IMPASSE!
Talks crumble; State walks away from bargaining table!

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CSEA strikes out at the Office of Mental Health for its lack of concern for the mentally ill.

PAGES 4 & 5
PERB gives CSEA a voice in choosing a mediator for impasse in state negotiations, and information about the impasse procedure. CSEA President Joe McDermott has a message about the stalemate.

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CSEA welcomes home public employees from the Gulf War. A new law gives them non-contributory pension credit, too.

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CSEA fights to save state jobs and aid to local governments and school districts while the Governor asks his managers to waste money printing his opinions.

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Orange County Community College custodians get the clothing allowance they deserve, and Sullivan County deputy sheriffs get permanent appointments after winning civil service protection — all thanks to CSEA.

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A handy guide to CSEA services.

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CSEA members in western New York pitch in to help during and after a devastating ice storm left thousands without heat or power.

Deadline near for submitting major medical claims

Major Medical claim forms may be obtained from your agency's personnel/business office or from Metropolitan Life Insurance Company. Please be certain that your doctor or other provider fill in all the information asked for on the claim form and sign it. If the claim form is not filled out by the provider, all bills submitted must include all the information asked for on the claim form. Missing information will delay the processing of your claim. Should you have any questions concerning your claim, you may call the following toll-free number at Metropolitan:

(Within New York state) 1-800-942-4640
(Outside New York state) 1-800-431-4312

All 1990 Empire Plan Major Medical claims must be submitted before April 1, 1991, to Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, CPO Box 1600, Kingston, N.Y. 12402-0600.
ALBANY — CSEA is stepping up its attack on the state Office of Mental Health (OMH) with the release of a new report, *No Compassion, No Care: Abandoning the Mentally Ill*.

“This report should be a clear signal to OMH that CSEA will not stand by and let them actively dismantle the system,” said CSEA President Joe McDermott. “OMH has abandoned its commitment to the mentally ill and in its relentless drive to run down the population of state psychiatric centers is condemning many patients to a hell of homelessness and hopelessness.”

The report, which has been distributed to every state legislator, emphasizes that CSEA is not committed to psychiatric center buildings themselves but is committed to assuring the continued quality care that the state mental health workforce.

“The issue is access to quality care,” McDermott said. “We also believe that the trained and experienced state mental health workers have demonstrated their ability to care for some of the most difficult patients — the investment in that proven workforce should not be wasted.”

OMH is moving to dismantle the state system without providing for alternative care settings for the seriously mentally ill. The report points out that OMH is continuing in this direction even though it’s clear that there are service gaps that could and should be filled by state operations.

Of immediate concern to CSEA is a proposal to close Gowanda Psychiatric Center without appropriately replacing the care it provides or making adequate alternative plans to house its patients. CSEA’s report details the situation at Gowanda as symptomatic of everything that’s wrong with the administration of OMH. It also points out that the Gowanda closing would signal a dangerous new direction for the rest of the system.

OMH is trying to steamroll the Gowanda closing through the Legislature under the pretext of the state budget crisis. In fact, the plan won’t save much money in the short run but will help OMH accelerate the closing of other psychiatric centers. The state will achieve long-term savings by shifting the burden of caring for the mentally ill to local government and private providers, even though it’s clear that neither has the resources to handle it. Coincidentally, the Governor’s budget also proposes cutting back funds for local government and voluntary mental health programs.

If OMH continues in the current direction, eventually the Legislature won’t have any choice but to close psychiatric centers because there will be so few patients in them that their continued operation won’t be justifiable. But that will open a Pandora’s box of homelessness, social problems and soaring costs.

CSEA’s vision of a more humane mental health system recommends the development of state-operated community residences and skilled nursing facilities; cutting wasteful OMH administrative overhead; and expansion of community-based follow-up care that seeks appropriate third-party reimbursements.

“CSEA’s recommendations are not only feasible and cost-effective, they are essential for assuring appropriate care for thousands of New York’s most vulnerable citizens,” McDermott said.
PERB listens to CSEA
Union wins voice in selection of mediator

ALBANY — The state Public Employment Relations (PERB) has agreed with CSEA President Joe McDermott in recommending that CSEA and the state approve a mediator or mediators to help end the impasse in contract negotiations.

The state declared the impasse March 8. "We demanded an independent, impartial mediator, and this effort to get one is a good first step," McDermott said. "We're pleased with PERB's decision."

PERB also agreed with CSEA that the state's unwillingness to negotiate led to the impasse and acted quickly to get the process moving.

McDermott blasted Gov. Cuomo for jumping the gun in declaring impasse in contract negotiations with the union.

Either management or the union can declare impasse when they believe talks are deadlocked and an agreement cannot be reached.

The state declared impasse well before serious talks on major issues had begun, McDermott said. In addition, the negotiating teams were making progress on certain issues when the state declared impasse, he said.

"To declare impasse more than three weeks before the contracts expire on April 1 and before any substantive talks on wages and benefits have taken place at the table is totally irresponsible," McDermott said. "Since we began these negotiations, CSEA has been interested in arriving at a fair settlement, but management has shown no interest in reaching an agreement."

McDermott also criticized the Governor for negotiating in the news media, rather than at the table.

As this issue of *The Public Sector* went to press, CSEA and state negotiators were planning to meet to review potential mediators.

"The union is prepared to protect our members' interests throughout the impasse process," McDermott said.

Impasse questions and answers
What it is, how it happens, what it means

What is impasse, and what does it mean to me?
During contract negotiations, your union team and management meet to work out a tentative agreement. If either side decides that they won't be able to reach an agreement, they declare impasse. It means progress on a new contract for you and other employees is temporarily halted.

When does somebody declare impasse?
Usually after contract negotiations have continued for some time. Often, impasse occurs after the union and management negotiators begin discussing major issues. When the parties are very far apart on any issue, they may determine there is no way they will be able to negotiate an acceptable compromise. That's when one side or the other usually declares impasse.

What happens after either the union or management declare impasse?
The first step is that the New York state Public Employment Relations Board, or PERB, appoints a mediator to help the two parties come to an agreement.

What is mediation? How does it work? Who is the mediator?
PERB appoints a mediator or mediators who have experience in labor negotiations from a list of qualified mediators who have the knowledge, training and experience to do the job. A mediator acts as a liaison, working with union and management negotiating teams in an attempt to help them come to an agreement. A mediator brings different perspectives, new ideas and skills of persuasion and compromise that may help resolve the issues in dispute.

