SICK SALARY GETS HEALTHY SHOT

See page 3
Taking a cue from Rodney Dangerfield

Have you ever felt mistreated or unappreciated at work? Do you ever wish your supervisor would smile instead of sighing when you complete a task? Then a booklet distributed by CSEA may be just the cure for your workday blues.

Called HOW ABOUT SOME RESPECT AROUND HERE?, the booklet was created for "CSEA members who are good workers but don't get credit where it's due," says co-author Peg Wilson, CSEA's acting director of education and training.

The booklet contains 18 skits taken from real-life office experiences. In addition to pointing out the humor in these situations, it encourages "employees to take pride in what they do and not let other people's ignorance wear them down," Wilson says. "If workers have self-respect, they can feel good about themselves and their jobs."

The booklet is now available through CSEA. You can order it using the coupon printed below. Just be sure to include your name, address and a check with your social security number written on the front when you send your request to CSEA.

HOW ABOUT SOME RESPECT AROUND HERE?
Respect And Dignity For Office Workers

A videotape of skits in the booklet will be available in October. "This is the first book written by any of the women's committees," said Wilson. "There's a need for the positive reinforcement it provides in the labor force. People should feel good about what they do for a living."

To: Civil Service Employees Association
Attn: Education Department
143 Washington Avenue
Albany, New York 12210

Please send me "HOW ABOUT SOME RESPECT AROUND HERE?" booklet(s). I have enclosed a check for $2.50 made payable to "CSEA" for each booklet ordered. I have also included my Social Security number on the check.

Send to:
CSEA Local
(Name)
(Street Address)
(City) (State) (ZIP)


Address changes should be sent to: Civil Service Employees Association, Attn: Membership Department, 143 Washington Avenue, Albany, New York 12210.

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CSEA closes the gap

Nassau nurses’ pay now more competitive

By Sheryl Carlin
CSEA Communications Associate

EAST MEADOW — In what is believed to be an unprecedented action, about 1,200 Nassau County nurses represented by CSEA have voted to accept an 8 percent salary increase in mid-contract.

“The agreement just ratified is completely separate from upcoming contract negotiations,” notes CSEA Region I Director John O'Sullivan. “The 8 percent has been offered to rectify an immediate and real concern.”

Negotiations are expected to begin soon on a new contract for Nassau County employees to replace the current agreement, which expires Dec. 31.

Pressure from CSEA, a critical nursing shortage, dissatisfaction with the existing salary structure and a wage war among area private hospitals that contributed to massive turnover rates combined to prompt Nassau County officials to address the situation. The nurses had pushed for an additional step increase but voted by a two-to-one margin to accept the 8 percent pay boost offered by the county.

“It's the first step to seeing that our nurses are paid comparable wages to nurses working in the private sector,” says CSEA Region I President Danny Donohue. “We were in strong support of ratification.”

The nurses became outraged when they learned that private hospitals in the area, caught up in a wage war created by a nursing shortage, were paying up to $6,000 more annually in an effort to recruit additional nurses.

“We feel this wage increase will attract more nurses and help alleviate the stress that short-staffing has caused,” says Nassau County Medical Center CSEA Unit President Jack Geraghty. “I'm very pleased that the nurses accepted the offer. It's not as much money as they asked for, but it's certainly an excellent start.”

Nassau County Local 830 President Jerome Donahue agrees.

“It's a great first step to resolving the problems in nursing. The raise will help decrease the mandatory overtime by making the salary more competitive with other hospitals in Nassau and Suffolk,” Donahue predicts.

John O’Sullivan is new Reg. I director

HAUPPAUGE — Labor unions have been a part of John O’Sullivan’s life for as long as he can remember.

He grew up in a union family and his entire adult life has been involved with unions. Now he has taken on new union responsibilities.

O’Sullivan, a CSEA field representative for the past 10 years, has been promoted to director of CSEA's Region I, which encompasses all of Long Island and its 55,000 CSEA members. He succeeds Ross Hanna who recently was appointed a deputy director of contract administration in CSEA’s statewide headquarters in Albany.

In his new position, O’Sullivan supervises a staff of 20 professional employees.

“I've always enjoyed working with the staff and the membership,” he says. “I've been involved with unions, either on the staff or as an elected officer, my entire adult life.”

O’Sullivan, whose father was on the original board of the Transportation Workers of America, worked in various capacities for the Uniformed Firefighters Association in New York City for many years. He was a professional firefighter and an elected union trustee, financial recording secretary and chief lobbyist before becoming a staff member of the Uniformed Firefighters Association. He left that position to join CSEA in 1977.

“I've met good people on both sides of the table,” O’Sullivan says. “I intend to visit the CSEA units and locals as often as time allows because I want to get to know as many members as possible and see that they receive the CSEA services that are available to them. That's my job and the job of my staff.”

O’Sullivan and his wife have three sons and a daughter. He has been a resident of Hicksville for more than 30 years.
CRIME:
Public workers favorite target
in capital city

Compiled by Daniel X. Campbell
CSEA Communications Associate

ALBANY — Incidents of crimes directed against state workers in downtown Albany apparently occur more frequently than originally thought. Even CSEA, which earlier this year said the problem had reached serious proportions, says latest figures indicate the problem is more epidemic.

Results of a survey taken among members of two CSEA locals based in downtown Albany reveal alarming statistics. "We knew the situation was serious, but even we were surprised by some of the numbers," a union member says.

"The survey findings confirm our position that state employees are targeted for assaults, muggings, robberies, harassment and property theft and damage," the member says. The survey was conducted by CSEA Locals 667 and 688 which represent, respectively, employees of the Higher Education Corporation and the state Department of Social Services. The survey was taken in response to employee concerns following a rash of muggings and assaults earlier this year. The state responded by cutting back brush near stairways leading to state parking lots in the Sheridan Avenue area, increasing lighting in the parking areas, and stepping up security patrols.

A security booth also was placed in the parking area where the bulk of the incidents occurred, but CSEA complains the booth remains unmanned and without a phone connection several weeks after being installed.

Earlier this summer employees became upset with what they said was a lack of response by the city and state to their plight and called in the Guardian Angels safety patrol for assistance. Members of the Guardian Angels patrolled the Sheridan Avenue parking area for several weeks and conducted self-defense classes for state workers.

The survey results confirmed that the Sheridan Avenue parking area is the major trouble spot. It was listed as the site of 190 incidents in the survey. The huge Empire State Plaza area was the scene of 38 incidents listed.

CSEA recently held a press conference in the troubled parking area to release results of the survey and to renew demands for more action by authorities to protect workers in downtown Albany.

