Contract negotiations open for 100,000 state workers

ALBANY- Contract talks between CSEA and New York State are underway. Wages, health insurance and job security are the issues our members are most concerned about," CSEA President William L. McGowan told reporters after the first bargaining session on Dec. 7, 1984. McGowan based his statement on the input he received from face to face meetings with members this summer and fall and on the contract demand sheets which members sent in.

At that first session the state and the union agreed to groundrules which include a news blackout on the negotiations.

From Dec. 17 until Jan. 7 the two sides will exchange and clarify demands. On Jan. 7, unit negotiations for the Institutional, Administrative and Operational units will begin. On Feb. 4, coalition negotiations begin.

The unit negotiations will deal with the specific contract language and working conditions for the 100,000 state employees in these three units.

The coalition talks will address the economic issues for all three units.

CSEA and AFSCME research staff are putting together the justifications for the union's economic demands.

"We don't just make up a wish list or pull numbers out of a hat," said President McGowan, "We use the expertise on our staff and that of our international affiliate to make our case at the table."

The negotiating teams and the collective bargaining specialists assigned to each unit have prepared demands to improve the contract language in each unit. CSEA staff and the negotiating teams have used the contract demand sheets sent in by thousands of members as a basis for formulating the union's demands.

Both President McGowan and Chief Negotiator James Roemer, Jr. warned that these will be difficult talks. The state's Chief Negotiator Thomas F. Hartnett has already told reporters that the state's target for a wage settlement in all of its contracts is 3.5 percent.

"Our members made sacrifices when the state was in financial trouble and we will be looking for a good settlement," McGowan said.


INSIDE THIS EDITION:

AFTER 22 YEARS BEHIND A DESK, BARBARA GRANT MOVES BEHIND THE WHEEL

Page 6
Longtime employee honored at recognition dinner

Joanne Gaillie says she'd do it all over after 36 years of service at Middletown

By Anita Manley
CSEA Communications Associate

MIDDLETOWN — "A good job is like a good marriage," says Joanne Gaillie. "You compromise, compromise and compromise."

Gaillie, a 36-year employee of Middletown Psychiatric Center, was recently honored for her service at an Employee Recognition Dinner at the facility.

Joanne was recruited for her job by a local priest when she was just 17 years old. "I told him I was too young and he told me that they needed me, so I applied for the job and was hired," she said.

A young, inexperienced farmgirl from Warwick, (about 20 miles from Middletown), Gaillie recalls that she was assigned as one of three therapy aides in a ward of 132 patients.

Patient care has come a long way since then, she says. There was no medication in those days, she emphasizes, and each day was an adventure. "My first day on the job, I saw a supervisor shielding herself from a patient with a mattress. Another worker hid under a bed when a patient tried to scratch her eyes out. You called for help by banging on the pipe and you hoped someone heard you and would come."

Gaillie also recalls the day a patient threw herself down a laundry chute and all the employees had to remain on the job until she was found.

Survival was uppermost in the employees' minds in those days. Gaillie says she remembers buying cigarettes (out of her $32 bi-weekly pay check) and using them to reward well-behaved patients. They, in turn, would protect the young workers.

"We were like family. There was no turnover in those days. You always felt like you were coming home to your family when you came to work."

The Office Sites Committee reported that the closing was held Nov. 21 for CSEA's purchase of a new headquarters building at 143 Washington Ave. in Albany. The Board also authorized renewal of a three-year lease for the Mayville Satellite office.

Region VI submitted names of members who will serve on its Political Action Committees; the committee covering the eastern portion of Region VI will be chaired by Flo Tripi, and Barbara Gradziewicz will chair the committee covering eight western counties.

approving a committee recommendation, Board members voted to raise the honoraria of the four full-time statewide officers. Under CSEA's constitution, any change in an honorarium must be approved before the election process begins for the next term of office for the position affected, and changes do not take effect until after the intervening election has occurred. (See story, page 19).


Two appointments were made to Board committees. Andrew Lucyszyn was named to the Charter Committee, and Scott Corey will serve on the Insurance Committee.

The Board approved changes in the pension plan covering CSEA staff employees in order to bring the plan in compliance with the 1984 tax act. In other action, the Board approved a resolution introduced by Region III President George Boncoraglio in support of South African unionists who are being harrassed by authorities. Letters of support will be forwarded to South African union leadership.

Questions by CSEA members concerning the union's Board of Directors should be directed to that member's Board Representative, Local President or to the Office of the statewide Secretary. Copies of the Secretary's Board minutes are mailed to all Board Representatives and Local Presidents.
THE SKY'S THE LIMIT — Airplanes owned by a large network of corporations, including some unions, are transporting cancer patients to and from treatment centers free of charge. Called Corporate Angel Network — CAN — this unique service has been endorsed by AFSCME and the AFL-CIO.

Air service a heavensend for cancer patients

WESTCHESTER COUNTY — Some very special “angels” are giving a lift to cancer patients in New York and elsewhere.

More than 200 corporations have become involved in the Corporate Angel Network (CAN), volunteering use of their company planes to transport cancer patients to and from treatment facilities without charge.

Three national unions have added the services of their planes to the Westchester County-based association, and the AFL-CIO has endorsed the program and recommended the service to its millions of members.

One CSEA officer who believes in the angels is Barbara Reese, president of CSEA Local 303 at the Roswell Park Cancer Treatment Facility.

“Eventually, all cancer patients have a common problem — they want to go home to be with their families,” said Reese. “Normally, there is no inexpensive way to make their wish come true.

“Cancer patients are usually burdened with great financial costs as well as with their illness,” she continued. "The cost of regular commercial flights is usually out of sight, especially since many cancer patients can’t travel unassisted, which means fares double or even triple.”

The Corporate Angel Network was formed about three years ago by a former cancer patient from Greenwich, Ct., Priscella Blum, whose hobby is flying. She noted that while corporate planes are usually designed to carry 10 passengers, they most frequently carry only two. So, she asked, why not let cancer patients fly to and from their medical treatments free of charge on underutilized corporate planes?