If mediation fails, what do we do?
The second step in the impasse procedure is called fact finding. PERB appoints a sole fact finder or a fact-finding panel of up to three members. Most fact finders act as 'super' mediators initially and attempt to bring the parties to a mutual agreement. If that fails, the fact finder or the panel will hear testimony, accept data and allow the parties to submit briefs detailing their positions.

The fact finder then issues a non-binding public report. While the fact finder’s report may offer potential solutions, either the union or management can reject all or part of the report. The fact finder cannot force the two sides to agree on a tentative contract or even to tentative solutions to individual issues, such as compensation or benefits.

What happens if fact finding fails?
The final step in the impasse process is a legislative hearing. The state Legislature gets copies of the fact finding report, and solutions recommended by the Governor and the union for settling the issue. Then the Legislature or a committee schedules a hearing.

Finally, the Legislature may impose terms and conditions of employment or require the parties to negotiate further. An imposition is not a contract, since the terms have been determined by the Legislature, not ratified by the union membership.

If the Legislature imposes a settlement, what does that mean to me?
A legislative imposition can't change the terms of an expired agreement unless the union has waived its right to stand on those terms.

How long will an imposed settlement last?
The imposition can only last for one fiscal year, which begins in April. Meanwhile, the unions and management will begin negotiations once again.

Can the union fight an imposed settlement?
No. The impasse procedure is set by the Taylor Law, and legislative imposition in included as an option in the procedure. The Taylor Law also prohibits strikes by public employees and imposes serious penalties.
A message from CSEA President Joe McDermott

Negotiations stall but 
CSEA hanging tough

When the state declared impasse in contract negotiations with CSEA I immediately protested that they were jumping the gun. Three weeks were still left before our existing contract expires, and I felt that there was still time to try and work out a deal.

The state’s action was not a total surprise. It was apparent to those of us on the negotiating team that the state was busy maneuvering toward an impasse. We saw it coming but still made an honest effort to try to reach an agreement.

Once the impasse was declared, we went into action. We made it clear to the Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) that CSEA wanted to be directly involved in picking a mediator or mediators. I was very pleased that PERB went along with us 100 percent.

Impasse does, of course, make it more difficult to reach a settlement by April 1, but our CSEA negotiating team is ready to work around the clock to do so. The impasse, in fact, has strengthened our resolve to protect your interests no matter how long it takes — and even if negotiations require fact finding and end up in a legislative hearing (see page 4).

The CSEA team is hanging tough during these very difficult contract talks.

Joe
ALBANY — A new law is providing non-contributory retirement credit to members of the state and local retirement systems who were called to active duty for Operation Desert Storm.

The law allows military reservists and National Guard members to receive retirement credit for their military duty without making the employee contribution required previously, providing they are not receiving a full salary from their employer.

Throughout the Desert Shield and Desert Storm operations, CSEA has successfully worked for extension of benefits for public employees serving in the Gulf efforts.

"Many CSEA members have been called to serve in Operation Desert Storm, and this law is just one more way to thank them for their contributions," said CSEA President Joe McDermott.

"We’re very proud of and grateful to our members who have served overseas, and the sons and daughters of CSEA members who have served in the Gulf."
CSEA fights for jobs, state aid

ALBANY — CSEA continues to fight Gov. Cuomo’s plans to layoff more than 7,000 state employees and cut millions from aid to localities.

The union has been in close contact with state legislators, lobbying for restorations that would let state workers keep their jobs while providing vital public services and that would put money back into the budgets of school districts and local governments across the state.

“We’re doing all we can to convince the Legislature that the state needs to continue the level of services it now provides,” said Larry Scanlon, CSEA director of Legislative and Political Action. “The Legislature needs to understand that the problem is not too much spending but with the unfair tax structure.”

CSEA has been advocating changes in the personal income tax structure to make the system fair. The wealthiest in New York state have benefited from major tax cuts over the last decade. Meanwhile, the working poor and middle-income wage earners have been paying more in income taxes and in other regressive taxes and fees which have risen steadily.

Cuts in aid to school districts and local governments only add to the problem, because they end up raising regressive property taxes to make up for lost aid.

The union is also trying to convince legislators to close corporate tax loopholes that have allowed businesses in New York escape paying their fair share of taxes.

Finally, CSEA would like to see the sales tax broadened to cover a variety of services generally used by wealthier state residents.

CSEA members have been helping get the message across, too. Grassroots efforts, including phone calls and letters, are reaching the Legislature. Hearing that public outcry against destructive cuts in the state budget is making an impression as a number of legislators have come out in favor of a more progressive personal income tax structure, Scanlon said.

“Keep writing, keep calling,” he said. “The more CSEA members who let their legislators know just how devastating this budget is, the more chance we have of changing it to benefit everyone. Don’t forget to tell them you’re a CSEA member, and New York works because we work.”

Keep writing, keep calling your legislators
Don’t forget to tell them New York works because we work

Managers wasting money on Governor’s letter

ALBANY — While the state is struggling under the burden of a $6 billion deficit, Gov. Cuomo is asking managers to circulate copies of “An Open Letter to the Public” making his case for massive budget cuts that include layoffs and cuts in local assistance.

A memorandum to agency heads from a top Cuomo aide advises them to distribute copies “as you wish.” However, the memo offers suggestions, including mailing it to the agency’s mailing list and distributing it to staff and at public appearances.

“This is crazy. The Governor is asking agencies to spend taxpayers’ money to tell them about a budget crisis,” said CSEA President Joe McDermott. “I hate to think how much more money this will waste.”

To close the $6 billion budget gap, Gov. Cuomo is proposing $4.5 million in budget cuts and $1.5 billion in regressive taxes. CSEA is pushing more progressive income taxes, the closing of corporate tax loopholes and a broader based sales tax (see story above).

McDermott said that if Gov. Cuomo wanted to circulate his political propaganda on the budget, he should have used his own money, not encouraged agency heads to spend taxpayer dollars during a fiscal crisis.
Eliminating DEC jobs at minimum-security prisons

Just another budget cut that doesn’t make cents

By Mark M. Kotzin
CSEA Communications Associate

CAMP GEORGETOWN — “Like bending over to pick up a dime and dropping a dollar.”

That’s the analogy that one CSEA member used to describe a state budget cut that CSEA says will cost the state more money than it will save.

The $1.3 million cut in the Department of Correctional Services (DOCS) budget eliminates funds for the salaries of 45 Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) employees who work in a 32-year-old cooperative program.

The program, called the “Rehabilitation of Offenders” program, is run out of the state’s 12 minimum-security prison camps and provides inmate work crews with professional supervision by DEC employees for labor-intensive environmental and community projects.

