highly critical of the state’s secretarial reclassification procedure because it was too complicated and unfair.

“The procedure was lousy and then the state made it worse by having a mishmash of retroactive dates,” CSEA President Joe McDermott said. “Once again, the state has wasted time and money by forcing a court battle instead of doing things right in the first place.”

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**Your right to union representation**

If you are a CSEA state employee, and questions by a managerial representative give you the feeling that you might be targeted for discipline, then you are entitled under Article 33(b) of the CSEA/NYS contract to have a CSEA representative with you during such questioning. You may also have private counsel at your own expense to represent you. In all interrogation periods, the right to union representation covers the “interrogation” period before any disciplinary action is actually taken and while the employee may be considered only a potential subject for disciplinary action. The right to union representation does not apply in cases involving the removal of an employee from a probationary appointment.

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**A case in point**

When Israel Greenberg was called to a meeting, he thought it was to provide technical expertise for an investigation conducted by the internal affairs section of the state Department of Taxation and Finance. He cooperated fully. But when the emphasis of the meeting changed abruptly and Greenberg was confronted with questions about his personal affairs, he stopped the line of questioning, ended the discussion and eventually filed a grievance.

Greenberg, a tax compliance agent II working out of the State Office Building in Hempstead, knew his rights. Management employees at the meeting either did not know the rules or chose to ignore them.

CSEA filed a grievance on behalf of Greenberg, charging management violated Article 33(b) by attempting to question him without a CSEA representative present.

The grievance was settled when the Governor’s Office of Employee Relations (GOER) agreed to send copies of the “interrogation” provisions of Article 33(b) to all management employees in the Department of Taxation and Finance who conduct interrogations of CSEA members. The stipulation emphasizes that all management employees understand their “obligation to comply” with Article 33 of the CSEA contract.

“People who do interrogations have to get the message that they cannot question an employee unless they give the individual an opportunity to have a CSEA representative present,” said Robert Dillon, CSEA assistant contract administrator. “That’s why the union insisted that GOER send the stipulation to the people in Tax and Finance.”

“This settlement not only reinforces the importance of protection afforded employees under Article 33 but also reminds us of the need to be vigilant of abuse of these rights,” said CSEA Associate Attorney Paul Bamberger, who handled the case. By knowing your rights, as Mr. Greenberg did, you might prevent yourself from being improperly or illegally entrapped while being denied your right to union representation.

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**STATE NEWS SECTION**

**Court favors CSEA in secretary upgrading case**

18

their new level retroactive to Oct. 26, 1989, prior to Dec. 31, 1989, would be paid at said employees who applied for upgrading in August 1989, it probably not see any immediate benefit and capricious. agency reclassification dates were arbitrary and capricious.

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**Arbitrations, Grievances, IPs, Lawsuits**

**March 1992**

18
CSEA asks for decision in pay lag suit

By Joe McDermott

STATE NEWS SECTION

CSEA asks for decision in pay lag suit

ALBANY — CSEA is asking a federal district court to decide in the union's favor in its lawsuit against the state over the executive branch lag payroll imposed more than a year ago.

"The courts have ruled against the state's imposed payroll lags," CSEA President Joe McDermott said. "Let's get this over with and get state employees their money back."

The union filed for summary judgment, which means CSEA is asking the court to decide in its favor based on the facts and recent court decisions. Under the lag imposed in December 1990, state employees lost one week's pay, which they will not get back until they leave state service.

CSEA has argued the state violated the contract and the U.S. Constitution and had no right to impose the pay lag. Paying back its executive branch employees represented by CSEA will cost the state as much as $125 million.

A series of court decisions have gone against the state in pay lag cases involving employees of the state's court system and employees represented by other unions.

The state has been forced to pay back the money it took from employees under those lag payrolls.

"We've said from the beginning the lags were an illegal scheme to pick our pockets, and the courts have agreed," McDermott said. "This request for summary judgement is designed to help our members get their money back, and the sooner, the better."

More sickness in Bldg. 8

ALBANY — As problems recur at state Building 8 at the state office complex here, the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health has agreed to investigate the situation at the infamous worksite.