The union sent survey results to Gov. Mario Cuomo and asked the governor to help in correcting the safety problems. A spokesperson for the governor's office acknowledged receipt of the material and said it is being reviewed. Meanwhile the state Office of General Services (OGS) said it is increasing security measures in the problem areas. The parking lot booth, OGS said, will be staffed as soon as electricity and phone service is installed.

Local 688 President Charles Staats Jr. says the responses are "a good start," while Local 667 President Elizabeth Habiniak would like to see quicker action. "I don't feel they're doing it fast enough," she says.

Both presidents said they will keep up pressure to clean up the entire area, noting the problem has gone unresolved for years. At the recent press conference CSEA distributed copies of a letter the union wrote to the late Albany Mayor Erastus Corning.

"It was dated more than 13 years ago and complained about serious crimes being committed against state employees. "We've waited a long time and we're tired of waiting. We demand corrective action now," CSEA said.

Report it!

The survey of state employees revealed many victims of crime failed to report incidents, and many victims who did report cases felt authorities treated their complaints too lightly.

CSEA encourages everyone to report criminal or threatening incidents to either the Capitol Police or Albany Police.

According to the survey findings, nine of 51 assault incidents were not reported to police, and only half of 44 harassment cases were reported by the victims. Thirty-one of 129 cases of vehicle damage or theft from vehicles went unreported.

Several state employees said they failed to report situations out of fear of retaliation or otherwise felt intimidated. Many said they knew of cases where other reports were dismissed or downplayed by authorities and they felt it was not worth the trouble.

CSEA believes every incident should be reported properly. Authorities say their departments will handle every case with respect and they, too, encourage reporting in every instance.
NEW YORK — CSEA officials are vehemently protesting a state Office of Mental Health (OMH) renovation plan that would turn the dilapidated Manhattan Psychiatric Center (MPC) laundry facilities into a homeless shelter and uproot 250 mental patients to upstate institutions.

"With professionals warning that New York's overloaded mental health delivery system is at the breaking point and our city facing the nation's worst crack epidemic, it defies reason that OMH bureaucrats could even consider shrinking the number of available hospital beds here and turning valuable treatment space into just another warehouse for the homeless," said CSEA Region II President George Boncoraglio. "It's ridiculous."

Intensely opposed to the arbitrary and ill-conceived patient transfers, Boncoraglio and Manhattan Psychiatric Center CSEA Local 413 President Mohamed Hussain invited state legislators to tour the psychiatric center and meet with concerned union members and patients' relatives.

At the informal meeting with state Assembly Mental Health Committee Chairperson Elizabeth Connelly, Assemblyman Angelo DelToro and state Sen. Olga Mendez, family members and union workers discussed on-site housing proposals as alternatives to the state plans.

CSEA's proposal is "intended to spare the mentally ill and their families the needless trauma of a forced upstate move while maintaining a safe working environment for the employees," Boncoraglio said.

Hussain led legislators on a walking tour to see available space that can safely accommodate the present patient population at the center during the state-planned three-year renovation.

In a presentation to the legislators, CSEA Field Representative Barton M. Brier stressed that the union supports improved care while "insisting that upheaval and disruption in the lives of patients be kept to a minimum."

After reviewing comprehensive informal packages outlining CSEA's proposals, legislators pledged to seek public hearings where all sides may be heard and work to stop patient transfers while all proposals are being analyzed.

Boncoraglio thanked the legislators for their concern and their support for the hearings.

"Inflicting this burden upon our mentally ill makes no sense at all, unless OMH's overall goal is to get out of the mental health business in New York City," Boncoraglio said. "CSEA is determined to see that this doesn't happen."

September 7, 1987
A major pension supplementation bill overwhelmingly passed both houses of the State Legislature this past session. CSEA, other public employee unions, thousands of retirees and the state comptroller all supported its passage. Only New York City Mayor Ed Koch, citing fiscal difficulties, urged its defeat. Gov. Mario Cuomo, with a vague reference to a "technical flaw," vetoed the bill. Coincidence?

CSEA retiree makes certain Cuomo hears

ALBANY — Mary Jaroki was not content just to allow CSEA officials and others to urge the Governor to sign the pension supplementation bill. Instead, the CSEA retiree, a former Local president and regional officer from Region IV, added her voice to the din.

Jaroki sent Gov. Mario Cuomo a personal telegram asking him to sign the bill. “Urgent you sign the pension allowance bill S.6355. The increase is needed by your family so desperately. Please don’t bypass us. The need is justified.”

She asked Cuomo to sign the bill, passed in the last legislative session, which would extend pension supplementation to state employees who retired between 1980 and 1983 and provided increasingly larger percentages of supplementation for longer periods of retirement.

Cuomo, however, vetoed the bill, earning the ire of CSEA Union President William L. McGowan has called for a special legislative session to amend the bill if necessary so it can be signed into law.
A contaminated building at SUNY Stony Brook has been reopened, but worrisome questions remain over what toxics staff and students may have been exposed to because of administration foot-dragging over the past year!

STONY BROOK — Less than a month after independent tests of the Javits Lecture Center at SUNY Stony Brook showed high concentrations of known toxic substances, an expert panel has given portions of the building a clean bill of health. Although three rooms in the center remain sealed pending further tests, the center has been reopened with the start of classes at the campus and CSEA members have returned to work in the building.

CSEA hopes it is the last chapter in the year-long controversy.

The situation began when a fire in a custodian’s closet last Sept. 26 deposited toxic soot throughout the building. The toxics, including dioxin and other cancer-causing agents, were formed when the fire consumed plastics and other supplies. Although CSEA maintenance workers participated in the initial clean-up after the fire, they soon afterwards refused any further involvement when problems became apparent.

Students began complaining of burning eyes, headaches and nausea. CSEA members wanted to know what risk was involved in cleaning up the mess — but the university had no answers.

CSEA’s position was quickly reinforced through an agreement between the union and the university.

“It was agreed that our people would not be forced to work in the lecture center until tests were completed and they were informed of what chemicals were present — so they could be trained in the use of proper equipment and procedures,” explains CSEA Region I President Danny Donohue.

In the meantime, CSEA, students and the New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG) began bringing pressure on the university for keeping the center open and failing to conduct exhaustive tests for toxic materials right away.

The center was finally shut down in June after initial test results showed a danger.

“Fm proud of my people for staying united and refusing to give in to the pressure to do the clean-up,” says CSEA Local 614 President Tony Ruggiero. “But at this point we have to respect the judgment of the expert panel and the clean-up work that has been carried out.”

