Veteran labor leader Irv Flaumenbaum is dead at age 70; union mourns loss

"Irv Flaumenbaum will be remembered as one of the great builders of our union," said CSEA President William L. McGowan. "Irving Flaumenbaum was a great leader of workers," said AFSCME International President Jerry Wurf.

Irving Flaumenbaum, builder of unions and leader of workers, died at the age of 70 on August 27. He died as he had lived for the past 30 years — attending a CSEA meeting. Mr. Flaumenbaum was stricken with a heart attack during a meeting of the executive board of the Nassau County CSEA Local, which he had helped to organize in the mid-1960's and led as president for a quarter of a century.

The veteran labor leader had been in the forefront of the expansion of CSEA to include county and municipal subdivision workers, building the Nassau County Local from a core of 11 members to more than 20,000, the largest Local within the giant CSEA. He served as a statewide officer of CSEA for the past 15 years and at the time of his death had been president of the 60,000-member Long Island Region since 1973. Along with CSEA President William L. McGowan, Mr. Flaumenbaum was one of two CSEA International Vice Presidents on the AFSCME executive board, and was re-elected to that high position just a month ago.

President McGowan led the entire list of CSEA statewide officers attending Mr. Flaumenbaum's funeral. AFSCME President Wurf attended a wake for Mr. Flaumenbaum, and after becoming ill was represented at the funeral by AFSCME International Secretary-Treasurer William Lucy.

Nassau County Executive Francis Purcell gave the eulogy, and the Nassau County Police Department provided the ceremonies of an inspector's funeral, including a motorcycle-guarded funeral cortège. The line of cars stretched for more than three miles.

Purcell, in his eulogy, recalled that he had worked for Flaumenbaum as a delivery boy 47 years ago when Flaumenbaum operated a pharmacy before joining the county service. "He was a labor leader who had greater impact on Nassau County than any other — an impact that will be felt for many years," Purcell said. "Irv did not brag about his accomplishments — he was interested in results."

"He got involved trying to help people without their ever knowing it. . . Many times he came to me," Purcell said.

In an unusual letter composed by Flaumenbaum's family and read at the funeral, the family related to the many years Flaumenbaum spent a minimum of four nights a week at CSEA meetings.

"As years went by and we realized that we were more fortunate than others, we became very proud of him. We realized that when he was called on to help other people, it would simply please dad. "Our Irving," the letter continued. "We were more than happy to share our Irving with each and every one of you."

McGowan summed up comments from union leaders and public officials when he asserted: "We fought like cats and dogs sometimes, but Irving was always for the membership. He taught me always to treat the membership as a whole."

And Jean Wichmann, a veteran of the Nassau Local who was there when Flaumenbaum first started organizing county employees in 1951, said: "He was a pathfinder, really. When he came into the county, CSEA had 11 members. Irving and his cohorts used to go around every payday and collect $1 from each employee — that was before the days of payroll deduction."

"Irving's thought was to benefit everybody. He got time and leave rules before there was official negotiating. He got the county to go on Social Security. He got the county to pick up the employee contribution to retirement. He was there when CSEA was recognized, and there was formal collective bargaining."

Mr. Flaumenbaum was born in Brooklyn on September 9, 1909. A graduate of Columbia University College of Pharmacy, he was employed as a pharmacist before the days of payroll deduction.

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Mr. Flaumenbaum was born in Brooklyn on September 9, 1909. A graduate of Columbia University College of Pharmacy, he was employed as a pharmacist by the Nassau County Department of Social Services.

A resident of Freeport for more than forty years, he is survived by his wife, Ruth; three sons and eleven grandchildren.

AFSCME endorses Carter re-election

WASHINGTON, D.C. — President Jimmy Carter's campaign for re-election has won endorsement by the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO.

The Board voted to make the endorsement at a special meeting called in Washington last week by International President Jerry Wurf. Following the endorsement, members of the Board met with Carter and his top economic advisors.

CSEA President William L. McGowan, representing CSEA on the International Executive Board, abstained from the voting on the Presidential endorsement. He said that the subject of an endorsement is expected to be discussed by the union's Statewide Political Action Committee this month and with the CSEA Delegates meeting in three weeks, an endorsement by him at this time would be inappropriate.

Mr. McGowan chatted briefly with President Carter during the White House meeting. It was the second time that the two men have met this year and the first time since President Carter announced his program for economic revitalization, a program viewed by AFSCME as significantly better than similar proposals advanced by Republican presidential candidate Ronald Reagan.

CSEA's Statewide Political Action Committee will be asked by President McGowan to consider a Presidential endorsement by the state's largest public employee union. With the Delegate's meeting beginning September 29, such an endorsement would be timely. Political observers have noted in recent weeks that New York State will play a critical role in the President's strategy for re-election.

An endorsement by a union representing approximately 400,000 New York public employees can be very significant.

Commenting on the endorsement before newsmen at the White House, President Carter noted that AFSCME was the first union to endorse his election efforts in 1976. Joking with reporters, Carter said that he had learned the value of an AFSCME endorsement or the lack of it, when the International endorsed United States Senator Edward Kennedy in the Democratic Presidential Primary.

