‘YES’ ON AFFILIATION!

President’s Message
William L. McGowan
President

It’s time for some straight talk about the relationship of CSEA and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees. For three years we have had a “trial marriage,” but now we must decide if we are to continue such a limited form of affiliation with AFSCME and turn the clock back to where CSEA was three years ago.

As President, it has been my responsibility to negotiate with AFSCME President Jerry Wurf on terms of a future affiliation agreement. It’s taken some hard bargaining, but we have reached a tentative agreement for a permanent CSEA/AFSCME affiliation subject to the approval of our Board of Directors and Delegates and AFSCME’s International Executive Board.

Next week, a Special CSEA Delegates meeting will decide this issue. The future of our union may very well hang in the balance. Our choices are really simple. We can have a permanent affiliation with AFSCME under terms of the tentative agreement that gives us all the benefits of AFSCME and AFL-CIO membership and services while protecting our “independence,” or we can walk away from our affiliation and any future relationship with AFSCME or any AFL-CIO union.

For me, the choice is simple. I think CSEA needs AFSCME and AFSCME needs CSEA. I believe it is in the interests of our members for our unions to join hands to fight to improve the standard of living of public employees. I stand firmly in favor of a continued affiliation and I strongly support the terms of the tentative agreement for several reasons.

It’s no big surprise to any public employee to hear that these are hard times for our public. The financial foundation of government is constantly under attack, we are being eaten alive by inflation and public employees are bearing an unfair share of the burden of this country’s economic problems. This is a time for unity, not separation.

Prior to the affiliation, CSEA was doing a good job representing its members, but the CSEA was spending a lot of time writing the dues it was paying to the federal government. Last year more than $8 billion came from federal sources. Seventy percent of the revenues of the City of Buffalo and twenty-five percent of Suffolk County’s revenues, for example, came from the federal government last year.

New York public employees depend on federal assistance and until the AFSCME affiliation, CSEA had nothing to do with this vital connection. Today things are a great deal different. Through AFSCME, CSEA has input into federal legislation, Senate and Congressional committees and hearings, federal agencies and departments, and, of course, national level politics.

Three years ago hardly anyone in Washington, D.C. had ever heard of CSEA. Three months ago, the President of the United States flew to Niagara Falls to address our Delegates. The affiliation has brought dramatic change in our relationship with the federal government in just a few short years and that new relationship is paying off for our members.

Affiliation has also opened our eyes to public employee unionism outside of New York for the first time. We have learned from the triumphs and tragedies of our brothers and sisters across America. We have learned from the disaster of California’s Proposition 13 and, so far, we have managed to keep this disease out of New York with AFSCME’s help.

We have also learned from the successes of other unions in fighting cutbacks and that has helped us save jobs.

CSEA’s professional expertise in the critical areas of political action, collective bargaining, education, research, economic analysis, and communications have been supplemented and improved by the International’s resources in these areas. Our staffs have joined hands time and again to fight to protect CSEA’s members with great success. We have learned from each other and all of our members have profited from the experience.

Our affiliation has also brought labor peace to New York’s public employees. The “no raid” provisions of the AFL-CIO’s Constitution have ended challenges from AFL-CIO affiliates and we can now devote our resources to fighting for our members instead of fighting other unions. Challenges cost money and manpower to fight and let’s face it, no union wins every challenge. Fewer members mean higher costs per member and that’s a financial burden for our people. Loss of one major bargaining unit alone, for example, is costing CSEA $4 million per year in lost revenues.

Affiliation has also meant strength within our own state. Before affiliation, CSEA spoke for 215,000 members. Today, CSEA/AFSCME speaks for more than 400,000 New Yorkers. If you think the Governor, Legislature and political leaders don’t know that, think again.

We have also become part of the organized labor movement in America and joined in its proud tradition as an advocate for the continuation of social progress in our country and protection for working people. CSEA is now part of the voice of the AFL-CIO as it fights at the national level for decency, dignity and security for all the people of America, not just the wealthy.