CSEA remains concerned that the university’s initial delay in taking appropriate action put students and personnel at significant risk. As a result, no one will ever know the full extent to which people were exposed to toxics in the building.

For that reason, CSEA will continue to monitor employee health for possible illness that may develop over time.

But CSEA also wants to protect against a similar crisis in the future. In a proposal that has been applauded by the university president, Ruggiero has suggested the creation of a campus task force to deal with such situations.

The group would be comprised of representatives of labor, management and students and would immediately be called in at the start of an emergency to establish a unified approach to the problem.
Raw Sewage

‘Waterfall’ exposes workers to hazards

By Lilly Gioia
CSEA Communications Associate
NEW YORK — A mysterious waterfall pouring down from the New York State Psychiatric Institute turned out to be raw sewage, exposing CSEA members to the gushing waste as they sought its source.

Thanks to the union's quick action, those affected promptly received gamma globulin shots to protect them from contracting a variety of illnesses, including hepatitis, said Tony Bailous, president of the Psychiatric Institute CSEA Local 419.

“It was the damndest thing we'd ever seen,” said Bailous, a senior stationary engineer at the institute.

Aware of major construction in progress at the neighboring Presbyterian Hospital, workers initially assumed the liquid was rushing from a ruptured interior pipe or was the result of a hydrant problem.

But while poring over building blueprints, city and state engineers learned that a New York City sewage line runs directly under the state facility at 722 West 168 Street in Manhattan.

The engineers were mystified that this type of construction was approved when the building was erected, Bailous reported.

“None of us had ever seen plumbing like this approved, and it was beyond our understanding,” he said.

CSEA member Ralph Maiello, a plumber exposed to the sewage, initially suffered intestinal virus symptoms.

However, CSEA members inoculated with gamma globulin were advised not to donate blood in the facility’s current blood drive because they will carry a weakened strain of hepatitis virus for a year.

City and state engineers plan to meet soon to review accessibility to sewage lines to prevent any recurrences of the sickening waterworks. While the city has cleared the blockage this time, the union intends to monitor developments to insure there are no more ghastly gushers.

American Legion post for public employees formed in Westchester

Westchester County employees now have their own American Legion Post.

The newly-chartered Major James S. Pitches Post is named to honor a county employee who died in the Vietnam War.

The post was the brainchild of county Veterans Affairs Director Ben Spadaro; he decided about a year ago that the county employees needed a legion post.

According to county Legislature Clerk Anthony Giambruno, any eligible county employee or retiree may join.

“There is a potential for 600 to 700 members,” Giambruno said.
AFSCME leads ‘stop Bork’ fight

Needs your help!

Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Moynihan,

Americans have long depended on the Supreme Court to protect individual rights and liberties. Judge Bork’s philosophy threatens the freedoms of all Americans. Our lives and health and the well-being of our families are at stake. CSEA/AFSCME members now depend on the U.S. Senate for a thorough review of Judge Bork. Our government’s balance of power depends on the Senate’s active scrutiny.

I urge you to vote for New Yorkers and against the confirmation of Judge Bork to the Supreme Court.

signature

address  city  st  zip

Senator Alfonse D’Amato
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator D’Amato,

Americans have long depended on the Supreme Court to protect individual rights and liberties. Judge Bork’s philosophy threatens the freedoms of all Americans. Our lives and health and the well-being of our families are at stake. CSEA/AFSCME members now depend on the U.S. Senate for a thorough review of Judge Bork. Our government’s balance of power depends on the Senate’s active scrutiny.

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signature

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September 7, 1987

THE PUBLIC SECTOR
It's that time again — children all over New York state are heading back to school. But for tens of thousands of CSEA members, this week is not the end of vacation. They've been working all summer long.

When those pupils file into their schools, they'll go back to spotless halls and neat classrooms, get their schedules and lunch menus, because CSEA members have been busy all summer. Whether they are custodians or clerical workers, they have been winding up old business from last year and setting up for this coming year while most people have been enjoying summer vacation. And with so many districts sponsoring summer school programs, bus drivers and cafeteria workers statewide have been working through the summer as well.

So when the first bus rolls in and the bell rings, it will be just one more day for CSEA school district members — only from now until June, their buildings will be bustling and buzzing with pupils.
CSEA talks ...

AIDS in the courtroom

By Stephen Madarasz
CSEA Communications Associate

ALBANY—The increasing concern of New York State Office of Court Administration employees over contact with defendants potentially carrying infectious diseases such as AIDS should be addressed by better education programs.

That was the message CSEA Deputy Director for Contract Administration Don Kelly delivered in testimony before an OCA hearing on the matter. While not ruling out the need for new court procedures to protect employees and the public, Kelly made it clear that a comprehensive education program is a necessary first step.

As in other work settings, such as prisons and health care facilities, court employees frequently come into contact with high-risk individuals. However, CSEA believes crises can be avoided if employees understand what they are dealing with.

“‘No one is going to contract AIDS from casual contact,’” Kelly pointed out. “‘Most of the hysteria about AIDS comes from a lack of information. To go in and start changing all kinds of court procedures without first providing education will just contribute to more hysteria.’”

Kelly also commented that it would be “irresponsible” to just focus on AIDS when other contagious diseases such as hepatitis B and tuberculosis pose similar concern in the court setting.

Among the information that should be included in any education program on infectious disease:

- How to handle unusual circumstances — especially first aid
- An explanation of what different diseases are and how they are transmitted
- Normal hygiene precautions to reduce risk

Kelly also explained that at a time when physical improvements are underway in the courts, it would be appropriate for OCA to review layouts to determine better arrangements for everyone’s well being.

AIDS is still with us!

Health care and laboratory workers—Safety posters now available from CSEA

Write:
CSEA Safety and Health Department
143 Washington Avenue
Albany, New York 12210

Learn how to protect yourself!
Oneida County

Scholarship winners

ROME — For the 16th consecutive year, Oneida County CSEA Local 833 has awarded scholarships to children of three of its members.

Local President Dorothy Penner-Breen announced the 1987 winners will each receive a $500 check to be used for their college education.

JoAnne Melisko, chairperson of the Local 833 scholarship committee, said all candidates were evaluated and winners selected on the basis of academic achievement, community service and financial need.

The winners of the Oneida County CSEA Local 833 scholarships are:

Andrew Koba, son of Carol Koba, an employee of Mohawk Valley Community College. He is a graduate of Oriskany Falls Central School and plans to attend Cazenovia College.