The President was defeated by Senator Kennedy in primary elections in New York, Pennsylvania and Massachusetts, states with large AFSCME memberships.

"We have had access and continue to have access to the Administration with regard to issues and problems affecting the well being of state and local governments. And while we have in the past been critical of some policies and programs, we have also at times been pleased with the direction taken by the Carter-Mondale Administration."

"We believe their re-election is in the best interests of AFSCME membership and urge all working men and women to support them."
Regional committee ready for delegates

Guide book will help delegates

NIAGARA FALLS — CSEA delegates arriving here later this month for the Fall convention will know just where to find a good meal when the working day is through thanks to a 20-page guidebook recently compiled by a Region 6 committee.

Under the direction of Jerry Frieday, who chaired the committee, the group assembled a generous sampling of restaurants, tourist attractions, and other information — like how to get the best look at the Falls themselves — in the guidebook, which is being sent to the delegates through the mail.

Jerry explained that she and others in the region thought it would be helpful if the delegates, slated to arrive September 28th for the week-long fall delegates meeting had a ready reference guide to introduce them to the many attractions of western New York.

With the help of the local Chamber of Commerce and the CSEA Communications Department, who printed the guide, the committee members gathered the necessary information, and compiled it into a practical handbook.

“I’m excited about being here in Niagara Falls. The last meeting held here was in 1975,” Jerry said.

“I really hope that our delegates will take advantage of Western New York. For those who have never seen the area I would think a car is essential. That’s why we felt it was important to include taxi services and car rental agencies in the book,” Jerry said.

“I’d really like to thank the committee for all their hard work since last March, when we began the project,” she said. “It took a lot of time and effort to put the guide together. I would also like to thank Ralph Distan and Melinda Carr for all their help.

The committee members were: Amelia Clay, Local 427; Patricia Froebel, Local 003; Anthony Pasqualichio, Local 832; Janie Raynor, Local 807; Bob Smith, Local 602; Dominic Spacone, Local 872; and Diane Zito, Local 632.

“There will be an information booth located in the lobby of the convention center beginning Sunday at 3 p.m. and continuing until Tuesday afternoon,” Jerry said. “If for any member of the committee can be of service please feel free to ask. Region 6 is looking forward to hosting this convention.”

Guideline is listed for departmental delegate meetings

ALBANY — The agenda for Departmental Meetings at the upcoming CSEA Statewide Delegates Meeting has been announced by CSEA Executive Director Joseph J. Dolan, Jr.

On Monday, September 29, several Departmental meetings will be held simultaneously at the Niagara Falls Convention Center. The following meetings will be held between 9 and 11 a.m., with the coordinators of the meetings listed:

- Office of Mental Health, Paul Burch, coordinator.
- Office of Mental Retardation, John McGraw, coordinator.
- Department of Transportation, Nels Carlson, coordinator.
- Social Services, Jack Conoby, coordinator.
- Correctional Services, Robert Guild, coordinator.
- Judiciary, Patrick Monachino, coordinator.
- Retirees, Thomas Gilmarian, coordinator.

On that same day, the following Departmental meetings will be held between the hours of 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.:

- State University, Paul Burch, coordinator.
- Environmental Conservation, Nels Carlson, coordinator.
- Executive, Jack Conoby, coordinator.

Calender of events

September

- Installation of officers, Orange County Unit, Orange County Golf and Ski Lodge, Montgomery, 6 p.m.
- Saratoga County, 846 Shop Stewards Meeting, Solar Building, High Street, Ballston Spa, 5 p.m.
- Region III Political Action Committee meeting, Regional Office, Fishkill, 7:30 p.m.
- Region V Fall Conference, Holiday Inn-Arena, Binghamton.
- Saratoga County 846 Annual Clambake, Eagles Club, Lake Lonely.
- Metropolitan Region II annual meeting, 9-11 a.m., Playboy Resort, McAfee, N.Y.
- Long Island Region I Legislative and Political Action Seminar, 8:30 a.m.-noon, Holiday Inn, Hauppauge.
- Saratoga County 846 Executive Board Meeting, Solar Building, High Street, Ballston Spa, 7:00 p.m.
- Buffalo Local 003, general membership meeting, 5:30 p.m., new Buffalo Hilton on the waterfront.
- Region III Executive Committee meeting, Holiday Inn, Fishkill, 7:45 p.m.
- Region V Political Action Coalition "Meet the candidates night," Sheraton Motor Inn, Liverpool, 7 p.m.
- Local 335 all-day dinner dance, Town and Country Restaurant, Walden and Union Road, Cheektowaga. Cocktails 6:30 p.m., dinner 7:30 p.m.
- Region VI meeting, Sheraton Inn East, Walden Avenue, Buffalo.
- Hudson Valley Armory Employees Local 252, Annual Banquet and Awards Dinner, Coppii II restaurant, 152 Washington Street, Peekskill, New York 8:00 p.m.
- Local 520 picnic, Applewood, Highland.
- Local 352 Labor Department-Buffalo District "Get Involved Now" membership meeting, Continental Restaurant, 212 Franklin Street, Buffalo, 6 p.m.
- Region III Delegates Meeting, Holiday Inn, Newburgh, 7:45 p.m.
Canal worker awarded $2,300 in back pay

AMSTERDAM — A seasonal employee of the Eastern Barge Canal, who was forced not only to sacrifice wage increases due him, but to take an actual cut in salary when he was promoted to a permanent position, was awarded a back-pay settlement of more than $2,300 by the Public Employment Relations Board in a grievance, and subsequent demand for arbitration, filed by the Civil Service Employees Assn.