Let’s be honest, these benefits have a cost. Our affiliation with AFSCME means CSEA must pay the AFSCME “per capita” of $3.25 per member, per month. Each year that amount is adjusted under a formula in the AFSCME Constitution to reflect gains in wages. As the AFSCME per capita increases, so will our obligation.

The tentative agreement for a continued CSEA/AFSCME affiliation provides for adjustments to CSEA’s dues to pay for the “per capita” both now, and in the future. CSEA will also be required, starting in April, 1982, to establish dues no lower than the “minimum dues” that any AFSCME Local can establish under the International’s Constitution. This will mean an estimated $13 increase in dues in 1982.

In return, AFSCME will provide to CSEA grants over the next several years that will allow us to be financially sound and avoid any further dues increases beyond those provided in the tentative agreement, for the next several years. By comparison with most labor unions, CSEA’s dues will still be quite low.

CSEA has tried to keep its members fully informed about our affiliation and the consideration of this continued relationship with AFSCME. The Public Sector has published the findings of a special committee that studied the issue, the complete text of the current affiliation agreement, and on pages 6 and 7 in this edition we publish the complete text of the new, tentative agreement and the recommendations of the special committee that the agreement be ratified by the Delegates next week. We have done all this so that every member can share his or her opinion on this issue with their elected Delegate.

The Delegates have received extensive documentation to prepare for this meeting. When they convene, all their questions will be answered, all the debate will be heard and then a decision must be made to either continue the affiliation or to turn back the clock to three years.

I will be doing everything that I can to convince the Delegates that the future of our union and the interests of our members depend upon continuing the existence of CSEA, Local 1000, AFSCME, AFL-CIO.

This is a time for strength and unity among public employees. The CSEA/AFSCME affiliation can provide that strength and unity for our members. I will energetically support the affiliation. I hope that you will too.
Long Island holiday party biggest ever

HUNTINGTON — Almost 400 persons turned out for the Long Island Region I Holiday Party, the largest crowd the annual affair has ever drawn.

Honored at the annual party were long-time CSEA activists Julia "Betty" Duffy and Ruth and Michael Braverman, all of whom are retiring; and David Flaumenbaum accepted three awards on behalf of his late father, Irving Flaumenbaum.

Jean Frazier, first vice president of Pilgrim Psychiatric Center Local 418 — Ms. Duffy’s local — accepted the award on behalf of the former Local 418 president. Ms. Duffy was hospitalized, recovering from an automobile accident.

Region I President and First Vice President Danny Donohue and Nicholas Abbatiello, respectively, presented the awards to Ms. Duffy and the Bravermans.

David Flaumenbaum accepted awards honoring his late father from the New York State Senate, the Arthritis Foundation and AFSCME.

LONG ISLAND REGION I President Danny Donohue (above left), presents David Flaumenbaum with one of the three awards accepted by Flaumenbaum in honor of his father, the late Irving Flaumenbaum. The awards are presented at the Region I holiday party.

NASSAU COUNTY LOCAL 830 President and Region I First Vice President Nicholas Abbatiello, left, presents Ruth and Michael Braverman with an award at the Region I holiday party. The Bravermans retired Jan. 2, 1981. Ruth was a vice president of both Region I and Local 830.

Regions III & IV: Holiday wrap-up

CSEA REGION IV President Joseph McDermott spoke to those attending Workmen's Compensation Board Local 671 Christmas party recently.

GETTING TOGETHER AT THE REGION III Judiciary Local 332 Christmas party are, from left, Fran Tursi, Frank DenDanto, Patricia Neelon and Joan Marie O'Reilly.

A. VICTOR COSTA, (left), long-time CSEA activist (left), was presented an award from Local 671 by Joseph McDermott for his years of service on behalf of public employees.

REGION III JUDICIARY LOCAL 332 members (right), are from right, Carmen Morey and Hilda Cardarolli greet guest Arthur Sapp at the local's Christmas party.
CSEA TAXATION AND FINANCE DEPARTMENT Labor-Management Committee meet.