Annette Neal, a graduate of Clinton Schools who plans to attend Mohawk Valley Community College. Her mother, Linda Neal, is an employee of Oneida County Social Services Department.

Jodi Nettleton, daughter of Donna Nettleton, an employee of the city of Rome. She is a graduate of Rome Free Academy and will attend the State University of New York at Oswego.

CONGRATULATIONS! — Oneida County CSEA Local 833 presented three children of members with $500 college scholarships in an informal ceremony. Attending were, from left, Local 833 President Dorothy Penner-Breen; Carol Koba; scholarship winner Andrew Koba; Linda Neal; winner Annette Neal; Donna Nettleton; winner Jodi Nettleton and JoAnne Melisko, Local 833 scholarship committee chairperson.

Board vacancy

An additional vacant seat will be contested in upcoming special elections to fill vacancies on CSEA’s statewide Board of Directors.

A newly-vacant seat for a representative from Region III has been added to the eight vacancies announced in the previous edition of The Public Sector.

The new vacancy is the second seat for Region III Mental Hygiene. To run for the seat, a CSEA member must get signatures from 450 CSEA members in the department who are eligible to vote to sign a petition.

The nine vacancies are, in the State Division: Audit and Control; Public Service: two seats for Mental Hygiene in Region III; and Mental Hygiene Region V. In the Local Government Division, the seats to be filled are: Albany County; Chenango County; Montgomery County; and Wayne County.

All nominating petitions must be received by the CSEA Membership Records Department at CSEA.


Region meeting

SYRACUSE — More than 300 CSEA officers, delegates and guests are expected to attend the three-day Region V conference September 11 to 13.

The conference will draw people from the entire 20-county Central Region and will feature discussion of priority issues to be covered at the statewide Delegates Convention beginning Sept. 27 in Rochester.

ALBANY — CSEA’s statewide Board of Directors met here on June 25. A lengthy agenda resulted in that session being adjourned and reconvened on Aug. 6. In official actions, the Board:

* Authorized nominations for appointment to political action committees in Regions I and V;
* Authorized the signing of a contract between CSEA and Clarity Publishing Inc. of Albany to print the union’s official publication;
* Recommended a procedure for filling the vacant position of Region II vice president;
* Approved preliminary plans for a mass demonstration to protest public service cutbacks;
* Accepted an invitation to send representatives to the AFSCME Regional Women’s Conference Feb. 5-7, 1988, in Atlanta, Ga.;
* Approved a contribution to the Clara Taylor memorial fund;
* Approved a new article in the retiree division constitution pertaining to affiliations with other organizations;
* Approved lease arrangements for the Utica and Canton satellite offices;
* Directed that all records, books and funds be returned to Locals 664, 668, 691, 439, 405, 828 and 826.

Questions from CSEA members concerning the union’s Board of Directors should be directed to the member’s Board representatives, local president or to the office of the Statewide Secretary. Copies of the minutes of Board meetings are sent to all Board representatives and local presidents.
Morin gets my vote!

CSEA is throwing its weight behind Lucien Morin in the race for Monroe County executive this November.

The endorsement of incumbent Morin has been announced by CSEA Local 828 and the Region VI Political Action Committee.

Local President George Growney and County Employee Unit President Florence Tripi say Morin has been fair to county employees, as well as accessible. He also has the experience needed to be effective.

Presenting the endorsement check to Morin in above photograph are, from left, Growney; Tripi; Jim Volpone, Local 828 Political Action Committee chairman; Morin and Judy DiPaola of Judiciary Local 335.

A premature Labor Day

"Labor Day" came several months early this year for Carolyn Cook. In January, the pregnant switchboard operator began experiencing premature labor pains at New York State Psychiatric Institute where she works. CSEA Local 419 secretary Nevada Solano assisted Cook to the hospital, where she later delivered tiny 1-pound, one-half ounce Jamel.

Now a hefty 14-plus pounds, Jamel accompanies his mother for a special visit to Solano when they drop by the Institute. In the photograph at left, Solano holds 8-month-old Jamel while Cook looks on.

What priority goals should CSEA aim for in the coming year?

Where asked: Madison County CSEA Local 827

CHRIS PERSON
Equipment Operator
Madison County Highway

"With the cost of living always climbing, let's make a concentrated effort on increased wages in our negotiations."

JIM EMERSON
Custodian
Canastota School Unit

"I think revised legislation covering Civil Service should carry high priority."

KATHY MILLER
Sr. Support Investigator
Madison County Complex

"I would like to see more utilization of AFSCME services."

NICK RASHFORD
Equipment Operator
Madison County Highway

"CSEA should really push for revisions of the Tier III retirement system."
"Overall we review suggestions from individuals and locals on ways to make CSEA run better," explains Carmen Bagnoli, chairperson of the CSEA standing Constitution and By-laws Committee.

This is the busiest time of year for Bagnoli and other members of the committee as they put the finishing touches on resolutions that go before CSEA's delegates at the union's annual meeting scheduled for Rochester later this month. Those resolutions can range from technical changes that clarify how CSEA conducts business, to establishing new committees, to setting the union dues.

Bagnoli describes what the committee presents for consideration as "ideas in the best interest of CSEA." Although the committee's work is most apparent at convention time, it is really a year-round job for committee members. "There’s always some issue that we’re working on and that’s what makes being on this committee so interesting — we handle a lot of important matters," Bagnoli comments.

"Everyone has an idea about how to make CSEA work better — but sometimes when you talk it out, it’s not as simple as it first seems," he adds.

Often, as part of its review, the committee will refer an issue to another CSEA committee for a report on its possible impact. After the information has been received, Constitution and By-laws will discuss it thoroughly and decide to accept or reject the idea.

If an idea is rejected by the committee, it can still be brought up for consideration at the convention by a two-thirds vote of the delegates.

As might be expected, considering their importance, the constitution and by-law revisions take up a large segment of the program at the convention.

"We try to make it as clear as we can what each change means and why we’re recommending it and then let the delegates decide what’s best," says Bagnoli.

But once the delegates have had their say, it’s not the end for the committee. It’s actually a new beginning.
REPORT OF THE
REVISION OF THE CONSTITUTION
AND BY-LAWS COMMITTEE

to be presented to delegates attending CSEA's 77th Annual Meeting
September 27-October 2, 1987 Rochester, N.Y.