The employee, Richard Grosse, had been a canal helper since 1973, going on seasonal layoff each year from December to April. He came back to work in $2,300 provided therein," and ordered that Grosse be repaid a sum of approximately eight salary and required him to pay back $900, supposedly overpaid to him.

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Another Quality of Working Life project involves a series of programs designed to orient new state employees to their jobs, giving the union's perspective, as well as management's on early opportunities, benefits, policies, procedures and job safety. This project is in the early production stages now.

In the private sector, there is a concept called the "Scanlon Plan" that allows employees to share in demonstrated financial savings that accrue to the employer due to the workers' increased productivity. The Quality of Working Life committee has hired Professor Stanley Altman of SUNY at Stony Brook to conduct a study to see if such a plan is feasible for New York State employees.

Another thing the committee is doing is studying environmental factors — temperatures, humidity, noise, and a myriad of other things that can affect the quality of working life and productivity," Mr. Langer said. "A questionnaire is being prepared, for distribution to 15 different state agencies in the near future. These are just a few of the projects being planned by the Committee on Quality of Working Life. Equally important, in Langeyer's view, are the ideas he expects to come from the rank and file, as they learn about the existence and functions of the committee.

But CWEP does help union members alone: management and confidential employees will also contribute to, and benefit from, the committee activities. CWEP's staff director, Carolyn Lemmon, represents management on the panel.

"Any state employee with an idea for improving the quality of working life at his work location should send it to the committee," Langer said. "We're open to all suggestions, and no one knows what's wrong, and how to fix it, any better than the employees themselves."

Ideas should be sent to M. Langer, c/o CWEP, Suite 2008, 99 Washington Ave., Albany, N.Y. 12110. Or, they can be sent to Prof. Harry Wiener, the neutral chair of CWEP. Prof. Wiener, who is Dean of Averill Harriman College at Stony Brook, will address the State delegates during the fall CSEA convention at Niagara Falls.

IT WAS THE FIRST EVENT of its kind ever sponsored by Dutchess Local 814 and more than 200 people attended. A Family Outing held at Wilcox Park, Pine Plains, Standing around the barbecue pit were, left to right, Regional Director Thomas J. Luposello, County Executive Lucille Pattison, Local Executive Vice President Barbara Babcock, Local President Ellis Adams, County Unit President Scott Daniels, and Regional President James J. Lemmon.

A SECOND GENERATION of Vallee's becomes involved in union activities as John Vallee, third vice-president of the Capital Region CSEA, left, installs his son, Daniel Vallee, second left, to the office of President of the Health Research, Inc. Local, CSEA. Standing next to the new president also being installed, are Nancy Groome, local secretary-treasurer and Rose Scott, local vice-president.

Capital Region backs Hague

ALBANY — The Political Action Committee of the Capital Region of the Civil Service Employees Association, AFSCME — Local 1800, has endorsed incumbent candidate Joan Hague in the upcoming Republican Primary for the 110th Assembly District seat.

Fifteen hundred CSEA members and their families, who reside in the primary area, have been informed of this endorsement. CSEA Capital Region Political Action Committee based its primary decision on interviews with all candidates seeking this position. CSEA is urging all registered Republicans to participate in the September 9th Primary.
Candidates to present issues in Liverpool

SYRACUSE — A political action coalition of Civil Service Employees Association (CSEA) Locals, representing more than 10,000 state, county and other public employees in the Onondaga County area, will hold a "Meet The Candidates" night Thursday, September 18, at 7 p.m., in the Sheraton Motor Inn, Liverpool.

According to Robert Vincent, event coordinator, invitations have been sent to candidates from the 118th, 119th, 120th, 121st Assembly Districts, and candidates for county clerk, sheriff, and judges.

"We invited incumbents and candidates to present their views on issues important to public employees. Considering the large number of public employees who live in Central New York, this 'Meet The Candidates' night should provide an excellent opportunity to ask questions and get direct answers from political candidates,' Vincent said.
Irving Flaumenbaum

September 9, 1909 - August 27, 1980

Builder of unions, leader of workers

By Bill Butler

It was a miracle that brought Irving Flaumenbaum to CSEA.
Flaumenbaum was the only passenger in the first car to survive the celebrated Long Island Railroad Rockville Centre train crash Feb. 19, 1950.

Although grievously injured, and hospitalized, he lived to begin a new life — one which he lived to the fullest.