Blum and another former cancer patient, Jay Weinberg of Pleasantville, N.Y. sought the answer by forming CAN. With the endorsement of the American Cancer Society, the system grew quickly. Flights can now be arranged on planes belonging to more than 200 companies and labor unions, including the International Machinists and Aerospace Workers, the United Food and Commercial Workers, and the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union.

Both AFSCME, CSEA’s affiliate, and the AFL-CIO have endorsed CAN, and urge member unions to make their membership aware of the value of the unique service.

John J. McManus, assistant director of the AFL-CIO Department of Community Services, said CAN has benefits reaching beyond the free service it provides cancer patients.

“CAN presents a unique opportunity for volunteerism on many levels. And CAN utilizes a heretofore not fully used resource, the corporate airplane, and serendipitously, turns often maligned airports into good neighbors.”

Headquarters of the Corporate Angel Network is at the Westchester County Airport, a popular base for corporate planes and now reported to be “the corporate heaven of the United States.”

Patients using the service must be accompanied by a family member or aide. Patients must be ambulatory, but crutches and wheelchairs are permitted.

Inquiries about the program can be obtained by contacting the Corporate Angel Network at (914) 328-3131.

CSEA members may also contact their AFL-CIO community service representative through their CSEA local.

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Retired, disabled and survivor beneficiaries who received Social Security payments during 1984 will receive a letter in January 1985 telling them they may have to pay federal income tax on up to one-half of those benefits. The tax will apply only to those who have substantial income in addition to their social security benefits, according to Lewis Epstein, Social Security manager in Albany.

But Epstein said about one person in 10 will be required to pay a tax on part of his or her benefits. Starting early in January 1985 and continuing throughout the month, every person who received any Social Security benefits in 1984 will receive a Form SSA-1099, Social Security Benefit Statement showing the amount of benefits paid. This net amount is the figure used to determine whether any benefits are subject to tax.

Also enclosed with the Form SSA-1099 will be a worksheet form, IRS Notice 703, which can be used to see if any benefits are taxable.

Up to half of an individual’s benefits may be subject to tax if his or her combined income — taxable income plus non-taxable interest plus one half of the Social Security benefit — exceed a base amount. That base amount is: $25,000 if a person files as a single taxpayer; $32,000 for a married couple filing jointly; and $0 for a married person filing a separate return if he or she lived with a spouse during any part of 1984.

The amount of benefits subject to tax if combined income exceeds the base amount is the smaller of one-half of the amount over the base amount, or one-half of the Social Security benefits. If combined income does not exceed the base amount, no Social Security benefits are subject to tax, Epstein said.

People can get the answers to questions about entries on Form SSA-1099 by calling the toll-free 900 telephone number shown on the form. Questions on figuring either taxable income or taxes should be directed to the nearest Internal Revenue office indicated on the back of Notice 703.

A free publication — Publication 915 — explains the entries on Form SSA-1099 and how to determine if benefits are taxable. Free copies can be obtained at any Social Security or IRS office.
Changes in health insurance deductions due

State employees enrolled in the New York State Health Insurance Plan may see changes in their health insurance deductions depending upon which option they are enrolled in.

Employees that have selected the Statewide Option (Metropolitan) will have the following amounts deducted from their bi-weekly paychecks:

- Individual Contract $2.54
- Family Contract $13.76

The Metropolitan annual deductibles will increase from $108 to $114 (Individual) and from $324 to $342 (Family).

Employees that are enrolled in GHI will not be required to contribute any premium for either individual or family coverage.

Premium changes for employees enrolled in a Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) will vary depending upon HMO option chosen. The state will be circulating information regarding any increases.

Payroll changes will occur Dec. 26 (Administrative Payroll) and Jan. 2 (Institutional Payroll).

Questions should be directed to personnel offices or to the health insurance unit, State Civil Service Department (518) 457-5784.

Any premium changes for local government employees participating in the State Health Insurance Plan will depend upon the employer/employee split negotiated in their own collective bargaining agreement.

Pact ratified in Wappingers schools

WAPPINGERS FALLS—CSEA members in the Wappingers Central School District have ratified a three-year contract following months of lengthy negotiations.

According to Region III Field Representative Diane Campion, an impasse and the filing of a number of improper practice charges contributed to the difficulties during the bargaining sessions.

Campion says the 128 clerical workers will receive an 8.25 percent pay increase retroactive to July 1; 8 percent effective July 1, 1985 and 6 percent plus increments as of July 1, 1986.

The contract also provides for all employees to be eligible for two Employee Benefit Fund plans on July 1, 1985, an additional week of vacation, family sick leave time, and increased longevity and parttime rates.

Members of the negotiating team included Unit President Maryjane McNair, Yvonne Tompkins and Norma Condon.

APPROVED — Wappingers School District Unit President Maryjane McNair and Yvonne Tompkins check membership lists at a ratification meeting at which members overwhelmingly approved a three year contract.
Former office clerk driven to trucker's job

New job a pick-me-up for first woman driver in Corrections Dept.

By Tina Lincer First
Associate Editor

MENANDS — After 22 years of sitting at a desk all day, Barbara Grant found moving desks more to her liking.

So these days you'll find her behind the wheel of a 24-foot van, transporting furniture to offices in state agencies, counties, municipalities and schools around New York.

"I come home from work and I'm exhausted, but I love every exhausting minute of it," says Grant, a member of CSEA Correctional Services Local 656. Grant is the first woman to be hired by the Corrections Department in the title of tractor-trailer operator, a grade 8 position. She works in the department's Division of Correctional Industries, a giant distribution center for the "Corcraft" furniture made by prison inmates. The center is located in the Albany County village of Menands.

"I don't feel any different than any other driver," she says. "I get along real good with the guys, and the bosses are fantastic. Believe me, it's great."

A resident of East Greenbush in Rensselaer County, Grant is a divorced mother of three children ages 20, 17 and 15. From 1962 until last month, she worked for the state Division of Criminal Justice Services as a grade 9 identification clerk. She was a shop steward for CSEA Local 656 there and also chaired the local's grievance and women's committees.