Bold Face = new material
[brackets] = removal of old material

The Constitution and By-Laws Committee has met four times since the Annual Delegates Meeting in October, 1986. The meeting dates were February 5, 1987; June 4, 1987; June 30, 1987; and August 13, 1987. The Constitution and By-Laws Committee has as its function the recommendations to the delegates of amendments to the CSEA Constitution and By-Laws. The Committee reviews suggestions made by individuals and Locals and accepts referrals from the delegates and Board of Directors. Additionally, the Committee can initiate proposals which it deems to be in the best interests of the Association. All recommendations made by this Committee are made to the delegates together with the reasons for the recommendations. THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE PRESENTED TO THE DELEGATES FOR A SECOND READING. IF PASSED, THE AMENDMENTS WILL BECOME PART OF THE CSEA CONSTITUTION.

(1) The following amendment to Article IV, Section 3 was submitted by Janice McGuinness, President of Local 860, by letter dated February 25, 1986.

"ARTICLE IV
ORGANIZATION OF THE ASSOCIATION
Section 3. No member of the Board of Directors of the Association shall be a member of a competing labor organization. * No elected or appointed public official who is deemed to have a conflict of interest by the Judicial Board of CSEA shall continue as a member of the Board of Directors.

Explanation: The Committee agrees with the justification provided by Ms. McGuinness which is to preclude CSEA members who are appointed public officials from holding elected or appointed positions in CSEA. There are instances where such employees, although excluded from CSEA contracts by mutual consent in the Recognition clauses, still maintain full CSEA membership, all rights to vote and run for office, etc. In CSEA because no managerial/confidential designation has ever been sought by the administration from PERB and such appointed public official is therefore not precluded from maintaining such full CSEA membership. It is believed that such appointed public official should have limitations placed on his/her CSEA rights as does an elected public official. The Committee recommends adoption of this amendment.

(2) The Board of Directors has submitted the following package of proposed amendments to the Committee for presentation to the Delegates.

"ARTICLE IV
ORGANIZATION OF THE ASSOCIATION
Section 5. OFFICERS. The Officers of the Association shall be a President, an Executive Vice President, six Vice Presidents to be the six Region Presidents, the Secretary and Treasurer.

(a) ELECTION. The [four statewide officers] President, Executive Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer of the Association shall be elected by secret ballot tri-annually (every three years). The six Vice Presidents of the Association shall be elected for a term of three years, such elections to be conducted concurrent with Region elections. All officers of the Association shall hold office for a term of three years, commencing on July 1 of the year in which they were elected, or until their successors shall have qualified. Vacancy in the office of President shall be filled by the Executive Vice President. Vacancy in the office of Executive Vice President shall be filled by the Board of Directors by electing any one of the six Vice Presidents, the Secretary or the Treasurer. A vacancy in the term of any of the Vice Presidents shall be filled according to the Constitution and By-Laws of the respective Regions. Vacancies in the office of Secretary and Treasurer may be filled for the remainder of the term by the Board of Directors. No statewide officer shall be an officer of a Local or Unit.

DELETE ENTIRE CURRENT LANGUAGE UNDER SECTION (c) INDEPENDENT NOMINATIONS.

"(c) ELIGIBILITY. In order to be eligible to seek office, a candidate must be at least 18 years of age, a member in good standing of the Association since June 1 of the year preceding the election, shall not have been a member of a competing labor association or union since June 1 of the year preceding the election, and shall not currently be serving a disciplinary penalty imposed by the Judicial Board of CSEA.

"(d) The Board of Directors shall within reasonable limits authorize the reimbursement of travel expenses for duly nominated candidates for the four statewide officers of the Association.

"ARTICLE VI
STATE DIVISION
Section 1. STATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. REMAINS THE SAME.
[Section 2. LOCALS] Renumbered to Section 3.

Section 2.
(a) NOMINATIONS. Nominations for members of the State Executive Committee shall be made by official petition. Upon the written request of any member, official petition forms shall be provided by the Executive Director or other responsible employee of the Association so designated. When nominating petitions are given out, the name of the candidate and the office that candidate is seeking must be typed or clearly printed at the top of the petition. A record must be kept of all petitions distributed. A member who is otherwise eligible may qualify as a candidate for the State Executive Committee by submitting a nominating petition carrying the signatures and social security numbers of not less than ten percent (10%) of the members in good standing eligible to vote in the election provided, however, that in no event will more than 450 valid signatures be required. Any member submitting the required number of valid signatures to the Statewide Election Committee at CSEA Headquarters in a timely manner shall be placed on the ballot as a candidate for the State Executive Committee. Write-in votes are prohibited.

(b) ELIGIBILITY. In order to be eligible to seek office, a candidate must be at least 18 years of age, a member in good standing of the Department since June 1 of the year preceding the election, shall not have been a member of a competing labor association or union since June 1 of the year preceding the election, and shall not currently be serving a disciplinary penalty imposed by the Judicial Board of CSEA.

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September 7, 1987

CSEA's Constitution and By-Laws

(Continued from previous page)

Section 3. LOCALS. LANGUAGE REMAINS THE SAME.

“ARTICLE VII
LOCAL GOVERNMENT DIVISION
Section 1. LOCAL GOVERNMENT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. REMAINS THE SAME.

§ 2. LOCALS. Renumbered to Section 3.

Section 2.

(a) NOMINATIONS. Nominations for members of the Local Government Executive Committee shall be made by official petition. Upon written request of any member, official petition forms shall be provided by the Executive Director or other responsible employee of the Association so designated. When nominating petitions are given out, the name of the candidate and the office that candidate is seeking must be typed or clearly printed at the top of the petition. A record must be kept of all petitions distributed. A member who is otherwise eligible may qualify as a candidate for the Local Government Executive Committee by submitting a nominating petition carrying the signatures and social security numbers of not less than ten percent (10%) of the members in good standing eligible to vote in the election provided, however, that in no event will more than 450 valid signatures and social security numbers be required. Any member submitting the required number of valid signatures to the Statewide Election Committee at CSEA Headquarters in a timely manner shall be placed on the ballot as a candidate for the Local Government Executive Committee. Write-in votes are prohibited.

(b) ELIGIBILITY. In order to be eligible to seek office, a candidate must be at least 18 years of age, a member in good standing of the Local or in the case of Educational Representatives of the Region since June 1 of the year preceding the election, shall not have been a member of a competing labor organization or union since June 1 of the year preceding the election, and shall not currently be serving a disciplinary penalty imposed by the Judicial Board of CSEA.

Section 3. LOCALS. LANGUAGE REMAINS THE SAME.