DEC employees in CSEA’s Central Region met recently with Region President Jim Moore and Political Action Coordinator Dwight Evans to formulate a plan to fight this cut. CSEA is coordinating a specific political action plan targeted at informing state legislators of the value of the program.

With the assistance of CSEA’s Communications Department, a brochure entitled “Mario Logic” was developed to explain the program and its benefits, what the cut means in services and dollars and how and who to lobby to get the funds and employees reinstated.

“Only our employees can successfully run this program. Our prison guards have neither the expertise nor the desire to continue this program.”

CSEA CENTRAL REGION President Jim Moore, second from right, talks with DEC employees concerned over the elimination of EnCon supervisors at minimum-security prison camps.

According to CSEA Environmental Conservation Field Local 117 Shop Steward Tom Hart, the employee cut would mean the end of the program.

Hart is a conservation operation supervisor at Camp Georgetown.

“Only our employees can successfully run this program,” Hart said. “Our prison guards have neither the expertise nor the desire to continue this program.” He added that local Council 82 members say they will not continue the program without the DEC employees.

Hart said the program’s values far outweigh its cost.

Those benefits include preserving the environment through reforestation, forest management and trash clean-up, preserving habitats for endangered species of wildlife, maintaining thousands of miles of state snowmobile, ski, bicycle and horse trails, preserving the Adirondack State Park and rehabilitating prison inmates through hard work and skill training. The program has resulted in the planting of more than 8 million trees in the past 10 years.

In terms of cost savings the program benefits in many ways. Inmates provide more than 700 hours of free labor for every 40 hours of paid DEC supervision. CSEA estimates that cost savings translates to more than $4 million a year if the inmates were earning minimum wage and double that if they were paid the minimum salary of a DEC laborer.

The state also saves in lumber costs and heating costs, Hart said. As the work crews harvest older trees while planting new ones, they provide timber that’s processed at several of the camp sawmills, thus turning the trees into usable lumber and firewood.

That lumber is used for construction projects such as picnic tables and handicapped access ramps for fishing sites while the firewood is used in camp boiler systems to heat the camps. Some is sold to state campsites for revenue, also. DOCS estimates the cost savings in heating fuel at one camp alone to be $50,000 annually.

Moore said the program’s value speaks for itself.

“Our members and staff have been working day and night to lobby for this program and have done a great job so far,” Moore said. “We know the Legislature is aware of our efforts and we will keep them up until this program is saved.”

8 March 18, 1991
HAUPPAUGE — In response to a massive budget deficit, the state first threatened to furlough workers without pay and then took five days of pay away from state employees in a lag pay scheme. Next the state began taking away their jobs. At the State Office Building at Hauppauge, the state’s most recent move was to punish those still left with a job by taking away the most traditional of all office appliances — their coffee pots. And if their toes turned blue because office temperatures are lower than normal, too bad. No portable space heaters are allowed, either.

To save a few pennies
According to a memo to state agency heads from the state Office of General Services, “use of portable electric heaters, fans and other appliances will not be permitted in state offices” to conserve energy and save a little money.

The state Department of Taxation and Finance followed up with a memo of its own, threatening to conduct “routine office checks” for such contraband items as refrigerators, fans, space heaters, radios and coffee pots, “which may result in the item being confiscated.”

You’ve gone too far
““This was just one more kick in the teeth,” said CSEA State Employees Local 016 President Tom Byrne. Union officials complained to state officials about the Tax and Finance memo and it was rescinded.

Keeping ’em in the dark
But a lot of things are still in the dark at the State Office Building because after rescinding that memo, the state’s next move in the name of energy conservation was to remove all but one element from overhead lights in some offices.

“The employees were really upset,” Byrne said. “They complained they couldn’t see properly and they had headaches and eye strain.”

“They took our money and now they’re trying to take our eyes,” said Pam Parinello, a Tax and Finance department employee for more than 10 years.

CSEA to rescue, again
CSEA once again came to the rescue of the workers, filling a grievance and arguing with the state that inadequate lighting is unsafe and unhealthy. The state agreed to restore lighting to employee work areas but left the lighting dim in halls, stairways and other areas.

Byrne said employees working on VDTs and typewriters were most adversely affected by the poor lighting.

“Look at this set-up,” he said, pointing to VDT stations that are no more than a terminal on top of a wooden table.

“Those tables are too high for the VDTs and typewriters. The chairs don’t adjust, and on top of all that they thought they could take away the light? They must have been joking,” Byrne said.

CSEA Labor Relations Specialist Gus Nielsen said conditions at the Hauppauge State Office Building are “generally unacceptable” and he’s pleased CSEA was able to get the state to replace the lights. He said the union pulled the grievance now that the matter is resolved.

Susan Moszczyn has worked at the State Office Building for six years, and she said conditions there have never been worse.

“We’ve been having problems with the filth and poor office set-up for years, then they tried to take away the light. What will they try next?”

Whatever “they” try next, CSEA says the union will be ready to protect the rights of employees.

March 18, 1991

CSEA LOCAL 016 President Tom Byrne — "...just one more kick in the teeth."
SMITHTOWN TOWN ENFORCEMENT BUREAU

By Sheryl C. Jenks
CSEA Communications Associate

SMITHTOWN — Because the work they do involves the community in several ways, residents of the Town of Smithtown are becoming more and more aware of the vital role that their Town Enforcement Bureau and professionalism of the people employed there.

The Town Enforcement employees, members of the Town of Smithtown Unit of CSEA Suffolk County Local 922, are responsible for protecting life and property in this Long Island community. Smithtown residents certainly have an added sense of security because of these employees," said CSEA Town of Smithtown Unit President Bill Maccarco.

Bureau employees inspect potential fire hazards, search for missing children, administer parking tickets, lecture and perform demonstrations on such subjects as fire safety and dos and don'ts for Halloween and are trained to administer CPR.

They are available 24 hours a day and their beat of 54 square miles includes miles of exclusive north shoreline beachfront.

Composed of five divisions - The Bureau is composed of five divisions: Park Rangers, Fire Marshals, Emergency Services, Municipal Securities and Municipal Clerical.

Emergency services: "Our members work hard to ensure that our enforcement is running smoothly," CSEA Labor Relations Specialist Jim DellaRocca said. "These employees in plain clothes on stake outs and other assignments in such cases as recycling, nuisance fraud or illegal multiple houses."

Catherine Archer, an employee for two and one-half years, is the first female investigator in the town. Archer, who completed two years of study at St. Johns University, said her job is "very interesting.