But the desk job didn't sit well with her.

"I was tired of being inside, I didn't like being confined. I'm an outdoors person, a mover," she said, listing fishing, camping, motorcycling and hunting as her hobbies. She said taking a cut in pay grade was worth it for what she feels is a job that's right up her alley. And, if she feels the urge to move again, she son, a mover," she said, listing fishing, camping, motorcycling and hunting as her hobbies.

According to Grant's son, a mover, she said, listing fishing, camping, motorcycling and hunting as her hobbies.

The daughter of a truck driver/mechanic, Grant says she always had an interest in riding motorcycles and trucks "and all this crazy stuff." But when her kids were younger she opted for the security and predictability of an office job.

Now that they're older, she enjoys the unpredictability and freedom of being on the road.

"My schedule? Oh my God," she lets out a throaty laugh. "I start at 6:30 a.m. I come in, check the board and see where I'm heading off to. You have a general idea of where you're going to be, but you have to stay packed at all times because you never know when you may have to stay overnight. So I always carry an overnight bag with me.

"I was restless. I just wanted to get out on my own and drive a truck. I've had my class 1 (tractor-trailer) license for three years."

The father of a truck driver/mechanic, Grant says she always had an interest in riding motorcycles and trucks "and all this crazy stuff." But when her kids were younger she opted for the security and predictability of an office job.

Now that they're older, she enjoys the unpredictability and freedom of being on the road.

"The first day I was on the job they asked me if I knew where Newark, N.Y. was. It's near Rochester. I went there and loaded up some chairs, the next day I delivered them to Queens."

Her local deliveries take her to such locations as the State Office Building Campus, while out-of-town runs take her to every corner of the state.

"Last week I was in Queens and Nassau and Suffolk, the week before that I was in Staten Island — how to see the state in two days," she quipped.

Not only does Grant drive the truck, she loads and unloads the cargo too, sometimes leaving it on the docks and other times moving it to the offices.

Though she says that's a lot of heavy moving, she adds, "I haven't felt this physically good in years."
Employees urged to send in pay equity surveys

By now, some 35,000 randomly selected state employees should have received pay equity questionnaires which went out earlier this month. The questionnaires, part of a pay equity, or comparable worth, study conducted by the Center for Women in Government, represents an attempt to find out if there is sexual or racial discrimination in New York state salary structures. The project is part of the current contract between CSEA and the state, and is being funded with $500,000 in grant money.

Comparable worth is generally regarded as one of the most important social and economic issues of the '80s, and CSEA-represented employees who have been selected to participate in the survey are urged to take the time to respond.

Because of the importance of the project, employees are being given time on the job to fill out the questionnaires. Validity of the study is based on a high response rate.
Employees look at ways to avoid worksite hazards

BATAVIA — Video display terminals, toxic substances and employee burnout were among the topics discussed at the daylong seminar held recently by the Region VI Safety and Health Committee.

Entitled “Issues in the Public Sector,” the seminar featured presentations by numerous safety experts and committee members. The committee worked closely with CSEA occupational safety and health staff, directed by James Corcoran to provide a full range of information to help improve safety in the workplace.

A filmstrip produced by the National Safety Council, “Video Display Terminals — the Human Factor,” was the highlight of a morning workshop addressing some of the common problems faced by operators who are exposed to VDTs on a daily basis.

Region VI Safety and Health Committee Chairman Barry Kobrin said that while radiation emitted from VDTs has been shown to be below federal standards, no studies have been completed assessing the long-range health effects.

The workshop on hazardous chemicals and toxic substances explored some of the more common substances CSEA members are exposed to and detailed means of personal protection.

In a session on office hazards, it was demonstrated that desk jobs can be as dangerous as other forms of work. Participants learned how to identify hazards, such as whether the workplace has adequate ventilation, and how to overcome them. Such factors as understaffing and outdated equipment were also discussed.

In a workshop on back injuries, Dr. Larry Birzon, a Buffalo chiropractor, showed what precautions workers can take to minimize injuries, including proper lifting of heavy objects.

Michelle Kaplan of the New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell University spoke on job stress and worker burnout, emphasizing the longterm dangers of unrelieved stress.

And in a session on the New York’s Right-to-Know Law, state Assistant Attorney General Wade Easton said the failure of employers to comply with the statute “is far greater than we think.”

The law, which has been on the books since Dec. 3, 1983, requires employers in the state to tell workers about the health effects of any toxic substances at their worksites. It also says employees routinely exposed to toxic substances must receive training and education from the employer regarding these substances. The training must take place before initial assignment and annually thereafter.

Region VI OSHA Specialist John Bieger and Region II OSHA Specialist Mitchell Braithwaite also conducted workshops, and Regional VI President Robert Lattimer urged members to contact Bieger in the Region VI office with any safety concerns they may have.

Region VI Safety and Health Committee members who participated in the workshop included Sharon Cordaro, Harry Douglas, John Grandietz, Art Cousineau, Tom Finger and Mark Hicks.
Members reject fact finder's report as legislature passes new budget

BUFFALO — Erie County CSEA Local 815 has overwhelmingly rejected a PERB fact finder's report and recommendations in the year-and-a-half struggle for a negotiated settlement.

Meanwhile, the county Legislature, facing a fiscal crisis that also threatened many county jobs, passed a 1985 budget that Local President John Eiss feels will avoid massive layoffs.

"We feel the legislators passed a budget that will allow the county to maintain the services our residents deserve and retain the jobs of our members to provide those services," said Eiss.

While the budget calls for eliminating more than 400 positions, Eiss said most of the cut positions are thought to be unfilled. He said a more through analysis is being made to confirm this.

The county Legislature's budget action climaxed weeks of intense public pressure that included lobbying by various interest groups.

A series of ads in several local publications by the Buffalo Chamber of Commerce incensed Local 815 membership by its inference that the average county employee's annual pay was $33,000. In actuality, CSEA represented county employees average less than $18,000, according to Eiss. The ad called for deep job cuts and pay cuts.