NEW YORK CITY — A State Department of Taxation and Finance labor-management meeting for Metropolitan Region II was held recently to coordinate programs and commitments by the department in the region.

Representing CSEA at the meeting were CSEA Taxation and Finance Labor Management Chairman John Gully, Collective Bargaining Specialist John Conoby, Field Representatives Al Sundmark and Mareia Schowitz, and Region II department employees Willie Raye, third vice president of Region II, James Heekin and Elseie Yudin.

Management at the meeting was headed by Donald Geik, director of the department's Bureau of Employee Relations.

The results of the meeting were:

1. This labor-management meeting will serve as a model to revitalize the labor-management process in the department as a means of exchanging information and settling some problems. Gully and Raye will coordinate future department labor-management meetings in Region II.

2. Geik gave assurance the department was committed to the CSEAP and was working with the Department of Civil Service to insure that certain new titles and career ladder opportunities would be added to the open-competitive titles as soon as possible. He renewed the department's commitment to fill most of those positions from within.

3. Geik said the department is committed to initiating an Employee Assistance Program. Both the union and management are working on it.

4. Geik renewed the department's commitment to QWEP (Quality of Work Environment and Productivity), including having the employee evaluation program work properly in the department. Geik said if the union can identify problems with the evaluation process, he would institute additional training.

5. Geik agreed to institute training in grievance procedures for department Step I supervisors statewide.

Info on university closings sought by union to prepare future cases against SUNY

ALBANY — CSEA is continuing its battle with the State University of New York over forced closings of SUNY campuses and buildings to 'save energy' but penalize employees.

Some SUNY facilities in the past have closed their buildings, even campuses over the Christmas and New Years holidays and forced employees to charge the days they are locked out of work to their annual leave accruals.

CSEA Collective Bargaining Specialist Paul Burch says any CSEA Local Presidents with information on such closings should notify him at CSEA Headquarters in Albany so preparations can be made to accurately record the location, dates, times and numbers of employees involved for use in future legal proceedings by the union against SUNY on behalf of employees.

Board of Directors removes most Local 401 officers

ALBANY — Local 401, Bronx Psychiatric Center, which was placed in trusteeship on Aug. 14, has now had most of its officers removed and barred from holding office by CSEA.

Their removal was ordered by the Board of Directors on the recommendation of a special trial board which found that officers William Anderson, George Austin, Delores Hunt, and James Payne demonstrated, "irresponsible management" and "disregard for the assets of the local and their fiduciary duty to the members."

Treasurer Rena Bowen, on the other hand, was cited for "her honesty, competence, integrity and ability to stand her ground in the face of unanimous opposition from the other officers." She was credited with bringing matters to CSEA's attention so they could be resolved, and she continues in office.

Albany Law reforms shed light on school budget woes

ALBANY — A recent seminar to explore possible reforms in the state's method of financing local school districts, sponsored by Albany Law School, has given the Civil Service Employees Assn. reason to hope that two laws which create budget woes for schools and have an impact on the jobs of non-teaching school employees represented by the union, could soon be changed.

The laws — one a transportation funding formula, which actually gives school districts an incentive to contract out busing services, and the other, a program funding regulation which allows the state to mandate educational programs without providing the financial support for them — were the focus of the workshop, attended by various union connected with school districts.

The Governors Special Task Force on Excellence and Equity in Education, also known as the Reuben Commission, which aided the law school's government law center in presenting the seminar, sought the input of participants in its preparation of proposals for change to be submitted during the 1981 legislative session.

Larry Scanlon, CSEA Coordinator of School District Affairs, who attended the two day conference in late November along with seven other CSEA staff representatives, commented, "The seminar was a major step for us. Changes may not come immediately, but at least we have some impact on whatever change may be. First and foremost we are looking to protect the jobs of our members, but at the same time we are concerned about the quality of education, which is affected by these laws."

CORRECTION

A typographical error in a story on page 2 of the December 24, 1980 issue resulted in misleading information. The article concerned steps to be taken by school district employees who had filed a claim for unemployment insurance benefits and did not receive such benefits.