"I've always been interested in the law and I like dealing with people," Archer said. "She said her most exciting case was one she worked on with a senior investigator."}

Communication and planning tools - The range of communications and planning tools at the Bureau is extensive. In addition to basic equipment such as radios and walkie-talkies, there are computers housed in the Fire Department of Motor Vehicles which quickly accesses the parking tickets and summonses.

Another communications system called CAMED, is used by the fire marshals to inform police and other emergencies of hazardous materials and the best way to deal with them.

"This system is excellent," McKay said. "We can put it right into the back of our vehicle and go to the scene." His Fire Marshall Division works very closely with the local fire departments.

The computer can identify 2,600 different chemicals which can be cross-matched with other chemicals and yield results in minutes.

Fire marshals work with local fire departments and other services for investigations and handling hazardous materials. Many fire marshals are involved with local fire departments. Fire Marshals Fred Kleppasstel, for instance, has served the Kings Park Fire Department in various positions for 20 years and will soon become chief of his fire department.

Fire marshals are also responsible for code enforcement and inspections of non-residential facilities and bulk carriers. They also teach fire safety whenever asked.

The fire marshals may get even busier, according to Valentine. He said research shows that there are more arsons and alleged insurance jobs and the economy worsens.

"My rangers also look for stolen vehicles and deal with abandoned and off-road vehicles," Valentine said. "We expect to see more of that."

Going undercover - Town investigators work undercover in plain clothes on stake outs and other assignments in such cases as recycling, nuisance fraud or illegal multiple houses.

Catherine Archer, an employee for two and one-half years, is the first female investigator in the town. Archer, who completed two years of study at St. Johns University, said her job is "very interesting.

"I've always been interested in the law and I like dealing with people," Archer said. "She said her most exciting case was one she worked on with a senior investigator.

"It dealt with illegal dumping and it went to court and the company was heavily fined," Archer said. "Our record work hard to ensure that the residents are safe and the town is running smoothly." CSEA Labor Relations Specialist Jim DellaRocca said. "These people play a very important role in law, order and safety in this town."

BUREAUCRAT John Valentine and Carol Guldi check out information on one of the clerical department's computers.

Surronded by some of the vehicles used by park rangers and fire marshals are, from left: Park Ranger Division Supervisor Lt. Tom Grosse, Fire Marshall Division Supervisor Lt. Rich McKay, Fire Marshall Fred Kleppasstel and Town Bureau Chief John Valentine.

PAPERWORK, PAPERWORK, PAPERWORK - Maddy DeGeorge discusses paperwork with Park Ranger Jeff Noonan while Investigator Frank Crisci looks on.

SMITHTOWN TOWN ENFORCEMENT BUREAU

Protecting life and property

By Sheryl C. Jenks
CSEA Communications Associate

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PAPERWORK, PAPERWORK, PAPERWORK - Maddy DeGeorge discusses paperwork with Park Ranger Jeff Noonan while Investigator Frank Crisci looks on.
By Daniel X. Campbell  
CSEA Communications Associate

TROY — The right of public employees to file safety and health complaints without fear of retaliation by their employer has been given a boost by a recent decision of State Supreme Court Justice Vincent G. Bradley.

Justice Bradley issued an injunction preventing Hudson Valley Community College (HVCC) from pursuing disciplinary proceedings against CSEA HVCC Unit President Richard Evans pending the outcome of administrative complaints filed by Evans charging that the disciplinary proceeding was retaliatory.

HVCC officials informed Evans last April 26 that the college would be operating temporarily without its water supply. When Evans, a security guard at the college, learned that no safety and health precautions were to be taken to protect the student body and college staff while the water was off, he reported the situation to CSEA's Safety and Health Office.

CSEA advised Evans to register a complaint with the state Department of Labor, and he immediately did so by telephone.

The Department of Labor investigated the complaint and issued two formal charges of violations of law to HVCC. Five days later, HVCC began disciplinary proceedings against Evans involving three charges, two of which were resurrected from a prior proceeding that had been settled by stipulation the previous year.

The third charge alleged that Evans committed insubordination by engaging in "union business" on April 26 when he reported the health and safety violations to CSEA and the state Department of Labor.

Evans in turn filed a complaint with the Department of Labor under the anti-discrimination provisions of the Public Employee Safety and Health Act (PESHA) and filed an improper practice charge with the state Public Employment Relations Board over HVCC's interference in the administration of union business.

Justice Bradley granted the injunction after noting "the reporting of health and safety violations by union officials has been found to be protected activity under Civil Service Law which the employer may not punish with disciplinary action. ... it has been held that a public employer should be stayed from taking the actions complained of in a PERB improper practice charge until PERB has disposed of the charge."

CSEA Attorney William Herbert said he will inform the court that the PERB decision on the improper practice charge will not dispose of the Labor Department PESHA complaint, and that therefore the court may extend the injunction until that complaint has been resolved as well.

"This is an important determination because it recognizes the importance of enjoining disciplinary proceedings when retaliation charges are pending before either of the bodies responsible for the health and safety of public employees," said CSEA Director of Safety and Health James Corcoran.

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JOHNSTOWN — CSEA members who clean and maintain the buildings of the Johnstown School District always knew they worked hard and did a good job. And that's been confirmed by a private sector cleaning firm that for years has been trying to get school districts throughout the country to contract out for such services.

A representative from ServiceMaster, the large Illinois-based cleaning contractor, recently studied the Johnstown School District as a possible target for contracting out, only to report to the school's Board of Education that CSEA members are doing a fine job and "It would not be worth the investment on your part to bring us in for any minimal improvements which we might make."

It would cost the school district an additional $100,000 a year to contract with the firm and "It's just not worth it," the ServiceMaster representative told board members.

The ServiceMaster representative said he found school district buildings to be in "good to excellent" condition from a maintenance aspect.

"The buildings overall were very clean and well maintained. In fact, our survey engineers noted that this school district was among the cleanest they have surveyed. There is a tremendous work ethic among your custodial staff that you can be proud of," the contractor said.

"Our members are very happy about this, and so is the district administration," said CSEA Johnstown School District Unit President Gerry Fries. "We knew we were doing a good job and this proves our point — public employees can do the job."

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March 18, 1991
At Creedmore Psychiatric Center

Out-of-title win means $3,000 award

QUEENS — Winning a $3,000 back pay award for more than six months of out-of-title work gave CSEA Creedmore Psychiatric Center Local 406 member John Jones plenty of cause to celebrate his grievance victory.