The Chamber ads sparked mobilization of a massive information picket march at a planned Chamber reception for elected area officials.

However, when plans of the march were publicized, the Chamber abruptly called off its planned reception.

Eiss said he had "no doubt" the Chamber was seeking to avoid a CSEA confrontation and said the local will decide later on whether to march at the Chamber's rescheduled reception in January.

The Erie County Medical Center, which has been blamed for a large part of the county's $70 million to $80 million budget deficit, should be funded by the state as a teaching hospital, according to Eiss. "Every other teaching hospital in the state is funded except this one," said Eiss. "It would take a big burden off the county budget." Eiss and ECMC Unit President Stephen Caruana have called for the hiring of permanent staff in the hospital's billing offices to improve collection procedures. They maintain slow collection of hospital debts have contributed greatly to the county's fiscal crisis.

Meanwhile, an imposed contract appears to be in the future for the 4,000 members of Local 815, following rejection of the fact finder's report. The rejection was in line with the recommendation of the local's negotiating committee and Collective Bargaining Specialist Danny Jinks.

Jinks told Local 815 members the report, which recommended zero wage and benefit increase, was "a copy" of a fact finder's report regarding the county sheriff's unit, which is also at contract impasse.

Following the local's rejection, Eiss issued a public statement "recognizing the fiscal difficulties facing the county, "but condemning the report as "out of touch with reality and leaving much to be desired."

"We are prepared to 'bite the bullet' and forego wage increases in this fiscal year, although they are deserved and needed by our members," Eiss said in the statement.

"We take this stance with the hope and expectation that county and state government officials will work together on the measures that will lead the county back to fiscal health and integrity.

"Those measures should not include a "meat-ax" approach that chops away the vital services that would be expected by new industries and residents, and accorded those presently residing there."

Eiss noted the county work force represented by CSEA has already been depleted by more than 260 job cuts and 300 early retirements this year.

"We wish to serve notice that with the acceptance of no wage or benefits increase this year, we will redouble our efforts for fairer compensation in the following fiscal year."

The local's negotiating committee members are Gerald Prince and David Wilbur of Social Services; Shirley Heron, Health; Barbara Gradzewicz, Local Representative; Shari Kamboltz, Homie and Infirmary; John Davidson, Auto Bureau; Stephen Caruana, ECMC; Duane Liefeld, Corrections; Iris Klossak, Erie Community College; and Marijean Nichols, Downtown Unit. Several members also joined with Betsy Piette to form a Contingency Action Committee.

Eiss said legislative hearings on an imposed contract should begin in early January. He said the local will aim to have a dental plan and summer hours included in the imposed 1984 pact to assure inclusion in any agreement reached for 1985.
The anatomy of a successful union representation campaign

By Daniel X. Campbell
CSEA Communications Associate

The final press release was short and to the point: "The Civil Service Employees Association has won the right to represent 400 private sector employees of the McAuto Group Systems Incorporated by a vote of 205 yes to 103 no..."

Behind those words was a long and hard campaign to organize the Medicaid Management Information System contract employees, who work side by side with eight CSEA represented public sector employees.

It started in July when CSEA received a call from a McAuto employee seeking information about CSEA. The individual spoke with CSEA Organizer Michale Sheldon, who answered a series of questions about services, dues and CSEA's structure. The phone call lead to a meeting with the caller at a location away from the person's work site.

The individual represented a group of private sector employees who work for the McAuto Group Systems Incorporated, a division of McDonnell Douglas. McAuto holds a $20 million annual contract with New York State's Social Service Department's MMIS department to process and pay Medicaid claims.

About a year earlier the workers had tried unsuccessfully to organize with another union. That effort failed when that union's tactics turned off some of the workers and McAuto management dissuaded many of the employees from voting for the union by making a lot of promises, most of which were not kept.

While researching the situation, Sheldon discovered that eight CSEA public sector members worked at the same worksite represented by CSEA Local 688.

Sheldon made an appearance at the worksite in the Albany suburb of the large building once housed the state's Social Services Department, but has since become offices for various companies. The cafeteria serves the needs of all employees, including the McAuto workers, however, was unoccupied.

An organizing committee of employees was formed and conducted a 30 percent showing of interest in having a union representation election. The workers wanted a much higher total of designation cards by the time of the meeting. Sheldon was able to instill other contacts in the worksite.

The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) staff member, Barnett L. Horowitz, counted a big majority of votes in favor of CSEA as, in background, CSEA staffers Michael Sheldon, left, and Greg Davis watch. Sheldon and Davis were among union staffs who worked on the McAuto organizing campaign.

A classic case of sour grapes from the loser

Within 72 hours after it lost a union representation election to CSEA, McAuto Group Systems Incorporated informed the state's Social Services Department that it would not be bidding for renewal of the MMIS contract. The present agreement runs until Oct. 31, 1985.

"It's a classic case of sour grapes on the part of McAuto," says CSEA Region IV Director John D. Corcoran Jr.

"The private contractor wants to make maximum profit while paying his workers minimum wages, and when the workers stand up for their rights, the contractor decides to pick up his marbles and leave," Corcoran said.

"The work that these employees do, however, is so important to the state that the contract with McAuto addressed the need of transferring the workers from one contractor to another. CSEA plans to negotiate a contract with McAuto and to pass these negotiated terms and conditions on to the new provider, be that another contractor or the state itself."

CSEA Regional Director John D. Corcoran keeps his own tally of votes as balloting began.

CSEA wins right to represent McAuto workers
New 3-year pact in Warwick School District

WARWICK — Non-instructional employees in the Warwick School District will realize more than 22 percent in salary increases as a result of a recently ratified three-year contract.

Unit President Naomi Kaplan said the smooth negotiations were due to "an excellent relationship with the administration."

The 135 workers, members of Orange County Local 836, will receive pay hikes of 7.2 percent retroactive to July 1; 7.5 percent as of July 1, 1985 and 7.5 percent effective July 1, 1986.