The accident led him to switch from commuting to a pharmacy he operated in Queens County to a job with Nassau County, and from there to taking charge of an 11-member seedling CSEA unit and building it to the largest in the state with more than 20,000 members.

Over the years, Flaumenbaum spent an average of four nights a week attending CSEA meetings, and his meetings were often well attended. He had sworn in, the number of meetings he attended, the speeches he made — always with the theme of strength in unity.

Faulmenbaum, meanwhile, served on the state CSEA Board of Directors, as state second vice president, then as first vice president, as president of the Long Island Conference several times, and as the first and only president of the Long Island Region since it was formed seven years ago. With the affiliation of CSEA with the American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees, he became one of the two international vice presidents.

The only time he ever lost an election was an unsuccessful bid for statewide president 10 years ago.

Flaumenbaum was a native of Brooklyn, son of Ben and Pauline Flaumenbaum. He attended the Columbia University School of Pharmacology, and had this summer attended his 50th class reunion. Later, he worked in pharmacies, and by age 30 had his own store in Malverne, in Nassau County. He was by then married to the former Ruth David.

They raised three sons, David, Donald, Dennis. David works for Nassau County. Donald is a sign painter. Dennis is a private investigator. They also cared for many years for a niece whose three children the Flaumenbaums counted in claiming 11 grandchildren.

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Flaumenbaum loved children — his or anyone else's. He loved to bring smiles to young faces by producing from his trunk his three favorite baseball hats or other souvenirs, which he secured by being on and off the president of the Long Island Mets Booster club. The Boosters was one of many other activities. He served as both honorary and working member of the March of Dimes, Heart Fund and, his eventual favorite charity, the Stop Arthritis Campaign. These charities not only pleased him for their worth, but as a means to project an image of civil service workers in a generous light.

Danny Donohue new president

Danny Donohue of Central Islip is the person on whose shoulders has fallen the difficult task of following in the footsteps of Irv Flaumenbaum as president of the 60,000-member CSEA Long Island Region I. As elected first vice president of Region I, Donohue automatically moved up to president upon the death of Mr. Flaumenbaum.

Donohue is young, well known within the ranks, and experienced in union affairs. Among many other union activities, he is President of Central Islip Psychiatric Center Local 404, chairman of the active and powerful CSEA Mental Hygiene Presidents Committee, and a member of CSEA's statewide Board of Directors.

The Public Sector will profile Donohue in greater detail in the next issue.

Ruth Flaumenbaum, widow of Irving Flaumenbaum, has asked to express through The Public Sector her gratitude for hundreds of communications from CSEA leaders and rank-and-file members.

"I want also to thank everyone for coming and giving us comfort. I especially want to thank Irving's friends for their contributions in his name to the Arthritis Foundation and other charities," Mrs. Flaumenbaum said.

Because of her bereavement and the overwhelming number of communications,Mass cards, flowers and condolences, Mrs. Flaumenbaum and her family have received, she asked that their friends understand that she would probably not be able to make personal acknowledgements.

ATMITYVILLE — Due to the death of Region I President Irving Flaumenbaum, the scheduled September 4 and 5 visit by CSEA statewide President William L. McGowan to Region I was cancelled. The visit was part of a statewide tour of all six CSEA regions during August and September. The remainder of the statewide tour will be conducted as scheduled. The Region I visit is expected to be rescheduled.
Hornell, Richford, Wayland

You won't find them in an 'I Love NY' ad

Work conditions for many DOT employees mean woefully inadequate, unsafe shacks

By Dawn LePore

RICHFORD — A crude shack heated by an ancient kerosene stove. No telephone. No bathroom. No running water — except for the creek that runs beneath the building. A tarpaper roof that lets in more rain than it keeps out.

While it would be hard for anyone to imagine that conditions like these still exist, it is an unfortunate fact that they do. And that state employees must work in such a woefully inadequate and unsafe environment is even a sadder and more incredible fact.

Yet tucked in the steep green hills of the Southern Tier, that crude shack serves as an outpost for Department of Transportation workers who report here to work each day, just as they have for the past 30 years that the state has rented the ramshackle building from the local cemetery association which owns it.

"We're forgotten people up here," said Clyde Morse, foreman of the road crew. "The main shop in Owego is 20 miles away and radio reception in these hills is pretty bad. The truck broke down once and it took six to seven hours before we got any help."

A few years back, one worker lost part of his fingers on one hand trying to hook up a snow plow with only the headlights of the patrol truck to guide him.

"The nearest phone and restroom is down the road a few miles at a restaurant, but in the middle of the night during a winter storm, they're not going to be open," Morse said. "The same goes for gasoline, unless the men travel the twenty miles back to the Owego shop."

Alternate restroom facilities are found behind the shack, in the pine-forested hillside. The men get their drinking water where they can. A strap holds it in a two-gallon jug to the grille on the front of the truck.

"We only got electricity last year," Morse said. "Before that, we had to use frayed extension cords hooked into an old switch box."