A sentence in the fifth paragraph read, "If such an employee did not file a notice of appeal with the appellate Division, Third Department, they are not precluded from doing so because of the passage of time." The sentence should read, "If such an employee did not file a notice of appeal to the Appellate Division, Third Department, they are now precluded from doing so because of the passage of time."
Director of Group Insurance Programs

ALBANY — Timothy Mullens has been named CSEA's Director of Group Insurance Programs, administering group insurance programs available to members. Other duties include dealing with carriers on contract compliance, claims and rates; analyzing coverage and premium adjustments; and communicating with policyholders on complicated insurance problems.

Mullens joined the CSEA staff in 1974 as a research assistant, and most recently served as a research project specialist. Previously he taught high school and served as a Green Beret.

The Albany native received his bachelor's degree in economics from Siena College, and is completing work for a master's degree in public administration at Russell Sage. He is married and has a daughter.

CSEA fills staff jobs

Communications Specialist

NEW YORK — Richard E. Chernela has been appointed communications specialist for the Civil Service Employees Association (CSEA), Metropolitan Regional Office in New York City.

CSEA is the largest public employee union in the state, representing nearly 250,000 public employees.

As the region's communications specialist, Chernela is responsible for publicizing CSEA's activities and accomplishments, and for building a positive image of public employees. He has worked in the public relations field for over five years.

A native of Newark, New Jersey, Chernela received a Bachelors Degree from Ohio University and a Masters Degree in English from Miami University.

All Americans urged to remember with respect
Dr. Martin Luther King
Thursday, January 15

ALBANY — CSEA members are reminded that Thursday, January 15th, is Martin Luther King Day.

CSEA President William L. McGowan said CSEA members should join with all Americans in remembrance of Dr. King’s immense contributions to the cause of human rights.

"Dr. King died fighting for the rights of public employees during an AFSCME sanitation strike. He recognized that repression of public employees often is synonymous with repression of the poor and minorities. His contributions to our nation were great and should never be forgotten."
Heros on the Barge Canal

Two alert workers prevent drownings in canal incidents

By Thomas Foster

PHOENIX, FULTON — Outstanding efforts by two dedicated barge canal employees recently halted two apparent suicide attempts.

In an exhibit of extrasensory perception or, at the least, extraordinary instincts, CSEA members John Steele and Gordon Chapin were able to save two lives.

The men, both members of CSEA Department of Transportation Barge Canal Local 503, were involved in separate incidents two days and a few miles apart.

At about 4:30 p.m. on a late fall day, equipment operator John Steele was working in an observation tower overlooking a canal bridge near Phoenix. He looked up from his work and spied what appeared to be a drunken man in his 30's staggering below.

Somehow, Steele said he knew the man was going to attempt suicide. “You look at some people and you know there will be a problem. It’s instinct,” Steele said.

The man stumbled toward the edge of the bridge and put his arms on the wall. When Steele saw this he was sure the man was going to jump. He was right. “It was the way he put his hands,” Steele recalled, placing his on a desk as he explained. “His elbows were raised and pointing out. Like he was going to climb up. You don’t put your arms that way if you are just looking over the edge.”

Steele had the number to the fire department dialed by the time the man hit the water. After completing the call, he streaked down two steep ladders and out the door, grabbed a life preserver, and crossed the bridge to the spot where the man had jumped.

Apparently the man had a change of heart after the 15-foot plunge into the frigid canal waters, Steele said, because “I threw him the life ring and he managed to make it to the edge of the canal. But he wasn’t sober enough to climb out.

“All the time I was wondering if I had done the right thing by calling first. I kept hoping I would get to him in time,” Steele said.

The Phoenix Volunteer Firemen were on the scene in only 90 seconds to pull the man from the canal. A few minutes longer and he might have died from the cold water, Steele said.

Although the employees said suicide attempts in the canal are not common, there had been a similar incident involving a 91-year-old woman two days earlier in Fulton.