Explanation: These proposed amendments to the Constitution relate to the Election Procedure for the four Statewide Officers, members of the State Executive Committee, and members of the Local Government Executive Committee. The basic intent of these proposed amendments is to modify the current language in the Constitution and By-Laws which relates to the use of a Nominating Committee in the election process. The new language provides for nomination by petition which is the only valid method which CSEA can utilize for elections under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Department of Labor. The recently run elections for State Executive Committee and Local Government Executive Committee both utilized the nomination by petition process even though this language did not yet appear in the Constitution and/or By-Laws. CSEA has no alternative but to adopt the language so that the Constitution and By-Laws reflect the legally permissible method for members to be nominated to either the four Statewide Offices, the State Executive Committee or the Local Government Executive Committee.

(3) The following amendments to Article VII were submitted by Statewide Secretary Irene Carr by letter dated July 16, 1985.

“ARTICLE VIII
DELEGATES

Members of each Local shall elect from their membership one or more delegates, and powers, rights, and privileges of members of the Local at all meetings of the Association, except that the Local President, Vice Presidents in ranking order, Secretary and Treasurer, shall, by virtue of their offices, automatically be designated as delegates and/or alternate delegates. Prior to July 15 of each year, each Local shall file with the Secretary of the Association an accurate list containing the names and addresses of its delegates and alternate delegates for the ensuing year. Such delegate or delegates shall have one vote for each one hundred (100) members or fraction thereof in such Local, based upon the paid membership in the Association on the first day of June preceding the meeting. The number of votes each Local or Department is entitled to cast shall be determined by the Membership Committee. Members in the State Division who are not entitled to representation by Local Delegates pursuant to this section shall be represented at all meetings of the Association by members of the State Executive Committee as delegates representing each of the State Departments, and each such delegate shall have one vote for each one hundred (100) members, or fraction thereof, in the Department from which the delegate was elected, excluding those members who are represented by Local Delegates as provided in this section. All other members of the Board of Directors shall have all the rights and privileges of delegates at meetings of the delegates except the right to vote. Such delegates selected or appointed pursuant to this section shall have and may exercise all the powers and privileges of delegates at any meeting of the Association.”

REST OF ARTICLE REMAINS THE SAME.

Explanation: Since all members are now assigned to and represented by a Local, this language is obsolete and should be removed. The Committee recommends adoption of these amendments.

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE PRESENTED TO THE DELEGATES BY THE COMMITTEE AS PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION. THE PRESENTATION TO THE DELEGATES AT THIS MEETING CONSTITUTES A FIRST READING OF THESE AMENDMENTS.

(1) The following amendment to Article I was recommended by the Officers of the Association.

“ARTICLE I
NAME
This organization shall be known as the CIVIL SERVICE EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION, INC., LOCAL 1000, AFSCME, AFL-CIO. THE REST OF THE ARTICLE REMAINS THE SAME.

REST OF THE SECTION REMAINS THE SAME.

“ARTICLE V
STATE DIVISION
Section 2. LOCALS.

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percent (50%) of the eligible school district
Units, but in no event less than 200 school
district members, shall request formulation
thereof. Each such Local shall make available
to the duly authorized representative of the
Association at the request of the President
[or], the Board of Directors or the Treasurer
at reasonable intervals, all local records for
inspection by the Association.”

Explanation: Since the Treasurer is the chief
fiscal officer of the Association, responsible
for the custody of the Association’s funds and
for implementation of the “Financial Standards
Code,” it is appropriate that the office of
Treasurer be able to exercise the same
authority over Local records as is given to the
President and the Board of Directors. The
Committee recommends adoption of these
amendments.

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE PRESENTED
TO THE DELEGATES BY THE COMMITTEE
AS PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE BY-
LAWS. IF PASSED AT THIS MEETING, THE
AMENDMENTS WILL BECOME EFFECTIVE
IMMEDIATELY.

(1) The following amendment to Article I, is
submitted to the Delegates by the
Constitution and By-Laws Committee as a
result of a recommendation made by
Statewide Secretary Irene Carr.

“ARTICLE I
OFFICERS

Section 7. The President, Executive Vice
President, Secretary, and Treasurer shall,
by virtue of their office, be designated as
voting Delegates at all Conventions of the
Association’s international affiliate, the
American Federation of State, County and
Municipal Employees.

Section 7(8). HONORARIA. THE REST OF
THE SECTION REMAINS THE SAME.

Explanation: This insures that CSEA will
always be represented by its Statewide
Officers at the AFSCME conventions. The
Committee recommends adoption of this
amendment.

(2) The following amendment to Article IV,
FINANCE, is submitted to the Delegates by
the Constitution and By-Laws Committee
without recommendation.

“ARTICLE IV
FINANCE

Section 2. DUES AND AGENCY SHOP
FEE

(a)(1) Effective April 1, 1980, the annual
membership dues and agency shop fee of the
Association shall be ninety-one dollars
($91.00). Effective April 1, 1981, the annual
membership dues and agency shop fee of the
Association shall be one hundred four dollars
($104.00). Effective April 1, 1982, the
annual membership dues and agency shop
fee of the Association shall be equivalent to
the minimum dues for local unions established
by the constitution of the Association’s
international affiliate, the American Federation
of State, County and Municipal Employees.

Effective January 1, 1988 an annual
organizational per capita charge of twenty-
six dollars ($26.00) will be assessed. This
assessment will be used exclusively to
fund statewide operations. An AFSCME
dues increase for 1988 will not be applied.

Effective January 1, 1989 and thereafter,
the annual membership dues and agency
shop fee of the Association shall be the
AFSCME minimum plus the annual
organizational per capita charge of twenty-
six dollars ($26.00) described above.

[Membership dues and agency shop fees
collected by bi-weekly payroll deduction shall
be at the rate of 1/26th of the annual
amount. Members who elect to pay dues by
direct payment may do so by paying the
annual amount of the dues to the Association
on or before October 1st of the fiscal year
for which such dues are paid. A member who
elects to pay dues by direct payment may
pay such dues in two equal semi-annual
installments on October 1st and April 1st of
the year for which such dues are paid. No
Local, Unit or Region has the right to assess
additional dues from members.]”

Explanation: See separate report relating to
CSEA finances justifying the necessity of an
assessment. The reference to 1/26th of the
annual amount causes confusion when there
are 27 pays in an annual period. CSEA
collects on many different pay-period
structures and no others are defined in the
Constitution. CSEA bills members who are not
on payroll deduction, such as retirees,
associate members, or those on leave without
pay. All others are expected to use payroll
deduction. Members cannot elect direct
billing. To keep this language in the
Constitution only causes confusion.