According to Region III Field Representative Felice "Flip" Amodio, the contract also provides for a new longevity step for 12 month employees; an additional 15 cents per hour after 15 consecutive years of service; a clothing allowance for food service employees and uniforms for custodians, maintenance and grounds workers and bus mechanics; and out-of-title pay for those employees performing such work for at least five consecutive workdays.

Members of the negotiating team included Virginia Carr, Marge Berry, Rick Daubert, Dane Cooper, Marilyn Youngman and Regina Foley.

Many benefits for Spring Valley workers

SPRING VALLEY — Employees of this Southern Region village recently ratified a two-year contract retroactive to June 1, following a year of negotiations. The village of Spring Valley is part of Rockland County Local 844.

According to Region III Field Representative Chris Lindsay, the contract provides for salary increases of 6.75 percent retroactive to June 1 and 7.85 percent effective June 1, 1985.

In addition, all employees are guaranteed a $400 longevity payment, a new meal allowance schedule, an increase in stand-by pay, and for those employees who receive a uniform allowance two additional sets of work clothing.

Lindsay says village officials also approved a 20-year retirement program with the municipality picking up 50 percent of the cost of health insurance for retirees.

Negotiating team members included Unit President Jay Garbus, Rhoda Greenberg and Lou Grausso.

2-year agreement for Goshen village unit

GOSHEN — Village employees here recently ratified a two-year contract that will boost salaries by 13 percent.

According to Region III Field Representative Felice "Flip" Amodio, the agreement, retroactive to Jan. 1, provides for 6.5 percent pay increases each year, an increase in clothing allowance, an additional holiday for Martin Luther King Day, an improved dental plan, an additional personal day and an agency shop clause.

The 20 employees, members of Orange County Local 836, are employed by the village's public works, water and sewer departments.

SIGNING — Region III Field Representative "Flip" Amodio shows Goshen Village Mayor Stephen Hopkins where to sign a new contract for 20 public works employees. Seated next to the mayor is Unit Vice President Joe Dominick; standing is Unit Treasurer Tom Reynolds.

Unanimous OK for Nanuet school employees contract

NANUET — A three-year contract unanimously ratified by members of the Nanuet School District will provide custodial and grounds workers with salary increases of up to $5,000 and new dental and vision plans.

The agreement provides pay hikes of 4 percent retroactive to July 1; 4 percent as of Feb. 1, 1985; 7 percent effective July 1, 1985 and an additional 7 percent effective July 1, 1986.

In addition, employees are now entitled to three days of personal leave per year and an increase in longevity payments for 10 year employees.

Region III Field Representative Larry Natoli said the Employee Benefit Fund's dental and vision plans will also be available to all fulltime and parttime CSEA members.

Members of the negotiating team included Anthony Dario and Rosemary Sweeney. The unit is part of Rockland County Local 844.
If you buy your kids a bicycle this Christmas, make sure it’s not a Schwinn.

Four years ago, after a tough organizing drive, the UAW won a strong first contract for 1,300 workers at Schwinn’s Chicago plant. Wages went up from a bare minimum. Workers won the right to a pension. Suddenly, Schwinn began shipping work to non-union sites in Taiwan, Japan, and Tennessee. It closed its Chicago plant for good this spring. Though it recently coughed up $28,000 for back grievances, it refuses to give its former employees the severance and vacation pay it owes them.

Schwinn bicycles used to be hand-crafted; now they’re assembled by workers on a starvation wage, and owner Eddie Schwinn is raking in the profits. He still peddles bicycles under the Schwinn label—but we don’t need to pedal them, too. Along with Schwinn exercise equipment, they’re being boycotted by the UAW and the AFL-CIO.

Have a nice Holiday!

For Christmas
Buy Union

Kick The Stuffing Out Of Marval
Don’t Buy!

AMERICAN IS BEAUTIFUL
Buy American... and look for the Union Label

Rockland choral group entertains

POMONA — Rockland County Health Center employees have been giving up their lunch hours to rehearse a newly formed choral group for a holiday concert for patients of the county infirmary.

Group organizer Pat Quinn, a former shop steward from Rockland County Local 844, said she volunteered to bring the group together because she is interested in the activities program at the facility.

Quinn said she hopes to keep her singers entertaining throughout the year. The first concert was held Dec. 10 when the group took part in the annual Christmas tree lighting ceremony.

MAKING A JOYFUL NOISE — Members of a newly organized choral group, left, at the Rockland County Health Center are, seated from left, Sylvia Weiner, Harriet Patt with the guitar, and Barbara Tew. Standing from left are Terry Bowman, Mary Prince, Florence Sadowsky, Audrey Migliaccio, Charlene Rodríguez, Joanne Wysocki, Anna Cohen and Pat Quinn. Also in the group, but not present for this photo are Diane Watson, Joan Toner, Joan Howard, Donna Stephens, Kathy Clark, Sonia Garcia and Jocelyn Lewy.
EDITOR'S NOTE: As reported in the previous edition of The Public Sector, CSEA has been carefully monitoring the cleanup operations at the contaminated Binghamton State Office Building. CSEA has taken the firm commitment to the more than 700 state workers who may eventually be asked to return to work in the building that the union will not allow any one to re-enter until CSEA’s own consulting firm declares the work environment in the building to be within acceptable and recognized standards. The workers themselves, at this point, continue to express doubt and fear about the prospect of returning to the building, as this account of a recent meeting in Binghamton confirms.

BINGHAMTON — Nearly four years after a fire in the mechanical room of the Binghamton State Office Building sent toxic soot throughout the 18-story tower, state employees continue to express distrust, fear and objections to reoccupying the building at some future date.

CSEA, which represents approximately 40 percent of the building’s 700 workers, recently conducted a meeting in downtown Binghamton to discuss progress of the cleanup and state proposal for reoccupancy of the building, now targeted for next year.

Tim Henehan, president of CSEA Binghamton State Employees Local 002 said, “We felt it was important to update state employees regarding progress of the cleanup, dispel some of the rumors that continue to arise, and reaffirm the union's position of final approval from impartial experts before any reoccupation of the building.”