Chief Lock Operator Gordon Chapin had just been relieved by Franklin Hall. “I got in my car and crossed this bridge,” Chapin said, as he recreated the scene as he walked along the bridge. The woman was standing near the canal, about 100 feet from Chapin’s car, when he noticed something odd. “I didn’t think too much about it until I noticed her coat. It was neatly folded and laid at the edge of the canal — like she wanted somebody to find it later,” Chapin said.

Chapin hurried back across the bridge on foot and told Hall to go down the side of the canal opposite the woman.

While Hall held the woman’s attention, Chapin crossed the bridge again and snuck up behind her.

She pointed at Hall saying: “Don’t take another step.”

She then took a step — over the edge. At the same instant, Chapin grabbed her arms and pulled her back.

“Why did you stop me?” she asked.

“I’d rather stop you here than go in after you,” Chapin told her.

Hall called the police, and she was taken to a nursing home by the police. She, too, apparently had second thoughts and thanked Chapin for stopping her.

Chapin, clad in oil-stained coveralls, thought about the woman as he looked out over the canal. “It’s a shame she didn’t have children or anyone who cared,” he said.

“No one who cared? He must have been excluding employees on the barge canal.

AFSCME’s top priority will save jobs

Congress approves 3-year extension of general revenue sharing program

WASHINGTON — AFSCME won a major victory in the "lame-duck" session of Congress when the House and Senate approved the extension for three years of the General Revenue Sharing program.

General Revenue Sharing — the biggest single federal aid program for state and local governments — has been AFSCME’s top priority in Congress.

President Carter is expected to sign into law a bill which automatically extends revenue sharing for local governments for the next three years.

In addition, the bill “authorizes” revenue sharing funds for state governments during Fiscal 1982 and 1983. This means funding for the state share will require a congressional appropriation each year. If the new Congress approves the states’ share of revenue sharing next year, New York State government will receive an additional $249 million during Fiscal 1982.

AFSCME’s victory on General Revenue Sharing came in spite of opposition from irrational budget-cutters from both parties. The states’ share of revenue sharing, in particular, had been opposed by the Carter Administration and was not supported by the leadership of both the House and Senate.

“Our victory on revenue sharing will save thousands of AFSCME members’ jobs,” said AFSCME Legislative Director Joe Beeman.

“Revenue sharing money is the only thing that prevents massive layoffs in local and state governments throughout the country.”
President McGowan presented this proposed agreement to the Committee for an addendum to the present affiliation agreement of April, 1978. The Board of Directors and Delegates of CSEA and the International Executive Committee of AFSCME did reach tentative agreement for a relatable to the present affiliation and any future relationship between the two organizations.

On December 22, 1980, the proposed agreement was presented to the Committee. On December 11, 1980, the CSEA Special Committee to Study the Affiliate Issue met and identified issues of major concern to the membership as expressed to the Committee during the summer of 1980. The issues identified dealt with autonomy, cost, permanence, and representation of public employees.

Further, the Committee finds that the other major provisions of the addendum are not inconsistent with the concerns of the membership as expressed to the Committee during the summer of 1980. It of the AFSCME Constitution. It of the AFSCME Constitution in the interests of a CSEA effort at the next International Convention to amend the AFSCME Constitution to provide additional CSEA representation on the National Executive Board.

The Committee hereby resolves that this day forward to promote and advance the interest of public employees with respect to all terms and conditions of employment, through the use of effective collective bargaining and to establish and maintain the principle of merit and fitness for public employment, and to enhance the interests of all public employees.

This Agreement is entered into between the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO (AFSCME) and the Civil Service Employees Association, Inc. (CSEA).

AFSCME and CSEA agree as their common objectives and purposes, to:

1. Prepare their respective proposals to expand and improve the present affiliation agreement of April 20, 1978 and this Addendum.
2. These proposals shall be finalized and presented to the Board of Directors and any future relationship between the two organizations.
3. Effective April 1, 1981, the sum of $2,760,000 is to be paid to CSEA by AFSCME in 12 equal monthly installments.
4. The Committee, therefore, recommends to the Board of Directors and any future relationship between the two organizations.
5. Effective April 1, 1981, and thereafter, CSEA agrees to receive a dues rate which shall be not less than the minimum dues rate established by AFSCME for local union purposes as a consequence of this Agreement.