"With the lag payroll, this money will really come in handy," Jones said as he expressed his gratitude for all the effort CSEA expended to pursue his grievance. Creedmore management had assigned Jones to fill in for a grade 20 chief housekeeper for an indefinite time. The job he did was five salary grades above the one he received pay for.

"After a month or so I realized the situation was still going on and I had all these extra duties that I would like to be compensated for," Jones said. "So I spoke to the union and put in a grievance in hopes of getting management to address my situation."

At the first step of the grievance process, management denied that Jones was even working out-of-title when he was clearly performing all the responsibilities of the grade 20 chief housekeeper, said Local 406 President Mickey Cruz.

CSEA pursued the case vigorously, said CSEA Labor Relations Specialist Marcia Schiowitz, because "there was no way we could allow an abuse like this to go unchallenged."

"All too often there is a misuse of authority by Creedmore management," Cruz said. "It's only proper that Mr. Jones was awarded what he rightfully earned."

CSEA Arbitrations, Grievances, etc.

At A. Holly Patterson Geriatric Center

Member wins job back thanks to union's help

UNIONDALE — CSEA recently won an arbitration reinstating a 15-year employee at the A. Holly Patterson Geriatric Center (AHPGC) to his position.

Larry Jackson, a custodian and member of the AHPGC Unit of CSEA Nassau County Local 830, was fired for chronic lateness.

Although the charge was true, Jackson was dealing with a serious hardship at the time, and CSEA appealed his firing. A single parent, Jackson has an infant daughter suffering from cerebral palsy.

"Larry's daughter was in the hospital for a long period of time," Unit President Helen Dupree said. "Larry had to take care of her and this caused the lateness. We're glad to be able to get him his job back."

Jackson is finally seeing the light at the end of the tunnel. He has been able to place his daughter in a care facility geared to children with cerebral palsy.

He has also moved closer to AHPGC and now owns his own car.

CSEA pointed out to the arbitrator that Jackson's reasons for being late were not frivolous and that changes in his circumstances allowed him to be on time. Jackson's supervisor attested to his good work on the job.

The arbitrator ruled in the union's favor and reduced the termination to a suspension.

"Getting him back to work was certainly a victory," said Claude Ferrara, CSEA labor relations specialist.

"Without the union, I would not have gotten my job back," Jackson said. "Things are looking much better for me now."

County returns docked pay

UNIONDALE — CSEA has won a grievance board decision which compensates an employee at the A. Holly Patterson Geriatric Center (AHPGC) for days the county improperly docked.

CSEA filed a grievance after the county docked Rose Welt for three days, claiming Welt had not properly notified her employer she was out ill. Welt, a member of CSEA Nassau County Local 830, became ill at work and reported to the Employee Health Clinic.

The registered nurse there took her blood pressure and advised Welt to go home and to see her doctor. Welt told the nurse she would not return to work for three business days, because that was when she had scheduled an appointment with her doctor.

Welt returned to her office to notify her supervisor, but when she couldn't locate him, she notified the business office. CSEA Labor Relations Specialist Claude Ferrara submitted a copy of an inter-office routing slip which documented that the business office was notified of Welt's intention to use sick time on the specified days.

"I think the grievance board ruled in a sensible fashion," Ferrara said. "This woman made every effort, and did notify the institution she was going to be out ill."

Welt retired a few months after the incident, but she will still receive a check for the three days she was owed.

"I'm very proud of our union," said Helen Dupree, president of CSEA's AHPGC Unit. "Sometimes management creates the problem and the member is truly blameless."
More than 200 CSEA members participating in initial dependent care account program

More than 1,700 state employees, 215 of them CSEA members, are participating in the new Dependent Care Advantage Account program, a pre-tax benefit for state workers who need to pay for dependent care in order to work. The Dependent Care Advantage Account Program became effective Jan. 1 and is sponsored by the state Labor-Management Child Care Advisory Committee (CCAC). The program is funded by the Governor’s Office of Employee Relations, CSEA, PEF, Council 82, UUP and AFSCME DC 37.

“This program benefits both the individual employee and the state,” said CSEA statewide Secretary Irene Carr, CSEA representative on the CCAC. “Because it’s a pre-tax benefit, the employee pays less taxes and has more spendable income. The state saves more on Social Security payments than it loses in state income taxes. Everyone wins.”

Under the program, eligible state employees select a pre-determined amount to be deducted from their salary for qualified dependent care before taxes are applied to the salary. Because taxes are applied to the lower, adjusted, salary, the employee pays lower taxes and has a higher spendable income every pay period. Deductions go into the employee’s Dependent Care Advantage Account. The individual pays the dependent care provider and submits a reimbursement form to receive payment from the DCA Account.

DCA Accounts can be used to pay for nursery school, kindergarten, day care center, before- and after-school programs and summer day camp for dependent children under age 13. It can also be used to pay for dependent care centers that provide day care (not residential care) for dependent adults and for a housekeeper or cook if services are provided in part to a person who qualifies for dependent care.

State employees must re-enroll in the program each year. Information concerning the 1992 program, including enrollment dates, will be distributed later this year, Carr said.

Future child care in NYC area hinges on pilot project

An appeal is being issued for more employee involvement in an innovative pilot project providing child care referral services and parenting assistance for state employees at four New York City psychiatric centers.

“The results of this pilot project will determine future child care and parenting assistance programs for state employees in the New York City area. We need the participation of as many employees as possible,” said CSEA statewide Secretary Irene Carr, CSEA representative on the state Labor-Management Child Care Advisory Committee (CCAC).

The 10-month pilot project is being conducted at 10 locations affiliated with Bronx, Creedmoor, Kingsboro and Manhattan Psychiatric Centers in New York City. The child care demonstration project is funded through collective bargaining agreements between public employee unions, including CSEA, and New York state. The CCAC authorized more than $300,000 in negotiated funds for the project.

 Officials are encouraging the 10,000 state employees at the facilities to complete child care survey forms, use child care referral services and participate in parenting seminars, resource libraries and other informational programs provided under the pilot project. State Office of Mental Health (OMH) and Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (OMRDD) employees at the following facilities are eligible to participate: Manhattan Psychiatric Center, Manhattan Children’s Psychiatric Center, Kirby Forensic Psychiatric Center, Creedmoor Psychiatric Center, Queens Children’s Psychiatric Center, Bernard Finsen Developmental Center, Bronx Psychiatric Center, Bronx Children’s Psychiatric Center, Bronx Developmental Center and Kingsboro Psychiatric Center.