“(a)(2) Members and persons paying an
agency shop fee who are employed for an
average of [four hours or less per day or an
average of] twenty hours or less per week
shall pay dues or an agency shop fee at a
rate of one-half of the annual amount.”

REST OF THE SECTION REMAINS THE
SAME.

Explanation: Members working less than 20
hours a week pay one-half of the amount
of annual dues. The test of four hours or less
per day has never been applied and causes
confusion.

“(a)(3) All members or persons paying an
agency shop fee who are employed on a
seasonal or less than full time (12 month)
basis shall pay dues or an agency shop fee at
the rate of 1/26th of the annual dues bi-
weekly] during the period of their
employment.”

Explanation: The same explanation as that
under (a)(1) applies to this section.

“(a)(4)” SEE ADDENDUM.

“(A)(5)” SEE ADDENDUM.

“Section 2(c) RETIRED MEMBERS. The
annual membership dues of retired members
shall be [nine] twelve dollars [($9.00)]
($12.00) effective October 1, 1980(9)

Explanation: These dues have remained
unchanged for the last eight years. Increased
services to retirees and increased general
operating expenses justify this change.

“Section 2(f) ASSOCIATE MEMBERS. The
annual membership dues of an associate
member shall be [twenty-six dollars
($26.00)] one-half the minimum dues
provided for pursuant to Section 2(a) of this
Article.

Explanation: The revised language
eliminates the necessity of changing
Constitutional language each time the amount of
the minimum dues is changed.

“Section 3. REFUND AND
REIMBURSEMENT

(a) REFUNDS TO LOCALS. Each duly
organized Local of the Association which has
complied with all of the provisions of the
mandated Local Constitution and this
Constitution and By-Laws shall receive from
the Treasurer an annual payment of twenty-
five percent (25%) of the membership
dues and twenty-five percent (25%) of the
agency shop fees collected from the
employees in such Locals after the net per
capita payment to AFSCME and the
organizational per capita, based on the June
1 audit, has been deducted.” REST OF THE
SECTION REMAINS THE SAME.

Explanation: This reflects the fact that the
per capita assessment is to be used exclusively
to fund statewide operations.

“Section 3(d). REFUNDS TO REGIONS.
Each Region of the Association shall receive from
the Treasurer an annual payment of
[twenty-five] fifty cents of the membership
dues and agency shop fees collected from
each of the employees in such Region.

REST OF THE SECTION REMAINS THE
SAME.

Explanation: The Regions need this
increase in funding to continue to provide
present services.

All correspondence with resolutions and/or
proposed amendments received by the
Committee as of the date of its last meeting
(August 13, 1987) have been reviewed.

Appropriate responses have been directed to
the individuals involved.

(Continued on next page)
CSEA's Constitution and By-Laws

Addendum to Report of Revision of the Constitution and By-Laws Committee

The Constitution and By-Laws Committee met on August 13, 1987 to consider and act upon all proposals which had been presented to it in a timely fashion. Many of the proposals had been referred to other CSEA committees, the Statewide Officers, and responsible staff for review, recommendation and information prior to Committee action. All persons submitting proposed amendments have been notified of the Committee’s action regarding their proposals. Proposed amendments received after specified time limits will not be reported out at this time, but will be held in Committee pending further information and action by the Committee. THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE PRESENTED TO THE DELEGATES BY THE COMMITTEE AS PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION. THE PRESENTATION TO THE DELEGATES AT THIS MEETING CONSTITUTES A FIRST READING OF THESE AMENDMENTS.

(1) The following amendment to Article III, Section 3, was proposed by Statewide Secretary Irene Carr.

"ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP
Section 3. RETIRED MEMBERS. Any person who, while actively employed, was a member of an associate member and who has retired from active employment may elect to become a retired member or who receives a retirement allowance from the New York State Employees’ Retirement System or the New York State Public Employees’ Retirement Fund may be retired if the member or the member’s Retirement Fund shall be eligible to become a retired member. Retired members shall have none of the rights or privileges of membership except that they shall be eligible to the extent the insurance program permits for participation in insurance programs sponsored by CSEA, and they shall be eligible for membership in Retired Member Locals and subject to the extent and privileges approved by the Board of Directors. Retired Member Locals shall be organized into a Retiree Division which shall be governed by the Retiree Division Constitution to the extent that it is not inconsistent with this Constitution.

Explanation: This language recognizes the organization and governance of the Retiree Division within CSEA.

(2) The necessity for the following amendments to Article IV, Section 5(b), Article VI, Section 2(a) and Article VII, Section 2(a) were brought to the Committee by attention of Thomas Jefferson, member of the Board of Directors, by letter dated May 29, 1987.

"ARTICLE IV ORGANIZATION OF THE ASSOCIATION
Section 5(b) NOMINATIONS. Nominations for the offices of President, Executive Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer shall be made by official petition. Upon the written request of any member, official petition forms shall be provided by the [Executive Director or other responsible employee of the Association so designated] Chairperson of the Statewide Election Committee or designated employee of the Association. REST OF THE SECTION REMAINS THE SAME.

ARTICLE VI STATE DIVISION
Section 2(a) NOMINATIONS. Nominations for members of the State Executive Committee shall be made by official petition upon the

writen request of any member, official petition forms shall be provided by the [Executive Director or other responsible employee of the Association so designated] Chairperson of the Statewide Election Committee or designated employee of the Association. REST OF THE SECTION REMAINS THE SAME.

"ARTICLE VII LOCAL GOVERNMENT DIVISION
Section 2(a) NOMINATIONS. Nominations for members of the Local Government Executive Committee shall be made by official petition. Upon the written request of any member, official petition forms shall be provided by the [Executive Director or other responsible employee of the Association so designated] Chairperson of the Statewide Election Committee or designated employee of the Association. REST OF THE SECTION REMAINS THE SAME.

Explanation: Because of the reorganization, CSEA no longer has a position of Executive Director and the Administrative Director of Field Operations is not involved in elections in any way. The Committee was of the opinion that the appropriate person to have this responsibility would be the Chair of the Election Committee, an employee of the Election Committee.

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE PRESENTED TO THE DELEGATES BY THE COMMITTEE AS PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE BY-LAWS. IF PASSED AT THIS MEETING, THE AMENDMENTS WILL BECOME EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY.

(1) The following amendments to Article IV, Section 2(a)(4) and (a)(5) have been made necessary by changes in State and Federal law relating to agency shop fee payor refunds. These changes have been made to comply with the latest cases as determined by the Supreme Court of the United States and by the Public Employment Relations Board of New York State.