Even though it will cost $35 million or more to clean the tower in downtown Binghamton, Henehan said 75 to 90 percent of the employees he polled do not want to return to the building.

“How will we know it is really safe?” asked one employee.

“Who can we believe?” another remarked.

The majority of concerns from employees surround the uncertainty of the cleanup job that has continued for nearly four years following the accident. Some state employees question the credibility of state officials who say it will be “safe” to return to the building.

“It’s the people who don’t have to go back into the building who are saying it’s safe to return,” another employee said.

Henehan and other Local 002 officials at the meeting doubted the state would re-open the building by fall 1985. They indicated the realistic target date might be two years away.

“Our task is twofold,” Henehan explained. “CSEA’s primary concerns are for adequate, safe working conditions at our present work locations. And to continue to monitor the downtown cleanup process. If and when we are asked to return to the tower, it will be with the assurance that it has been approved for occupancy by a CSEA-approved panel of experts. That is the firm policy of Local 002, Region V and CSEA statewide.”

EDITOR'S NOTE: As reported in the previous edition of The Public Sector, CSEA has been carefully monitoring the cleanup operations at the contaminated Binghamton State Office Building. CSEA has taken the firm commitment to the more than 700 state workers who may eventually be asked to return to work in the building that the union will not allow any one to re-enter until CSEA’s own consulting firm declares the work environment in the building to be within acceptable and recognized standards. The workers themselves, at this point, continue to express doubt and fear about the prospect of returning to the building, as this account of a recent meeting in Binghamton confirms.

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Maintenance position unfairly filled, arbitrator rules

WHITE PLAINS — The Westchester County Department of Personnel must repost a job opening that was filled last April as a result of a recent arbitration decision.

According to CSEA Attorney Arthur Grae, 11 county employees who applied for a job opening as a senior maintenance mechanic III were not considered for the position. Instead, an outsider with inferior qualifications was.

Following testimony by the department head, in which he admitted that the appointee did not possess the wastewater experience required for the job, Arbitrator David Stein ruled that the county “arbitrarily and discriminatorily applied stricter eligibility standards to its employees than it did to the outsider that it eventually appointed.”

In addition, Stein emphasized, the department head’s disqualification of seven of the applicants who were employed in lower grades “was not the result of a serious evaluation.”

“This disparate treatment inescapably leads to the conclusion that the county did not give its employees a ‘good faith’ first consideration for the senior maintenance mechanic III position,” Stein concluded.

LEAP program coordinator sought

ALBANY — CSEA/LEAP, the Labor Education Action Program, is seeking a qualified candidate to serve as program coordinator of its adult education program.

Responsibilities include program development and operations, selection of instructors, and program review and analysis.

Qualifications include a bachelor’s degree with three years experience in adult education, curricula, teacher supervision or program design. Master’s degree may be substituted for one year’s experience.

Valid driver’s license and car for business use is also required.

Submit resumes by Dec. 24 to Personnel Office, P.O. Box 7125, Capital Station, Albany, N.Y. 12224.
WILTON — The 21st State Employee Child Day Care Center — Country View — opened at the Wilton Developmental Center here recently.

The modern facility, created in space which formerly housed facility offices, can take care of 25 children at present and has room for expansion to provide care for an additional 10 children.

"This is an example of the good that can be accomplished when labor and management work together to address a problem," Wilton Developmental Center Local 416 President Fran Wilusz said at the center's dedication.

Molly Hardy, executive director of Empire State Day Care Services, noted that 25 more day care facilities will be opening throughout the state during the coming months. Most of that number will be located at State University campus sites.

AT THE OPENING — Country View Director Debbie Cianca, Wilton Developmental Center President Fran Wilusz with son Michael, and CSEA Capital Region Director John D. Corcoran get together at the opening of the new Wilton child care facility.

RIBBON RIPPING — Instead of cutting a ribbon, children, top, ran through a brightly colored streamer officially opening the new facility. Bottom, a movie captures the imaginations of a group of students at the center.

Children’s center at CDPC holds opening

The Carol A. Dunigan Children’s Day Center at CDPC, Albany, recently held its grand opening celebration. The bright, roomy facility which cares for nearly 50 students was named in honor of a former CSEA CDPC Local 692 member and MEATA who died last year from cancer. On hand at the opening were Capital Region President C. Alan Mead, center Director Kathleen Sheehy and Hank Wagner, a member of CSEA and the center’s board of directors.
'Tax simplification' plan threatens employee benefits, Kirkland charges

The Treasury Department's "tax simplification" proposal is unfair to workers and shortchanges the nation's needs, AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland charged.

It wouldn't do anything to reduce the federal deficit because the proposed tax increases and decreases balance out. But in the reshuffle, many workers would end up paying more in taxes even though tax rates would be reduced and personal exemptions raised.

Kirkland pointed to the proposed taxation of "important fringe benefits" provided by employers.

Besides the taxation of health insurance benefits above minimal levels, which President Reagan proposed last year, the Treasury proposal calls for taxing workers on the value of employer-provided life insurance, education benefits and group legal services.

Low-income persons would be taxed for the first time on their unemployment benefits and injured workers would have to pay taxes on workers' compensation. For those who itemize deductions, state and local taxes would no longer be deductions from taxable income and neither would most charitable contributions and union dues.

Single-parent households and families where both parents are employed would no longer receive a tax credit for child care expenses. But an affluent couple with one income would be able to put aside $5,000 a year of tax-exempt savings into an IRA (individual retirement account). Under present law, the maximum would be $2,000.

Small contributors to political campaigns or political funds such as COPE would no longer be eligible for a tax credit.

On the business side, the corporate tax rate would be dropped but a variety of tax changes— including some loophole closings urged by the AFL-CIO — would result in higher total tax payments from the corporate sector.

The corporate reforms will be targets of heavy industry lobbying, and the political consensus was that it would take active presidential support to get them enacted.

But the White House quickly put a long arm's length between President Reagan and Treasury Secretary Donald T. Reagan, the principal author of the tax package.