“Employees can obtain information on the child care pilot program by contacting their facility personnel office or CSEA representatives at each facility,” Carr said.

State employees at the facilities are eligible to receive referral services to more than 2,400 licensed child care programs as well as participate in the on-site information programs.

The largest child care referral service in New York City, Child Care Inc. (CCI), is providing on-site staff to assist employees at each of the facilities. CCI is also providing the parenting seminars, resource libraries and other informational programs available to employees.

Special labor-management committees at each location are monitoring employee participation levels and effectiveness of the pilot project to assess future child care programs in the New York City area.
March is Women's History month

CSEA women honored for achievement

HEMPSTEAD — It was an especially proud evening for CSEA when two union members recently received Pathfinder Awards from the Town of Hempstead.

CSEA Nassau County Local 830 President Rita Wallace and Town of Hempstead Senior Citizen Supervisor of Information and Referral Dorothy McCrea, a member of CSEA Town of Hempstead Local 880, were two of eight "distinguished women" honored.

The awards are part of the town's salute to women during Women's History Month.

"Our honorees represent the many thousands of women whose daily activities, although unsung and often taken for granted, strengthen the community and encourage its positive development," Town of Hempstead Presiding Supervisor Joseph Mondello said.

A Women's History Month display in the Town Hall included a photograph of each recipient and a list of accomplishments.

Wallace was chosen for her outstanding achievements in government. A long-time nurse and president of the 21,000-member CSEA Local 830 since 1988, Wallace has had a profound effect on the lives of many people within the Town of Hempstead and throughout Nassau County.

Wallace serves on 12 union and professional committees, agencies and associations. One of her favorites is the CSEA Political Action Committee.

"Political action is a way for members to have a voice in what happens to them on the job as well as at home," Wallace said.

During the awards ceremony Wallace discussed CSEA's pending sex-based wage discrimination suit against Nassau County.

"We are still fighting wage discrimination in this county," she said, "and women are not the only ones affected. It affects every father who puts his daughters through college only to find they are financially discriminated against and it affects every husband whose wife gets less money than she deserves in the job market."

"As our largest local's president and as a mother of two daughters — an attorney and a nurse — Rita clearly inspires the women who know her to work hard and dare to do great things," said CSEA Region I President Gloria Moran.

McCrea received her Pathfinders Award in the Town employee category. A CSEA member for more than 22 years, she works as a field social worker, visiting the elderly, doing legwork for those who are housebound and speaking on health issues to senior citizens groups.

"My job has been joyous, frustrating, rewarding and humorous," she said after Town of Hempstead Supervisor Gregory Peterson presented her with the award.

McCrea, whose hobby is her show dog, prides herself on being an advocate for the elderly, often acting as a liaison between them and the local politicians.

A former chair of the Freeport Housing Authority Board, she has also served as a member of various women's service organizations.

"You could have knocked me over with a feather when I heard I was chosen for this award," McCrea said.

"We're all very proud of Dorothy McCrea and the job she does in this town," said CSEA Town of Hempstead Local 880 President Pete Ellison.
First for local government and school employees

CSEA helps open new opportunity

NIAGARA FALLS — The first pre-apprenticeship training program for school district employees will soon be helping general maintenance workers at Niagara Falls Schools upgrade their skills and work towards becoming electricians and carpenters.

Developed through a cooperative arrangement with CSEA, the state Department of Labor (DOL) Apprenticeship Program and the school district administration, the program recently kicked off its first orientation program for 27 candidates who are members of CSEA Niagara Educational Employees Local 872.

"It won't be easy, but with hard work and dedication these men and women can greatly improve their promotability if they stick with it," said Local 872 President Dom Spacone. "This is something we've been pushing for quite a while, so it's great to see it finally get off the ground."

The apprenticeship candidates will receive classroom and on-the-job training in the skills areas they have chosen, as they work to accumulate 18 months experience said Dominic Ruggieri, liaison for the DOL Public Sector Apprenticeship program.

"The successful candidates will be registered with DOL and will receive certificates that document their skills training, not only for their present employment, but anywhere else in the public or private sector, should they change jobs," Ruggieri said.

Completion of the pre-apprenticeship program also makes individuals eligible for the formal Joint Apprenticeship program that DOL has established in cooperation with CSEA.

MAKING IT OFFICIAL — Signing the agreement are, seated, from left; Dominic Ruggieri, state Department of Labor; Vincent Loristo, assistant school superintendent; Dominic Spacone, CSEA local 872 president; and Dr. Esther Hamilton, school district staff trainer.

The new program also benefits the employer by upgrading the skills of its maintenance workers and providing a pool of skilled employees to draw from when electrician or carpenter slots open up.

The classroom and practical experience will be coordinated by Dr. Esther Isler-Hamilton, support staff trainer and affirmative action officer for the school district.

"This is not a gift — sacrifices will have to be made to keep up with the classroom work, homework, and regular job duties," Dr. Hamilton said. "But this is a great opportunity for those who put in the hard work that will be necessary. Each person will move forward at his or her own speed and they won't be rushed to complete the 18 months or 3,000 required."

CSEA's Office of Local Government and School District Affairs has been working with the state to promote and establish pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship training programs in local governments and school districts.

Local and unit presidents interested in more information about this program should contact their CSEA labor relations specialist.

16 March 18, 1991
EAP helping military personnel families cope with any Gulf War-related problems

By Daniel X. Campbell
CSEA Communications Associate

In a gesture of support for the Gulf war effort, the Statewide Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is providing referral support services to the families of 137 military personnel called to active duty from the Stratton Air National Guard base in Scotia, Schenectady County.

The Employee Assistance Program is a confidential service which provides counseling, assistance and referral to employees and/or their families with problems that may adversely affect their work.

EAP services are being provided to the military families through the state’s Division of Military and Naval Affairs (DMNA), whose civilian employees are members of CSEA’s DMNA Locals, according to Statewide EAP Committee Field Representative Angie Fondano.

“EAP has become a FAP — Family Assistance Program — for the families of military personnel at Stratton,” Fondano said.

Providing EAP services to the families of military personnel at Stratton began at the request of CSEA EAP Statewide Committee Coordinator Jim Murphy before he was himself called up to active duty in Saudi Arabia, Fondano said.

Murphy is a captain in the Air National Guard. He and his wife, First Lieutenant Laurie Murphy, both serve as flight nurses with the 139th Aeromedical Evacuation Flight of the 109th Tactical Airlift Group at the Stratton Air National Guard base.