"ARTICLE IV FINANCE
Section 2. DUES AND AGENCY SHOP FEE
(a)(4) An annual amount of three percent (3%) of the dues or agency shop fee paid by an individual shall be appropriated by the Association for political or ideological purposes. Such annual amount shall be collected and set aside on a bi-weekly basis in the same manner as dues are collected. Any dues paying member of the Association [person paying an agency shop fee] who objects to the appropriation of their payment for political or ideological purposes unrelated to the nature of the bargaining shall have the right to object to such appropriation. An objector shall file written notice by registered or certified mail of his objection with the State Treasurer during the month of October of each year. Upon receipt of such objection, the State Treasurer shall remit to the objector three percent (3%) of the annual dues for the period of time object to by the objector. If the objector has not paid dues [or an agency shop fee] for each of the preceding twelve months, the State Treasurer shall remit to the objector an amount equal to three percent (3%) of each bi-weekly period for which dues [or an agency shop fee] were collected.

Explanation: In order to clarify the different refund procedures available to members and

agency shop fee payors, (a)(4) will relate to members only while (a)(5) relates to agency shop fee payors only.

(a)(5) [Any person paying an agency shop fee who asserts that the Association is exceeding more than the amount referred to in paragraph (a)(4) for political or ideological purposes may file a claim for such additional sum with the State Treasurer by certified mail. The Treasurer will present the claim and substantiation therefor to the Board of Directors at its next regularly scheduled meeting. Based upon the substantiation submitted by the claimant, the Board of Directors shall notify the claimant of the determination within ten (10) days of said determination by certified mail.] The State Treasurer shall have the discretion to establish an agency shop fee refund procedure which satisfies the requirements of the United States and New York State Constitutions and of §208 of the New York State Civil Service Law in that persons choosing not to belong to CSEA shall not be compelled to participate in CSEA’s support of activities or causes of a political or ideological nature only incidentally related to terms and conditions of employment. The rules shall specify procedural details relating to notice, dispute resolution and distribution of agency shop fee refunds.

Explanation: Because of the decisions by the United States Supreme Court and the Public Employment Relations Board, certain procedures related to agency shop fee refunds have been dictated by law. Although these procedures are too extensive to be set forth in the CSEA Constitution, agency shop fee payors will be put on notice that such rules exist and will be promulgated by the State Treasurer.

(2) The following amendment to Article VI, Section 1(a) was submitted by Maureen Malone, Chair of the Committee for Methods and Procedures, by letter dated June 25, 1987.

"ARTICLE VI COMMITTEES
Section 1(a) All standing committees must meet at least [four] [three] times annually and any member of standing committee failing to attend [three] two consecutive meetings without proper notification to the committee chairperson shall be determined to have resigned from the committee.

Explanation: This is implemented as a cost saving measure since a study of committees found that some committees do not have enough business to merit meeting four times a year.

Submitted by,

REVISION OF THE CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS COMMITTEE

Carmen Bagnoli, chair
Rita Wallace
Fred Daniels
Enrico Paradiso
Maureen Malone
Terrence Melvin
Gloria Rutkey

September 7, 1987
By Sheryl Carlin
Communications Associate

MONTAUK — James Schneidmuller wants people to know how important it is to sign an organ donor card.

He knows because he was recently the recipient of a donated liver which saved his life.

Schneidmuller, a park assistant with Montauk State Park and a member of Long Island Inter-County State Park CSEA Local 102, received a blood donation after a car accident in 1965. The blood had hepatitis in it.

JAMES SCHNEIDMULLER recuperates from his liver transplant earlier this year.

"Over the last two years, I've been having problems with my legs swelling, retaining water and I couldn't think right," Schneidmuller said. "It turned out my liver was three-quarters gone."

Schneidmuller, 45, went to Presbyterian Hospital in Pittsburgh for diagnosis and his name was added to a list of potential liver recipients. Then he returned home to Montauk.

On May 23, Schneidmuller walked into a drug store and the clerk told him his parents had called; he was to go home immediately. A donor had been found and he had to get to Pittsburgh.

The hospital had called Schneidmuller's home at 9:45 a.m. to tell him, cautioning that he had to reach the hospital by 12:30 p.m., less than three hours later, or another person would get that liver.

But he didn't know that as he drove home. His friends in the Montauk Fire Department heard the news from his parents and they searched for him.

Meanwhile, arrangements were made to get him to Pittsburgh and the fire department chief talked with the nurse who coordinated Schneidmuller's surgery.

The fire chief spotted Schneidmuller's red truck and pulled him over. The other firemen practically pulled him from the truck into the car that sped him to the East Hampton Airport, where he boarded a plane that took him to the waiting Lear jet at Farmingdale.

Schneidmuller arrived at the Allegheny County Airport at 12:35 p.m. and rode an ambulance to the hospital for the 10-hour surgery.

"The flight was made in record time," said Schneidmuller, acknowledging that the quick thinking and action of his family and friends in the fire department made his arrival timely.

But more important, he is aware of the person who generously agreed to donate his or her organs so that Schneidmuller, or someone like him, could live after the donor died.

"I want people to know there's a shortage of donated organs," he said. "The transplant survival rate has doubled, but donations are needed."

Because of the organ donor, the tremendous effort of his friends and family and the technology and skill of the transplant team at Presbyterian Hospital, Schneidmuller's story continues.

He remained in the hospital approximately a month, and his return home was filled with surprises.

"As I was coming into the Montauk area, I saw the fire department cherry picker in the air with water shooting out," he said.

"There was a big welcome parade through the town. I never knew I had that many friends."

Schneidmuller was back at Pittsburgh undergoing a thorough but routine checkup when this issue of The Public Sector went to press.

"I hope the doctor will give me a letter so I can to return to work," he said before leaving.

Schneidmuller also recognizes the importance of his membership in CSEA and the benefits he receives through the union.

The medication he must take for the rest of his life costs $15,000 a year.

"I'm very fortunate because I am covered," he said. "Some people aren't so lucky to have those benefits."

He also urged people to consider signing the organ donation cards provided on the back of the New York state driver's license.

Giving the gift of life

Getting a transplant of any major organ in New York state can mean a long wait — and potential transplant recipients can literally die in the process.

A number of factors have to do with the shortage of organs available for transplants, including lack of legislation defining brain death and the number of transplant programs in the state.

If you would like to be a potential organ donor, you can do so by filling out the back of your New York state driver's license (see illustration at right). You also need two witnesses to sign the card.

That gives permission for your organs to be used, if possible, for transplants at your death.