Two recent incidents affected dozens of workers at the building housing state Tax and Finance Department employees. One incident sent 13 workers to the hospital; three days later 19 workers went to local emergency rooms. More than 70 other workers reported symptoms to the nurses' station because of repeated, unexplained illnesses.

Visits to nurses' station have become common in Building 8

Indoor air quality a serious issue

Indoor air quality problems are the most frequent safety and health complaints CSEA receives. It is also one of the most difficult issues for the union to resolve.

OSHA air quality safety and health standards are designed for industrial settings, not offices. While most offices meet those standards, it doesn't mean they are healthy or safe.

How well a worksite's heating, ventilation and air cooling system is designed, operated and maintained plays a major role in worker comfort and well-being. Even well-designed HVAC systems can cause problems if not operated properly.

New York's energy code includes measures such as sealed windows, operating limits on HVAC systems and extra insulation. But sealing a building may have added costs in terms of productivity losses and worker health problems. "Sick" or "tight building syndrome" results from inadequate fresh air in buildings. CSEA has advocated changes in the energy code to increase air circulation.

Many office products and materials can cause workers to get sick. Unhealthy office products include copier chemicals, cleaning solutions and synthetic materials used in construction, office structures and furniture.

Sickness from poor air quality ranges from short-term discomfort to chronic illness. Workers may experience headaches, eye irritation, scratchy throat, fatigue, drowsiness, dizziness or congestion. Often these symptoms may go away as soon as the worker leaves the building.

More serious illness, such as cancer or lung disease, may develop from long-term exposure. Germ-caused illness, such as Legionnaires Disease, can also result from indoor air pollution.

If you believe there is a problem in your worksite, take steps to document it in as much detail as possible. When you approach management with this information, you should stress the importance of working together. It's in labor and management's interest to get to the source of the problem.

If management doesn't respond, contact your CSEA labor relations specialist for help.
Moving up on the slopes of Belleayre

HIGHMOUNT - She's the first woman to be promoted to assistant supervisor of ski lift operations and Michele Persons said she wouldn't trade her job in the snowy outdoors for one inside a warm office.

"No way!" she said. "I'm too fidgety!"

An employee of the Belleayre Ski Center, she began as a lift attendant and was promoted to a lift operator. She's a member of CSEA Mid Hudson State Employees Local 009.

During the summer, Persons works at the Woodlands Campsite, just down the road from Belleayre.

Although she got her recent promotion because of her experience, she said her boss had to fight for her to get the job.

"There haven't been any female lift operators," she noted.

Persons loves her new job and the responsibilities that go with it.

"I get along really well with my co-workers," she said. "They're good workers. I can sympathize with them. It's tough to be out there when the temperature is sub-zero."

Persons' boss is proud of her, too.

"She does a nice job for us," said Mountain Manager Carl Johnson. "She's very professional and has a good rapport with everyone. She's the best of my employees.

March is Women's History Month

Women have been a driving force behind the labor movement from the beginning, and CSEA women continue that tradition. On the job, in the community and in their families, CSEA women make history every day.

Special care for special kids in Rockland

ORANGEBURG - Finding competent day care for a child who has special needs is very difficult.

But in Rockland County parents have a solution at Kids Corner, a day care center at Rockland Psychiatric Center.

Of the 100 children there, 16 have asthma, requiring special treatment and medication every day.

But thanks to Director Ann Taylor and full-time nurse Debbie Giannella, parents know their children are getting good care.

"We are the only day care center in this area, maybe in the state, that has a full-time nurse," Taylor said.

Giannella is constantly busy with the children's care.

"Some day care centers tell parents to give children their medication before or after they come," she said. "These kids get their medication and their treatments while they're here."

Other children at the center have special needs including attention deficit disorders.

"I would like to have a separate classroom for these kids. And to offset the cost, I would like to open an after-school 'latchkey' program and a summer camp," Taylor said. "This would help more parents."

The care for children with special needs is a blessing for parents, said CSEA Statewide Secretary Irene Carr.