Two bare light bulbs now serve to light the ten-by-ten foot room that Morse must do his paperwork in and in which the men try to warm themselves between shifts plowing snow in the winter. "We're afraid to keep the heater going while no one's here in case it might explode, so when we come in at four in the morning, we have to freeze until it gets started," one of the workers said. "And when it rains, you might as well stand outside, you get just as wet," Morse pointed out.

Because the location of the sub-residency is so isolated, it has fallen frequent prey to vandals who have siphoned gasoline from the two vehicles assigned to the crew. Once the vandals even stole the patrol truck and abandoned it several miles down the road. Because of this, the crew now must store the vehicles off-site.

Although rumors have circulated recently that the state has plans to buy a newer, better-equipped building with storage room for the trucks, no one is holding their breath.

"We've heard that one for the past five or six years," one man said.

A similar working condition exists in the town of Wayland, where the state road crew operates out of another shack-like building. It also has no telephone, running water or bathroom facilities.

An antique kerosene heater crowds the ten-by-twelve foot room that is home base for several men.

Upon inspection by union officials, it was discovered that the heater's stove pipe is not insulated properly as it exits the building, increasing the possibility of a fire.

"You can drive all over the state and it's the same thing," said Harold Towner, president of the Hornell City CSEA Local 007. "I don't understand why this place hasn't burned down yet."

"What would it take to throw up a cement building and dig a hole in the ground or get a chemical john?"
COMBINATION OFFICE and warming hut for the DOT employees has no running water, no phone, no bathroom, and is inadequately and dangerously heated in winter by an ancient kerosene stove. Clyde Morse, right, is foreman of the men assigned here, and he shows his "office" entrance to Harold Towner, left, President of CSEA Local 007, of which the men are members.

THIS ANCIENT KEROSENE STOVE provides heat against bitter cold in winter months in this tiny 8 by 10 feet building used by DOT personnel. But because the stove is dangerous, it cannot be left unattended, so the men arrive for work in winter without benefit of a heated room. Very similar heating arrangements are featured at the DOT outpost at Wayland (see adjacent article).

Hornell revisited — one year later

Toluene still lying around

HORNELL — More than a year after The Public Sector reported the improper storage of toluene at the state Department of Transportation facility here, nothing has changed.

Barrels of the highly toxic and flammable solvent are still stored out-doors, exposed to the heat of the summer sun. A tapped barrel allowing toluene to spill on the ground with a twist of a nozzle is also still there.

When a Public Sector reporter examined the situation, she also noted that road salt from a large storage pile is clearly leaching into the Canacadea Creek causing an environmental hazard located directly behind the DOT workshop.

ONE YEAR LATER, NOTHING'S CHANGED — A year ago The Public Sector published a special report on the dangerous substance toluene. The conditions at Hornell, where many highway employees had become ill from working with the substance, was reported in detail. Toluene stored in large drums out in the open were detailed in photographs taken at that time. One year later, CSEA Hornell City Local 007 President Harold Towner demonstrates that toluene is still stored out in the open and that a simple flick of the wrist sends the highly toxic chemical flowing onto and into the ground. At left is Local 007 Vice President John Wallenbeck.

A HIGHLY VISIBLE TRAIL OF SALT shows how road salt from a large storage pile leaches into the Canacadea Creek, in the background, at the Hornell DOT facility.
Local president's ten-year struggle for WW II veteran status finally over

By Ron Wofford
CSEA Communications Associate

OLEAN — The ten-year struggle of a World War II veteran to have her Women's Army Auxiliary Corps service considered active duty has resulted in a victory for Josephine Sirianni, president of the statewide Environmental Conservation CSEA Local 119.

Her success means her six-months of voluntary service during World War II will be added to the over 18-months of active duty service as an interpreter in war torn Italy in the coastal town of Bari. This will mean increased retirement benefits when she becomes eligible for retirement next year, although this active, young-looking, WWII veteran says she has not decided yet when she will call it quits.

Another immediate benefit, in addition to the many calls of congratulations from friends and co-workers, is the three service medals she received over thirty-five years late from the U.S. Department of Defense.

"I'm very proud of these" she says of the Women's Army Corps Service Medal, WWII Victory Medal, and Honorable Service Victory Medal. "I'm going to have a chain put through them so I can wear them around my neck."

Olean Mayor William Smith, who also served in Italy and Africa in WWII, pinned her medals on in an informal ceremony recently and said, "Josephine's been one of our greatest citizens and an active positive force in the community. She's served her time and a lot of other people's time."

Josephine Ozzella Sirianni began her quest for recognition of her voluntary service in 1970 with a letter to then-State Comptroller Arthur Levitt referring to the G.I. Bill Improvement Act of 1977 which clarified and upgraded the service of many war-time volunteers to active-duty status, including the bomber ferry-pilots.

"A reunion and celebration is in the offing for those who struggled and will benefit from the G.I. Improvement Bill, and Josephine Sirianni says she will be there but until a date is set, she will continue her active life. Which means frequent trips around the state on behalf of CSEA as a member of the statewide Labor/Management committee and her demanding role as a statewide local president."