The Addendum proposal to affect this current affiliation agreement shall be effective upon approval by the AFSCME International Executive Board and by the CSEA Delegate Body of CSEA and AFSCME's International Executive Board.

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Signed this 20th day of April, 1981, by the authorized representatives of AFSCME and CSEA as follows:

AFSCME:

Patrick Mascioli, President

CSEA:

Maureen Malone, President

A CSEA Legislative District shall be established for CSEA. Two International Vice-President shall be elected from each of the state units at the conventions of the National Executive Board of the AFL-CIO. The International Vice-President shall serve until the 1980 AFL-CIO Convention, at which time they shall be eligible to be re-elected or their successors in accordance with the normal election procedure of the AFL-CIO. The AFSCME Constitution shall not be applicable.

The "Name of the Civil Service Employees Association, Inc." registered trademark and any and all other copyrights and patents presently enjoyed by the AFSCME, shall be used and presented in the course of the execution of this Agreement. The AFSCME, members of CSEA shall enjoy all the rights of membership in AFSCME.

In order to give all possible assistance to CSEA in organizing, the AFSCME agree, beginning immediately upon issuance of the affirmative Charter, to make a monthly grant to CSEA for use in organizing, and in representation of public employees.

A CSEA Legislative District shall be established for CSEA. The AFSCME agrees to provide CSEA with a series of reources and facilities, personnel and expertise in areas such as representation of public employees in various bodies of the state and city central bodies of the state and city central bodies, representation before the federal government, political action, research, education, and in representation of public employees.

AFSCME shall have full autonomy as a Local Union of CSEA and CSEA shall have the right to establish all of its own structure, determine its own dues structure, set its own goals, hire its own staff, make its own decisions regarding its structure and executive action, engage in political activity consistent with its own principles and policies, and retain such professional and other related services as may be required.

Immediately upon issuance of the affirmative Charter by the AFSCME, the AFSCME shall provide additional CSEA representation on the National Executive Board.

CSEA, as Local 1000, AFL-CIO, is an independent union within the meaning of the Federal Labor Relations Act.

The proposed addendum addresses all the concerns outlined in the report of the Committee. The Committee's report was submitted to the Board of Directors of AFSCME and CSEA with additional recommendations. The Committee's report was submitted to the Board of Directors of AFSCME and CSEA with additional recommendations.

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Straight facts about tentative agreement

ALBANY — The framework for a permanent affiliation of the Civil Service Employees Association and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees will be presented to CSEA's Board of Directors and Delegates by next week.

CSEA President William L. McGowan and AFSCME President Jerry Wurf worked out the details of the future affiliation arrangement in the form of an addendum to the current affiliation agreement between the two unions. CSEA has been affiliated with AFSCME since April 1978. Under the tentative agreement, CSEA and the AFL-CIO will have to make it in the future.

The tentative agreement was presented to the Board of Directors and the Delegates.

"We have worked hard to make this the best possible arrangement. We have given it a "Red Light District". Others were inadequate elevators, parking facilities, and the "ifs", "buts", and "bottoms" of our head spin. The office offers job placement services to professional/technical persons seeking employment and also industrial/service job applicants.

"One early frustration was the first site that was finally chosen for the Office on Main Street as a building with many faults, not the least of which is that it's located in the heart of the "Red Light District". Others were inadequate elevators, parking facilities, and the "ifs", "buts", and "bottoms" of our head spin. The office offers job placement services to professional/technical persons seeking employment and also industrial/service job applicants.

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Broome Co. Unit assists with labor studies

BINGHAMTON — CSEA's Broome County Unit is pitching in again this year to help support a Cornell University Extension Division Labor Studies Program in cooperation with the Broome Community College. CSEA Unit President Barbara Pickell said two courses will be offered by the program in coming months dealing with conflict resolution and arbitration.