"I was amazed that the day care center could accommodate children with special needs," she said. "Parents don't have to worry about their kids getting the attention they need."

Carr said "we're way ahead" of a new law which mandates better accessibility for children with special needs and the severely handicapped.
No stranger to employee abuse

KINGS PARK — CSEA Kings Park Psychiatric Center Local 411 member Mary Shaughnessy is a walking testimonial to the dangers of understaffing at state psychiatric centers.

Shaughnessy, a 16-year employee, recently recovered from a patient attack which left welts on her head and pain in her neck and back.

"The patient was definitely going for my eyes," Shaughnessy said. "She tried to bite me and when I pulled away she grabbed my hair."

The patient's grip was so strong that other staff members who came to Shaughnessy's aid couldn't free her. They finally restrained the client and convinced her to release Shaughnessy's hair.

Shaughnessy is no stranger to patient attacks. In 1987 she suffered a fractured jaw and sprained neck after a client crashed his fist into her face twice while she attempted to restrain him. She and a nurse were the only ones on duty.

She had her teeth fixed and her jaw wired shut but that was far from the end of the misery. She had surgery to repair fractures and the dislocation, but is still plagued by headaches and pain in her mouth and face.

In 1982 Shaughnessy's nose was broken when a client smashed her in the face as she blocked the patient's attempt to jump out of a car during transport from one hospital to another. She took the weekend to recover and returned to work with no time lost.

The first six years of Shaughnessy's state service were injury free. She believes the incidence of on-the-job injuries have increased significantly over the years because the patients are more dangerous and there is less staff to handle the work.

"Staff cutbacks are putting us in serious danger," she said. "When you're on a ward and you have to be killed before the OMH bureaucrats in Albany do something about what's happening here?"

The incident was just the latest in a string of murders, shootings and robberies at the facility, she said.

It has raised renewed concerns about staffing and security precautions.

The facility has 88 fewer direct care positions from its authorized fill level. There are only 15 security positions for the entire facility which is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

There is also a longstanding controversy about the lack of a security fence to separate the center from an adjacent men's homeless center. The project was approved but never begun.

Patients, staff in danger at Manhattan PC

MANHATTAN -- CSEA members protested over the latest outbreak of violence at Manhattan Psychiatric Center.

CSEA Local 415 members demonstrated to show their concern over the security of patients and staff.

In January, a homeless man posed as a hospital employee and entered a center building where he assaulted, raped and robbed a female patient.

"People are scared," Local 415 President Mohammed Hussain said. "Does someone have to be killed before the OMH bureaucrats in Albany do something about what's happening here?"

The incident was just the latest in a string of murders, shootings and robberies at the facility, he said.

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The facility has 88 fewer direct care positions from its authorized fill level. There are only 15 security positions for the entire facility which is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

There is also a longstanding controversy about the lack of a security fence to separate the center from an adjacent men's homeless center. The project was approved but never begun.

Attack leads to miscarriage

MIDDLETOWN — The horror of being attacked on the job is a nightmare every therapy aide fears. Debbie Sapio knows that fear only too well.

A patient attacked her in 1988 when she was pregnant. She suffered a twisted spine.

But another attack in January was more serious.

Once again Sapio was pregnant and this time the attack resulted in a miscarriage.

The patient had threatened Sapio and some co-workers. Although he was transferred to a secure ward, his doctors declared him stable and sent him back.

He soon began acting up. When Sapio and a co-worker tried to put him into a quiet room to cool off, he attacked her.

"As I started to unlock the door he came up behind me and began to choke me," Sapio said. "We were on the floor and three people were trying to get him off me. He punched me in the back of the head."

Co-workers finally got the patient off her but she suffered cuts and marks on her neck and a bruise on her head.

Two days later she miscarried.

"I'm angry," she said. "It should never have happened."

Even worse was management's response when she complained about the incident.

"I was told I was trained for this sort of thing and that I should expect these things to happen," she said.

Sapio's supervisor never even suggested that she see a doctor.

"Management has to open their eyes and consider the threat to safety here," said Local 415 President Grace Ortiz.