Both were called to active duty last August and served a month in Saudi Arabia. Laurie was recalled to active duty in December and Jim was called up again in January. Both remain on active duty in the Gulf.

Fondano said that this is the first time the EAP services have been provided to military personnel, noting that 95 percent of all EAP services are provided directly to public employees.

“EAP has become so well known as a help provider that we have been approached by private sector people for assistance and referrals,” she said.

EAP Field Representative Lucy Maynard-Carbonello emphasized that the EAP program is a valued service in the changing workplace.

If personal problems are affecting your work performance, help is available by contacting the

EAP HOTLINE
1-800-822-0244

CSEA EAP Coordinator
Jim Murphy

Laurie Murphy, both serve as flight nurses with the 139th Aeromedical Evacuation Flight of the 109th Tactical Airlift Group at the Stratton Air National Guard base.

It’s time for the sons and daughters of CSEA members to apply for the Irving Flaumenbaum Memorial Scholarships.

The Civil Service Employees Association’s IRVING FLAUMENBAUM MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP will award

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Irving Flaumenbaum Memorial Scholarship will award

$500 SCHOLARSHIPS
(3 in EACH of CSEA’s 6 Regions)

to children of CSEA-represented employees in New York State who are graduating high school seniors.

It's time for the sons and daughters of CSEA members to apply for the Irving Flaumenbaum Memorial Scholarships.

The deadline for applying is April 15. CSEA awards three $500 scholarships in each of the union’s six regions to eligible high school seniors.

You can get scholarship applications from your CSEA Local president or the region office.

Members of the Scholarship Committee are: Diane Lucchesi, chair; Willie A. Allen; Nevada F. Solano; E. "Sam" Rockefeller; William Fetterling; Sandra Della; and Arthur Howell.

Remember, the application deadline for the Irving Flaumenbaum Memorial Scholarships is April 15.
**In Sullivan County**

**Deputies win status, job security**

By Anita Manley  
CSEA Communications Associate

MONTICELLO — After finally winning civil service status, deputy sheriffs in Sullivan County can thank quick thinking by CSEA and quick action by their county Board of Supervisors for status as permanent employees.

A local law in 1989 and an amendment to the state constitution in 1990 granted the deputies civil service status. With that status comes a number of protections, including layoff rights, disciplinary procedures and, in some cases, relief from political patronage problems.

That didn’t solve all the problems. Because of their new status, all current sheriffs’ deputies were to automatically become provisional and would have to take a civil service test. Some older employees could have been excluded from even taking the tests because of their ages.

Hogg met with Sheriff Joseph Wasser and asked county Personnel Director Richard Green to support a local law granting current employees permanent status.

Following a presentation to the county Board of Supervisors, Green prepared the local law and the board passed it in December.

While civil service status has not been mandatory until now, a number of counties in New York have granted civil service status to those employees. Those counties which don’t already have their own local law must now adopt one.

CSEA is working on state legislation which would allow all current deputy sheriffs to keep their jobs once their counties pass the law giving them civil service status.

In Sullivan County, the victory is an important one.

"It’s a major step," said CSEA Region III President Pat Mascioi. "It’s what the sheriffs were looking for. They had no seniority rights before. Now they do. We had an obligation to protect those in the job for so long. I’m happy for them."

**In Orange County**

**College pays for clothes**

MIDDLETOWN — Orange County Community College custodial employees will receive the protective clothing their contract calls for, thanks to a grievance CSEA filed.

The county provided work clothing by renting it from a uniform company until 1985, explained CSEA Shop Steward John Sullivan.

“They were supposed to clean and repair the uniforms, but the uniforms weren’t being cleaned properly and some of the employees wouldn’t wear them,” Sullivan said.

In 1985, the county began buying the clothing, but didn’t follow through on replacing worn clothing on a timely basis, he said.

“It was more of a hit-and-miss situation,” he added.

“I was spending $22 to $300 a year on work clothes myself,” said co-worker Bruce Churchill.

Sullivan tried to resolve the issue, but he became frustrated.

“We went through so many changes in supervisors and administrators that there was never any follow through,” Sullivan said. “They always passed the buck.”

Sullivan filed a grievance, but management denied it.

“They said we had no grounds for the grievance,” he said.

That’s when he called on CSEA for legal assistance to pursue the grievance.

The threat of arbitration prompted county officials to resolve the problem. A signed agreement now provides for specific work clothes for specific employees with replacement at specific times.
CSEA Toll-Free

The union's toll-free telephone number — 1-800-342-4146 — is your direct link to CSEA Headquarters.

When you call the toll-free number, a recorded message describes the choices to put you through to the right place for the help you need.

You need a touch-tone telephone to complete your call without operator assistance. If you aren't calling from a touch-tone telephone, an operator will pick up and complete your call at the end of the message.

If you know the extension number of the individual that you're trying to reach, you can press "O" plus the extension number on your touch-tone telephone at any point during the recorded message and be connected.

If you don't know the extension, the message will give you the following choices:

• For Field Operations or the Empire Plan/Health Benefits Committee, press number 1
  • For disciplinaries, grievances and other legal matters, press number 2.
  • For Communications, the Executive Offices or Political Action, press number 3.
  • If you have a question concerning dues, membership or agency shop, CSEA group
    offices or Political Action, press number 3.
  • To hear CSEA's Current Issues Update for news of interest to CSEA members, press 5.

Employee Benefit Fund

The CSEA Employee Benefit Fund is a CSEA-administered trust fund which provides certain supplemental negotiated benefits for state employees and participating local government employees. It currently administers Dental Care, Vision Care, Prescription Drug, and Package 7 Benefits Plans.

For questions regarding any of the benefits or for assistance with negotiations, call:

1-800-323-2732 or (518) 463-4555 or write:

CSEA Employee Benefit Fund
14 Corporate Woods Boulevard
Albany, NY 12211

Education and Training

CSEA can help you prepare for civil service exams with low-cost study booklets and free-to-borrow video tapes.

CSEA also provides educational workshops for union activists eager to learn more about their union responsibilities.

To request booklet order forms or to obtain information on union workshops, call CSEA headquarters at 1-800-342-4146. For information on videotapes, contact your CSEA regional office.

To report unsafe or unhealthy working conditions or serious accidents, call your CSEA labor relations specialist. For occupational safety and health information, call CSEA headquarters at 1-800-342-4146.

AFSCME Advantage Credit Card

THE AFSCME MasterCard has one of the lowest interest rates available — 5 percent above the prime lending rate. There is no annual fee.

To obtain an application form, call your CSEA regional office.