A veteran of state employment as well as the U.S. Army, she has over 23 years in the Department of Environmental Conservation where she is a senior stenographer. She was a charter member and secretary of the first "chapter", as locals were called, in 1972. She has long been an activist for women's job rights and an advocate for career ladders for women, which she pridesfully acknowledges is now commonplace. CSEA Field Rep Michael Painter calls her a good president "who inspires all those who work with her."

"I enjoy working with employees and helping them with their problems and I'll be with CSEA until the day I retire."
The Chichesters: Special people behind the Special Olympics

By CHARLES McGEARY
CSEA Communications Associate

STAMFORD — Ken and Chris Chichester are two special people with a special mission in life. They are totally dedicated to the work and goals of Special Olympics.

One only has to talk to them several minutes to grasp the enthusiasm they have for helping adults and children with special needs.

Ken Chichester, a member of CSEA Local 813 Delaware County, has been a bus driver with the Stamford Central School District for seventeen years. His wife, Chris, is also employed by Stamford Schools and has taught special education for eighteen years.

During their span of married years, they have raised three healthy children of their own and were devoted foster parents for twelve others.

When asked how they became involved in Special Olympics endeavors, Ken replied it all started in 1968.

"Chris and I have always been rather active in church work and other community activities," he said.

"We began by helping two people with special needs in 1968, and when we saw the tremendous need we gradually became more involved. To see the expressions of accomplishment and gratitude on the faces of those we have helped has been worth every minute of effort," Chichester said.

When questioned about working funds for the projects, Chichester explained that through various drives — bake sales, crafts projects, door to door soliciting and other ideas — they have raised approximately $10,000 per year over a twelve-year period.

As she listened to her husband recount the beginning years, Chris Chichester filled a pause in the conversation with some highlights concerning the Special Olympics Winter Games started in Stamford five years ago.

"We pretty much had to 'wing it,' " Chris said.

"We had no prior experience in conducting the events, we had no idea where we would house the athletes and how we would feed them. But we didn't let anything stop us. We received tremendous cooperation from local churches, service clubs, fraternal and social groups. From that point it just sort of became a total community effort," Chris said.

"The results were exciting," Ken said.

"More than 300 statewide entries participated, and we had almost as many volunteers as kids," he said with a chuckle.

In describing the preparation and logistics for the project, Chichester explained that the Stamford School was used to house and feed the athletes. The food was donated.

"Each entry was asked to pay a nominal $3.00 for the entire week-end. And we had sufficient sponsors available for those who could not afford the small fee," Chichester said.

Those first winter games included such events as skiing, tobogganing, skating, snowshoeing, with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation supplying some of the necessary equipment.

The Winter Games continued for three years and then Ken and Chris Chichester looked for other Special Olympic challenges.

Their current big project is a Soccer Clinic for Special Olympics Area 13 scheduled for Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, October 17, 18, and 19, in Oneonta.

"So far, we expect more than 300 athletes, plus 50 coaches and volunteers. Our plans call for a clinic prior to the actual games, to better equip our coaches and volunteers with the skills to handle athletes with special needs. We prefer to use the term adults and children with special needs, instead of handicapped persons," Chichester said.

"The more time we devote to them, the more we realize how much talent they have. It just takes patience to bring it out," Ken said.

"Please make it clear that this is a team effort. We have been blessed with abundant help and couldn't hope to conduct the Soccer Clinic without the help of our many sponsors, including the Holiday Inn in Oneonta. The Inn has generously agreed to house the athletes and coaches. And the other sponsors will give us the added support needed to reach our goal," Chichester said.

COORDINATORS CHRIS AND KEN CHICHESTER — get set to kick off their next Special Olympics project, a three-day soccer clinic in Oneonta, October 17, 18, 19. A member of Stamford Unit of CSEA Local 813 in Delaware County, Ken has been active in the Special Olympics for twelve years.

Both Ken and Chris Chichester were also quick to give credit to other people who have helped them over the years. They specifically mentioned the support of CSEA School Unit President John Kosier, and Richard Little, the supervising principal of Stamford Central Schools who approved the use of school buses and other transportation when it was desperately needed.

After listening to past accomplishments, it was difficult to imagine how the Chichesters managed to find additional time for other volunteer work with the Boy Scouts and church activities. They modestly admitted they somehow find the time, and still enjoy visiting with members of their family, friends and neighbors.

When asked about their family, Chris Chichester proudly mentioned their son Gary who is following the lead of his parents and is currently a student at State University of New York at Brockport, majoring in adaptive physical education.

CSEA proudly salutes Ken and Chris Chichester for their total dedication to helping those adults and children with special needs. And the countless hours, days, and years they have given so selflessly to the Special Olympics.

The CSEA seal and motto "We Serve" could not be more appropriate than to be associated with Ken and Chris Chichester, two very dedicated public employees in Stamford, New York.