CSEA member held hostage, released in prison incident in Western New York

A CSEA civilian prison employee was taken hostage in a western New York maximum security prison in February. A corrections officer position that would have provided security to the area was eliminated in budget cuts last year.

Laundry Supervisor Frances King was attacked, tied up and held captive for nearly an hour before being released at the Wende Correctional Facility in Alden, Erie County.

An in-depth interview with Mrs. King, who suffered painful injuries in the incident, will be published in the next edition of The Public Sector.
CSEA is stepping up its effort at all levels to demand improvements in the state’s mental health and mental retardation systems.

CSEA’s campaign calls the state mental hygiene policy “The Shame of All New York” and is aimed at mobilizing CSEA members and the general public to demand changes. CSEA is blitzing the state with copies of a brochure detailing the deterioration of the system.

The union is running a statewide radio advertising campaign about the problems and is prodding state and local officials to address them.

CSEA is fighting the Governor’s proposed cutbacks for OMH and OMRDD that will make a bad situation worse.

CSEA is also challenging a recently-released OMH capital plan to dump nearly half the current population of state psychiatric centers within five to 10 years. It threatens the existence of several psychiatric centers, particularly Harlem Valley and Willard.

But the union is concerned about all CSEA mental hygiene workers. That kind of patient rundown without plans to develop state-operated community-based care will lead to the loss of thousands of jobs and dump the clients onto already overburdened communities.

CSEA is also worried about the future of the OMRDD system. There are indications that OMRDD’s previously responsible policy of closing developmental centers while successfully moving staff and clients into community-based facilities could become a victim of budget politics. Cutbacks in the development of new state-operated community-based care could limit the availability of needed services and increase the state’s temptation to privatize services.

“CSEA will do everything we can to get improvements, but we also need the individual efforts of all of our members to succeed,” CSEA President Joe McDermott said.

CSEA has three key points:
* Don’t abandon mentally ill and mentally retarded people;
* Don’t waste the experienced state workforce; and
* Use existing mental hygiene facilities and campuses better.

CSEA’s message is getting out. Media across the state have reported on CSEA demonstrations and other activities, including the leafletting of state budget hearings in a direct challenge to OMH Commissioner Richard Surles’ testimony to the Legislature.

“Lives and livelihoods are on the line,” McDermott said. “We have to keep up the pressure.”

Call the CSEA Mental Hygiene Hotline for updated information at 1-800-342-4146 Press 51 on a touchtone phone
CSEA members aid ailing co-worker

By Mark M. Kotzin
CSEA Communications Associate

ROME — For more than a year, CSEA members Kelly Weiler and her husband, Randy, fought alone in Kelly’s battle against a rare form of cancer. Now many of their co-workers at Mohawk Valley Correctional Facility have pitched in, raising more than $4,000.

Kelly, a 28-year-old senior library clerk, has a form of cancer so rare doctors say she may be the only living person with it. This only adds to her uncertainty about her treatment, she said.

The fundraiser was a joint effort among all the unions and workers at the facility, CSEA Local 195 President Joan Hand said. It was coordinated by “The Friends of Randy and Kelly Weiler Committee” to help defray costs not covered by insurance.

Kelly has had surgery twice and faces more chemotherapy. She will soon use up her leave accruals. Randy, a motor vehicle operator, has used up his leave time traveling to be with Kelly at Roswell Park Cancer Institute in Buffalo and Crouse-Irving Hospital.

Despite all their troubles, the Weilers are grateful for their friends and their support.

“We’re not the kind of people who like to take charity, but we had no choice,” Randy said. “We appreciate the help beyond words.”

“To help people out, even when you don’t know them — that’s incredible,” Kelly said.

“We could never put into words how we feel,” Randy said. “Thank you is just not enough.”

The CSEA members on the committee include Hand, local Vice President Joan Daley, local Treasurer Debbie Thayer, Dave Leonard, Debbie Dunn, John Badger, Claudia Dote and Patty Zalepeski.

Day care center at Helen Hayes celebrates expansion

March 1992
RILED UP!

On the line at Harlem Valley Psychiatric Center

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