The card is issued by the Bank of New York. If you apply for a card and there is no response within four weeks, call the bank toll-free at 1-800-942-1977.

AFSCME Advantage Legal Services Program

The AFSCME Advantage Union Privilege Legal Service Program makes it possible for you to easily obtain high quality, affordable legal services for many personal legal matters. For more details and a list of the participating lawyers in your area, call the CSEA office in your region.

Insurance

CSEA offers several insurance programs at low group rates and provides the convenience of automatic payroll deduction.

These voluntary group plans include: Basic Group Life, Supplemental Life, Income Protection Program, LongTerm Indemnity Plan, Family Protection Plan, Auto Insurance and Homeowners Insurance. For more details, call 1-800-386-5273 or (518) 381-1600.

Health Insurance

For health insurance questions concerning Empire Plan coverage, call the appropriate following telephone number:

**EMPIRE PLAN**

Blue Cross Claims 1-800-342-9815 or (518) 485-0171
Metropolitan Claims 1-800-942-4640
Participating Providers 1-800-537-0010
Empire Plan Health Call 1-800-992-1213
(Hospital admission approval/surgical review)

Retirement

If you are retiring soon, it's important that you select the proper option from the Employees' Retirement system.

By using the services of a CSEA-provided retirement counselor, you'll be able to plan for a lifestyle in your retirement years that takes into account your anticipated expenses.

For more information, call 1-800-366-5273.

General retirement information and retiree membership information are available by contacting CSEA's Retiree Department at CSEA Headquarters 1-800-342-4146 or (518) 434-0191.

Technical retirement benefit questions (i.e., eligibility for service buy-back, transfer of membership), requests for retirement allowance applications, and requests for retirement estimate applications should be directed to the New York State and Local Retirement Systems at (518) 477-7736.

State employees over the age of 50 and their spouses can attend DIRECTIONS, a two and one-half day pre-retirement planning seminar sponsored by CSEA. For information call (518) 486-1918.

United Buying Service

Get big savings on consumer products through the union's official discount buying service. UBS combines the power of millions of members to negotiate discounts on a wide range of major name discount products.

Everything from automobiles to major appliances, video to home furnishings and more. The program is free to CSEA members and carries no service charges. To place an order or for pricing information, call 1-800-336-4UBS or 1-800-877-4UBS. UBS has also set up a hotline for information on limited special monthly offers available only to CSEA members. For a listing of specials, call the hotline at 1-203-967-2980.

Grievances, Disciplines

If you believe you have a grievance, immediately contact your local grievance representative or shop steward. If they are unavailable, contact your CSEA Unit or Local President, or your CSEA Labor Relations Specialist at the appropriate regional office. Do not delay if you believe you have a problem; grievances must be filed on a timely basis.

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CSEA REGIONAL OFFICES

**LONG ISLAND REGION 1 OFFICE**
Hauppauge Atrium Building
300 Vanderbilt Motor Pkwy.
Hauppauge, NY 11788
(516) 273-2280
(516) 435-0962

**SOUTHERN REGION 3 OFFICE**
Rural Route 1
Box 34, Old Route 9
Fulton, NY 13062
(914) 896-8180

**METROPOLITAN REGION 2 OFFICE**
11 Broadway
New York, NY 10004
(212) 514-9200

**CAPITAL REGION 4 OFFICE**
Suites 402
1215 Western Avenue
Albany, NY 12203
(518) 489-5424

CSEA STATEWIDE HEADQUARTERS
143 Washington Avenue, Albany, N.Y. 12210
1-800-342-4146 (toll-free)
(518) 434-0191
Press 5 for Current Issues Update.

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March 18, 1991
By Ron Wofford
CSEA Communications Associate

ROCHESTER — When a treacherous late-winter ice storm devastated a large area of western New York in early March, CSEA members rose to meet the formidable challenge of clearing the damage, protecting the public and restoring essential services. CSEA members in several counties surrounding the Rochester area were part of a gigantic effort to clear roads of fallen trees and branches, restore power, offer medical and other assistance, maintain temporary shelters and provide a variety of services, according to CSEA Monroe County Employees Unit President Florence Tripi.

300,000 without electricity

At the height of the storm damage an estimated 300,000 homes were without electrical power and 26,000 homes remained without power more than a week later.

"Our members really came through in a community effort to get things back on track, and they really helped a lot of people. This city (Rochester) looked like a war zone and it will be quite a while before everything is restored to normal," Tripi said.

"Our health department employees set up 15 temporary shelters around Monroe County for people who were without heat in their homes," Tripi said. "Two of the largest were at the county hospital and the community college. The nurses and everyone else put in long hours, many on a voluntary basis, to do whatever was needed. We’re very proud of them."

Everyone volunteered

Although Monroe County offices were totally closed for two days, CSEA members such as school health personnel, environmental health workers and employees of the Pure Waters Department volunteered to work wherever needed to help maintain public safety and health, Tripi said.

The Monroe County Sheriff’s Department command personnel maintained an emergency command center to service communications and public safety needs. Department staff helped maintain security and assist emergency and fire vehicles through streets without traffic lights.

12-hour shifts commonplace

CSEA Rochester State Department of Transportation Local 506 members worked 12-hour shifts, chipping and clearing downed trees and limbs throughout the area. Many members volunteered to handle telephone calls and dispatch and serve on emergency crews as needed.

Members of CSEA Genesee-Orleans DOT Local 513 put in many hours of overtime work clearing downed trees, brush and debris.

"The eastern section got hit pretty bad," Local 513 President Tom Patterson said. "We’re still cleaning up more than a week after the storm."

"I’ve never seen anything like it," said Bill Miller, president of the CSEA Town of Irondequoit Blue Collar Unit of Monroe County Local 828. "I couldn’t even hazard a guess as to how long it will be before everything is back to normal. But we’ll be clearing trees and brush for quite some time."

Wayne County Local President Ed Williams is an officer in the sheriff’s department, where members spent a lot of time pumping out cellars, hauling generators to homes without power, checking on sick shut-ins and closing roads where live power lines posed a danger to the public.

Still reeling week later

"We’re still reeling from the severity of this ice storm," Williams said more than a week after the storm hit. "We think the power is back on in most of the county, and we’re very happy we didn’t have any fatalities."

Ontario County Sheriff’s Department members of Local 835 helped set up shelters and assisted fire departments in routing traffic around live wires, according to Unit President Larry Nolan.

And in Wyoming County, CSEA members spent long hours sawing up fallen trees and broken branches and using loaders and dump trucks to clear miles of roads covered by storm damage.