Editor's Note: For information concerning sponsorship or athletic participation in the Special Olympics Soccer Clinic October 17-19 in Oneonta, contact Ken or Chris Chichester, Mt. Jefferson Road, Stamford, New York Phone (607) 652-7125.

Schenectady school workers ratify two year contract; major wage increase plus increments

SCHENECTADY — Members of the maintenance and operational unit of the City of Schenectady School District Local, Civil Service Employees Assn., have ratified a two year contract, containing wage increases of eight and one half percent each year, in addition to increments. The first year increase is retroactive to July 1, 1980.

Other monetary benefits include an additional longevity step of $350 after an employee's 20th year of service, and an increase in the travel allowance from $250.00 to $350.00 per year.

In addition to regular leave for union business, CSEA members will be allowed one day per year for a conference workshop, which must coincide with a teacher's conference day. And if the three snow emergency days per year are not used up, the employees may select one day in the school calendar as a vacation day.

Another important clause calls for an employee assigned to a higher classification to be paid the higher rate from the first day of the assignment, if he works in that position for three consecutive days, rather than five days presently required.

On the negotiating team were unit President Ronald Teller, David Ralston and Fred Maioriello.
Changes in the Constitution and By-Laws of the Civil Service Employees Association have a direct effect upon the day-to-day operation of the union, and therefore upon the membership itself.

Traditionally, the largest block of time devoted at CSEA conventions is in the preparation for or consideration of such changes. This will undoubtedly be true at the upcoming meeting of the union delegates.

As the official publication of CSEA, “The Public Sector” has a legal obligation to publish proposed changes prior to delegate sessions. Members are entitled to the opportunity to study these changes at their leisure and to discuss them with others. This will undoubtedly be true at the upcoming meeting of the union delegates.

The Constitution and By-Laws Committee has met once since the last report was published. As a result of this meeting, the following changes have been adopted by the Committee for submission to the members at the upcoming meeting of the Association.

The following items are presented to the delegates by the Committee for a second reading. These items will become part of the Constitution if approved by the members at the meeting.

(1) The following amendments to Article VI, Section 1 and Article VII, Section 1 are the result of a recommendation of the Committee for a second reading. These amendments are being considered at CSEA conventions, and if adopted, will take effect immediately.

(2) The following amendments to Article V, Section 1 are the result of a recommendation by the Committee for a second reading. These amendments are being considered at CSEA conventions, and if adopted, will take effect immediately.

(3) The following amendments to Article VII, Section 1 are the result of a recommendation of the Committee for a second reading. These amendments are being considered at CSEA conventions, and if adopted, will take effect immediately.

ARTICLE IV
ORGANIZATION OF THE ASSOCIATION
Section 5. OFFICERS
(b) NOMINATIONS
3. If the vote is by secret ballot, the names of the committee members selected by the various Regions shall be filed with the Secretary and Executive Director of the Association as noted below:

(1) The following amendmments to Article VIII were submitted to the members for their consideration and approval. If approved, these amendments will become effective immediately.

(2) The following amendments to Article IX, Section 1 are the result of a recommendation of the Committee for a second reading. These amendments are being considered at CSEA conventions, and if adopted, will take effect immediately.

(3) The following amendments to Article X, Section 1 are the result of a recommendation of the Committee for a second reading. These amendments are being considered at CSEA conventions, and if adopted, will take effect immediately.

(4) The following amendments to Article XI, Section 1 are the result of a recommendation of the Committee for a second reading. These amendments are being considered at CSEA conventions, and if adopted, will take effect immediately.

(5) The following amendments to Article XII, Section 1 are the result of a recommendation of the Committee for a second reading. These amendments are being considered at CSEA conventions, and if adopted, will take effect immediately.

(6) The following amendments to Article XIII, Section 1 are the result of a recommendation of the Committee for a second reading. These amendments are being considered at CSEA conventions, and if adopted, will take effect immediately.

(7) The following amendments to Article XIV, Section 1 are the result of a recommendation of the Committee for a second reading. These amendments are being considered at CSEA conventions, and if adopted, will take effect immediately.

(8) The following amendments to Article XV, Section 1 are the result of a recommendation of the Committee for a second reading. These amendments are being considered at CSEA conventions, and if adopted, will take effect immediately.

(9) The following amendments to Article XVI, Section 1 are the result of a recommendation of the Committee for a second reading. These amendments are being considered at CSEA conventions, and if adopted, will take effect immediately.

(10) The following amendments to Article XVII, Section 1 are the result of a recommendation of the Committee for a second reading. These amendments are being considered at CSEA conventions, and if adopted, will take effect immediately.

ARTICLE V
FINANCE
Section 3. REFUND AND REIMBURSEMENT
(a) Refunds to Locals. Each duly organized local of the Association not later than January 1st. The report must be given to Headquarters by June 1st, it will not be tabulated for purposes of this report. The expense is being considered that affect them directly. Therefore, we are publishing the report of the CSEA Constitution and By-Laws Committee to the upcoming delegates meeting in order to (1) meet our legal obligation, and (2) keep the membership informed of events that are important to them.