The course on conflict resolution begins January 21 and ends late in February, consisting of six sessions to be held at Broome Community College.

Arbitration is the subject of a second class beginning on March 18 and continuing to April 29. The course deals with preparation for arbitration, conduct of hearings, evidence and proof, and the standards by which arbitrators render decisions.

Registration can be made by telephone, mail or on the first night of class. For more information on these courses, contact Debi King, NYSSILR-Cornell, 109 Conference Center, Ithaca, N.Y. 14853, (607) 256-2125.

Members come together to celebrate the holiday

ATTENDING THE YONKERS SCHOOL DISTRICT UNIT Christmas party are, from left, CSEA Field Representative Joe O'Connor, School Superintendent Joan Raymond, Unit President Janice Schott and Westchester County Local 860 President Pat Mascioli.

DONATING TOYS FOR THE U.S. Marine Corps Toys for Tots Program are Pilgrim Psychiatric Center Local 418 and Long Island Region I President Danny Donohue. Marine Corps personnel accept the toys at Region I Headquarters. On hand for CSEA are, from right, Local 418 President Bill Chacona, Region I Director William Griffin, Field Representatives Nat Zummo and Nicholas Pollicino and Donohue. Donohue said he hopes this is the beginning of a region-wide program in the future.

SUNY STONY BROOK LOCAL 614 President Charles Scalfani, (left photo) standing at right, and Cindy Scalfani greet Town of Brookhaven Highway Unit President Charles Novo at the Local 614 Christmas party.

SUNY SYRACUSE COLLEGE OF FORESTRY LOCAL 647 members, from left, Alice Steckiewicz, Joyce Disinger and Eleanor Anderson admire cards received while attending the local's recent Christmas party.

SANTA VISITS SMITHTOWN Town Hall, (right) for the Christmas program sponsored by the CSEA Smithtown Unit. John "Santa" Stein holds onto Christopher and Laura Stein while, from left, James Carthy, Region I Director William Griffin and Doug Hallock join in. Carthy, Stein and Hallock are president, first vice president and second vice president of the unit, respectively.

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1980: A banner year for CSEA

February

- CSEA's Political Action Committee meets with President Jimmy Carter in the White House to lobby for a strong New Deal agenda.
- President McGowan testifies before Congress on the importance of OSHA regulations.
- The state concedes to a demand by CSEA to end alarming cutbacks in mental health services in New York State.

March

- More than 1,200 union members attend a rally at the State Capitol to protest layoffs and cuts in education and health care.
- The union prepares to send its first workers to New York City for a statewide leadership conference.

April

- Governor Carey signs a bill to increase the minimum wage, which will benefit millions of state employees.
- CSEA's Political Action Committee (PAC)擞es over 800,000 votes in the 1980 Primary elections, as 93% of CSEA members vote for pro-labor candidates.

May

- The historic OSHA bill is signed into law, marking a major legislative victory for CSEA.
- Governor Carey also signs a bill that establishes a “Right to Know” program for public workers.

June

- Top priority OSHA legislation is finally introduced in the New York State Legislature.
- A two-day strike by state employees in Syracuse is settled after CSEA's successful negotiation of better working conditions.

July

- The state convenes a series of hearings on the OSHA bill, with CSEA providing extensive testimony to ensure the safety of all New Yorkers.
- The Public Sector was a part of the prestigious New York International Press Club Awards, where they won the Award of Merit for their ongoing coverage of labor issues.

August

- Irving Flaumenbaum, Long Island Region Vice President, is elected to the state Board of Public Examiners.
- In an effort to head off problems with the state's mental health institutions, the CSEA prepares to launch a massive public awareness campaign.

September

- CSEA's Political Action Committee (PAC) scores an overwhelming victory in the endorsements of the reform candidates for the 1980 Primary elections.
- Some of the PAC's successful campaigns include endorsements for New York State Attorney General Robert Abrams, New York State Senate Majority Leader Warren Read, and the leadership of the New York State Employees' Retirement System.