The president had directed the Treasury to come up with a "revenue-neutral" tax package, stressing "simplification" of the tax code.

When the package was formally unveiled, after its principal provisions had already been widely reported, the White House issued a statement from the president saying he realized the proposal would "generate much debate." Reagan promised that he would "personally" review the plan and consider public and congressional reaction before proposing any legislation to Congress.

The reaction from influential members of Congress from both parties was markedly unfavorable.

A restructuring of the tax system "will demand enormous political leadership from the White House," House Ways & Means Committee Chairman Dan Rostenkowski said.

"The deficit is probably our most urgent priority," the newly-elected Senate Republican leader, Bob Dole, said.

There was a consensus that the final version of any tax simplification legislation that cleared Congress and became law would differ significantly from the original Treasury proposal. As AFL-CIO Research Director Rudy Oswald saw it, any changes made by the White House as a result of adverse reaction would more likely result in restoring loopholes for business rather than elimination of inequities for workers.

On the plus side, Oswald said, the Treasury report did kill — although not very strongly — a value-added tax or some other form of national sales tax. Such a tax is inherently regressive, the report acknowledged, and its "considerable advantages" would have to be weighed against "serious disadvantages."

The Treasury proposal also takes steps in what the AFL-CIO considers the right direction by amending the depreciation and investment credits to corporate income taxes.

Thus far, the fund built up through the income tax checkoff has been adequate under the funding formula established by Congress. If it fell short, available amounts would be pro-rated among the candidates.

The question immediately arose as to whether the proposal to drop the checkoff represented an administration attempt to eliminate public funding of presidential campaigns. Encouraging that view is the fact that President Reagan has several times indicated his dislike of public funding and has not checked the campaign funding box on his own tax return. He has, however, accepted public funding for both his 1980 and 1984 election campaigns.

A high Treasury Department official told the AFL-CIO News that the proposal was not a move to eliminate public funding of presidential campaigns. He said the Treasury view was that the mechanism for providing funds should not be a part of the tax collection system and that Congress, if it wished to continue public funding, should provide a difficult means of allocating the money.
Among organized labor's proudest achievements is its historic role as a champion of the right of all Americans to education, and that philosophy translates into direct action in the AFL-CIO's long support of the United Negro College Fund.

This year, AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland, with the endorsement of the federation's Executive Council, is serving as UNCF's labor chairman for its nationwide fund-raising telethon to be broadcast in nearly 100 cities on Dec. 29.

The telethon, "Lou Rawls Parade of Stars," is in its fifth year, and it is the first national telethon ever devoted to raising money for education. The 12-hour show will begin at noon.

Kirkland, in agreeing to lead this year's support effort by the AFL-CIO and its affiliates, stressed the crucial importance of higher education in fortifying Americans to deal with the most pressing problems while building a just and prosperous future.

"The black colleges were founded a century ago on such dreams of a bright, free future, and they continue today to satisfy the thirst of young people for knowledge and progress," Kirkland said.

Many of the schools that comprise the United Negro College Fund are in extreme financial difficulty, Kirkland observed in a letter to unionists urging support of the fund.

"If these institutions cease to exist, we will be denying countless numbers of black youngsters the equality of opportunity so vital to their futures and to the future of our nation," he said.

Kirkland said the AFL-CIO, including its Education, Civil Rights and Community Services Departments, will be playing a "significant role" in UNCF's programs "in keeping with the federation's longstanding commitment to higher education and the need to provide upward mobility for all of our youth."

The 42 private, predominantly black colleges of the United Negro College Fund enroll some 45,000 students annually. Although they make up less than 4 percent of American colleges, they enroll 35 percent of all black students attending four-year colleges and universities.

Many UNCF colleges are well over a century old, founded in the mid-1890s or after the Civil War to feed the hunger of young black Americans for education and a better life. Students at UNCF schools say they choose to attend them because they offer high academic standards, small classes and individualized attention and a unique environment available only at a predominantly black college.

Lower tuition is also an attraction, since the cost of attending a UNCF school is about two-thirds less than at comparable private colleges nationally. Most students at UNCF schools are the children of low-income families who can provide little or no financial help. The UNCF reports that 90 percent of all students in its affiliated colleges need scholarships and loans.

Under its famous motto, "A mind is a terrible thing to waste," the UNCF has raised more than $350 million for its member institutions since its founding in 1944.

The UNCF relies on contributions from business, labor, foundations, civic and other organizations, students and other individuals. The AFL-CIO has been a long-time supporter.

Among the graduates of UNCF colleges have been Martin Luther King, Jr., Olympic champion Edwin Moses, Metropolitan Opera soprano Leontyne Price, singer Lionel Ritchie, Mayors Andrew Young of Atlanta and Ernest Morial of New Orleans and the late Gen. Chappie James, first black four-star general in the Air Force.

The "Parade of Stars" telethon Dec. 29 will be hosted for the fifth year by singer Lou Rawls, who helped get it started. More than 50 nationally known, popular performers are scheduled to appear during the 12-hour broadcast that starts at noon.
Oswego unit ratifies pact

OSWEGO — For more than 150 Oswego County blue collar unit members, the New Year will begin with a new two-year contract calling for pay increases each year, plus other important benefits.

The unit, part of CSEA Oswego County Local 838, recently ratified the agreement by an overwhelming margin.

Roger Kane, CSEA collective bargaining specialist and chief negotiator for the unit, released terms of the pact effective Jan. 1, 1985.

They include an increase of 50 cents per hour, plus an increment step where due, each year of contract; a new 25-year longevity step; full uniform payment for mechanics; tool allowance of 75 dollars per year; an employee dental plan; improved vacation benefits; and a seven-day notice prior to any permanent work schedule changes.

Commenting on the new contract, Kane said, "The fact that unit members voted overwhelming to ratify speaks for their general satisfaction with the agreement. We think it offers some good improvements and new benefits the employees can certainly use and enjoy." Kane also expressed his appreciation for the help and support of Fred Potter, unit president, and the other members of his negotiating committee. They include Larry Archibee, Brett Galvin, Steve Wilber, Hank Mattot and Mark Bailey.