October

- President Jimmy Carter makes a personal appearance at a rally in preparation for the general election. He promises to support labor issues if re-elected.
- The CSEA endorses three candidates for governor in the upcoming election: Governor Mario Cuomo, State Senate Majority Leader Warren Read, and the leadership of the New York State Employees' Retirement System.

November

- CSEA's first statewide Women's Conference is held in New York City, attended by over 1,000 women, as 90% of CSEA members vote for pro-labor candidates.
- The Public Sector was a part of the prestigious New York International Press Club Awards, where they won the Award of Merit for their ongoing coverage of labor issues.

December

- CSEA endorses three candidates for governor in the upcoming election: Governor Mario Cuomo, State Senate Majority Leader Warren Read, and the leadership of the New York State Employees' Retirement System.
Strong CSEA support in Erie election

CSEA Local 815 volunteers join officers and staff to fight dissident challenge

BUFFALO — Dozens of members and officers of CSEA’s Erie County Local 815 are pitching in to help the union fight off a challenge for representation of about 4,000 union members.

The challenge, by a group of dissidents, has been blessed by the assistance of the supposedly-neutral Public Employment Relations Board which has issued two opinions in connection with the challenge that are being appealed to the courts by CSEA.

Unfortunately, CSEA can’t attempt to obtain a restraining order in the case without harming its own membership. The union’s contract with Erie County expired on December 31. While CSEA had its contract demands prepared and ready to take to the negotiating table, the challenge resulted in an order barring negotiation until the matter is resolved. If CSEA attempted to restrain the election, it would be denying its own members the benefits of negotiation.

Mail ballots are scheduled to be mailed to eligible members on January 19, and to be counted February 6.

Says CSEA Regional Director Lee Frank, “We think that there is no legal basis for this challenge but we are not going to penalize our own members while we argue it out in court. We have confidence that they can see through this challenger for the ‘paper union’ that it is and will reject it in an election.”

Already the challenger has published deliberate distortions in newspaper advertising so CSEA is gearing up to set the record straight with its Erie County membership. “CSEA was there when Erie County tried to adopt Proposition One and we defeated it,” Mr. Frank says, “and we were there when Erie County tried to lay off the membership at Meyer Hospital and we saved it. Our people have seen what a real union can do and they know the opposition has no staff, no structure, no insurance programs, and no experience. We intend to set the record straight and our members will do the rest.”

Part of the union’s effort was an intensive two-day training session for officers and member-volunteers of Erie County Local 815 conducted by CSEA Education Director Thomas Quimby. Mr. Quimby said that while part of the training session dealt with representation challenges and how to deal with them, many of the skills learned will be of lasting value in improving the ability of participants in their interactions with members, union staff and management.

Representatives of the Local from Auto Bureau, Home and Infirmary, Social Services and other areas participated in the session.

Union forces Erie County to reverse denial of leave time so member can be at program

BUFFALO — When management in the Erie County Social Services Department tried to prevent CSEA activist Charles Carpenter from participating in a recent union training program, it found out that CSEA doesn’t just negotiate contracts, it enforces them.

Social Services Program Support Specialist Charles Carpenter is a concerned CSEA member. He wanted to help CSEA fight off a challenge in Erie County Local 815 that could mean the end of effective union representation for county employees, so he volunteered to participate in a union educational program that, among other things, dealt with challenge elections.

But Carpenter’s request to use his vacation leave to attend the session was denied by his immediate supervisor. It took some “arm twisting” by CSEA, according to Regional Director Lee Frank, but the denial was subsequently repealed and Mr. Carpenter was able to participate in the training session.

“I did not indicate union business when I made my vacation request,” Mr. Carpenter said. “What I do with my vacation time is personal business. But when they found out it was for union business, the director denied it.”

Local President John Eiss and Regional Director Frank said the threat of an unfair labor practice filing was instrumental in freeing Carpenter for the session.