Judiciary locals revamped to better fit bargaining units

CSEA's judiciary locals have been restructured by the Board of Directors in a move to bring the locals' membership more in line with the bargaining units representing them.

In general, judiciary locals will now include all Unified Court System employees represented by CSEA, but will exclude Court of Claims employees who will be represented within the State Division of Criminal Justice Services Local 696.

"There was a great need to reassign these judicial employees into their own locals on a more uniform basis," explained Director of Field Services Paul Burch. "Office of Court Administration employees have their own bargaining unit, and negotiate separately from the other state employees that we represent. This restructuring is in line with our basic CSEA philosophy, and should improve our ability to represent these members."

Honoraria hikes for statewide officers OK'd by board

ALBANY—CSEA's statewide Board of Directors has approved increases in the honoraria of the union's four statewide officers, to take effect July 1, 1985. Under CSEA's constitution, any changes in the honoraria must be approved by the board before the election process begins and cannot take effect until an intervening election has been completed.

The Board's action followed the recommendations of a seven-member committee which had studied the honoraria structure. The committee's report took into consideration the current salary structure for the four offices, increased duties and responsibilities of the positions, and comparisons with salaries of other labor leaders.

The committee concluded that the current honoraria are under-par compared with those of leaders of labor organizations representing sizeable membership. The salaries should be brought up to a respectable level commensurate with responsibilities of each position and then frozen to maintain stability.

The approved honoraria structure will be as follows:

President: effective July 1, 1985, $78,000; 1986, $82,000; 1987, $86,000; Executive Vice President: effective July 1, 1985, $52,000; 1986, $56,000; 1987, $60,000; Secretary: effective July 1, 1985, $37,000; 1986, $41,000; 1987, $46,000; Treasurer: same as Secretary.

(See Meeting Highlights, page 2, for more information.)

Union wins pay differential for Cayuga Co. Nursing Home workers

AUBURN — Night shift employees at the Cayuga County Nursing Home have been awarded a pay adjustment to reflect a differential of 10 percent of their base rate following a recent arbitration decision.

Officials of the CSEA Cayuga County Local 806 unit were informed that the award not only covers the rate of pay for time worked, but will compensate for vacation, personal leave, sick leave and compensatory time — all retroactive 60 days prior to filing of the initial grievance.

CSEA unit representatives filed the grievance in June after Cayuga County paying night shift employees a differential of 50 cents per hour only for hours worked. The grievance was moved through the three step procedure to eventual arbitration through the CSEA Legal Assistance Program.

During arbitration, CSEA Regional Attorney Earl Boyle contended that under terms of the existing collective bargaining agreement the 10 percent night shift differential should apply to all employees in the bargaining unit, including employees at the Cayuga County Nursing Home, which opened in April.

CSEA further argued that the county violated the contract when it paid a night shift differential for time worked, but did not pay the differential for vacation, personal leave, sick leave and compensatory time, as was the practice with other night shift employees in the bargaining unit.

The union offered testimony of county employees other than those at the nursing home that in the past 10 years the county had included the night shift differential as part of paid time off for those regularly scheduled to work between 3 p.m. and 3 a.m.

Unit President Michael Pisciotti also testified that the union never waived the application of the contract with respect to the new employees in the bargaining unit at the nursing home. And no requests for change in the contract language had been discussed during negotiations for a successor agreement.

In his decision, the arbitrator concluded that the unilateral change of pay policy on the part of Cayuga County was inappropriate and ruled that salaries of nursing home employees shall be adjusted to reflect a night shift differential of 10 percent of their base rate of pay and adjusted to also include the night shift differential in the rate of pay for vacation, personal leave, sick leave and compensatory time.

In a comment following the award announcement, Pisciotti said, "We are extremely pleased with the arbitrator's decision." He also expressed thanks to Boyle for his excellent presentation of facts and legal assistance.

$5 exam fee waived for ASU, ISU and OSU employees only

ALBANY — CSEA has issued a reminder that the $5 filing fee for Civil Service open competitive examinations is waived only for employees of the union's Administrative, Institutional and Operational Services bargaining units.

Waiver of the $5 application fee was negotiated by CSEA in the last round of bargaining. Under the 1982-85 contracts for the three bargaining units, the fee is assumed by CWEP — the joint labor-management Committee on the Work Environment and Productivity.

Anyone else taking an open competitive examination is required to pay the fee.

A computer check verifies an applicant's eligibility for the waiver. Otherwise, Civil Service will not verify the test score until the $5 fee is paid by the applicant.
1985 will be a year of challenge and opportunity for CSEA and its members. This is our 75th anniversary year. A time to look back and celebrate the union’s achievements, but also a time to look forward and plan for new challenges.

Negotiations with New York State have begun. This winter we will be negotiating the three contracts that determine the salary and working conditions for half of our membership. We are ready. We have excellent negotiating teams, our staff and AFSCME’s staff are preparing the information we need, and we bring experience and expertise to the bargaining table. Even so, these negotiations will not be easy. We will be facing a new governor and a new chief negotiator for the state. It will take determination and hard work to win a fair contract.

I spoke with many of you at meetings around the state and discussed these contract talks. I have looked at the contract demands that others have sent to headquarters. Wages, health insurance and job security seem to be the issues on most people’s minds. We will work hard to come out of these talks with a good contract in each of these areas.

In the area of local government, 1985 will also be a year of challenge and opportunity. This year we will work hard to increase our membership strength in local government. A union with solid membership support is a strong union.

Many local governments will face hard times and will try to balance budgets on the backs of our members. I want to make sure that we are strong enough in those units to negotiate from a position of strength and win good contracts for all of the local government workers we represent.

In this issue of The Public Sector is the first half of a calendar that celebrates some of the union’s accomplishments. I hope you will put it up in your workplace and take a moment to reflect on how many things that we take for granted are really hard won union victories.

The holiday season is upon us. I hope that each of you and your families enjoy this season of celebration and happiness. And I wish you a very happy and peaceful year in 1985.

William L. McGowan