The following item is presented to the delegates by the Committee as a proposed amendment to the Constitution. If passed at this meeting, the amendment will become effective immediately.

The following amendment to Article IV, Section 3(a) was referred to the Committee by CSEA Comptroller David Stack on behalf of John Eiss, Erie County Local President.

The following amendment to Article V, Section 5 is presented to the delegates by the Committee as a proposed amendment to the Constitution. If passed at this meeting, the amendment will become effective immediately.

The following amendment to Article VI, Section 1 is presented to the delegates by the Committee as a proposed amendment to the Constitution. If passed at this meeting, the amendment will become effective immediately.

The following amendment to Article VII, Section 1 is presented to the delegates by the Committee as a proposed amendment to the Constitution. If passed at this meeting, the amendment will become effective immediately.

The following amendment to Article VIII is submitted to the Committee by the Statewide Officers after it was brought to his attention by Mr. Eiss that the current language in the Section is technically incorrect. Refunds to locals are made on the basis of both membership dues and agency fee payments. The current provision in the Section provides that refunds should be "based on the June 1st voting strength." Because voting strength is determined by membership only, it does not allow for reimbursement based upon agency shop votes which, of course, is the intent of the overall Section. The Committee concurs with Mr. Stack's recommendation and presents this technical change to the delegates with an affirmative recommendation.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS
At its August 6, 1980 meeting, the Committee discussed several items which were tabled for further investigation and consideration. These items are listed below:

(a) Organizing non-public employees;
(b) Retirees' amendment regarding voting;
(c) Consolidating the offices of Statewide Secretary and Treasurer;
(d) Special meetings of the Board and/or State Executive Committee;
(e) Educational programs at conventions
(f) Educational programs at conventions.

The Committee wishes to thank all the members of the Association for their support and continued interest in the activities of the Committee.

ARTICLE REMAINS THE SAME.

Explanation: The Statewide Officers unanimously recommended to the Committee that consideration be given to changing the effective date for submission of names of delegates from June 1st to July 15th. Many locals elect their delegates at the same time officers are elected. The current recommendation would probably thereafter have to be amended since local elections will be held after June 1st and before July 1st. Based upon this, the Committee finds merit in the proposed amendment and recommends adoption of same.

The following item is presented to the delegates by the Committee as a proposed amendment to the Constitution. If passed at this meeting, the amendment will become effective immediately.

The following amendment to Article IV, Section 1 is presented to the delegates by the Committee as a proposed amendment to the Constitution. If passed at this meeting, the amendment will become effective immediately.

The following amendment to Article V, Section 1 is presented to the delegates by the Committee as a proposed amendment to the Constitution. If passed at this meeting, the amendment will become effective immediately.

The following amendment to Article VI, Section 1 is presented to the delegates by the Committee as a proposed amendment to the Constitution. If passed at this meeting, the amendment will become effective immediately.

The following amendment to Article VII, Section 1 is presented to the delegates by the Committee as a proposed amendment to the Constitution. If passed at this meeting, the amendment will become effective immediately.

The following amendment to Article VIII is submitted to the Committee by the Statewide Officers by memorandum dated May 15, 1980.

"ARTICLE VIII"
DELEGATES
Members of each local shall elect from their membership one or more delegates to represent the members of the local at all meetings of the Association, except that the local president shall, by virtue of that office, automatically be designated as a delegate. Prior to (June 1st) July 15th of each year, each local shall file with the Secretary of the Association an accurate list containing the names and addresses of its delegates for the ensuing year, and names and addresses of alternate delegates may be submitted to the Secretary thereafter.

REST OF
Coney ward gets emergency attention

BROOKLYN — Formal union complaints that a psychiatric ward at Coney Island Hospital is unsafe for both patients and employees has led to the start of corrective action by management following a recent meeting between CSEA officials and hospital administration personnel.

Union officials charged that chunks of cement ceiling fell without prior warning, that heavy dust clogs the air, and that conditions are generally overcrowded. As such, union officials said, the employees, members of CSEA Local 446, often became ill on the job and were in constant danger due to the problems. The employees are assigned to South Beach State Psychiatric Center but work out of a psychiatric ward floor of the Coney Island Hospital administered by the New York City Health and Hospital Administration.

Although employees say ceiling material has fallen for several years, they say the problem became critical only in recent weeks. As the situation became more acute, many workers expressed fears of patients or themselves becoming injured.

As a result of the condition, Local 446 President George Boncoraglio and CSEA Field Representative Bart Brier met with Coney Island Hospital Executive Director Robert J. Bradbury and city structural engineers. Bradbury said he was aware of the condition, has construction men working overtime to rectify it, and would let an additional contract on an emergency basis, thereby bypassing usual bidding delays.

In response to the workers' complaints, South Beach administrators crowded the floor's available space into half of what it had previously occupied. Coney Island Hospital then called in construction men to scrape the cement surface of the ceilings to the bare beams on the evacuated portion of the floor. Resulting heavy dust, however, caused a number of workers to take sick-time off, and increase their concern for their patients welfare.

Bradbury said at the meeting with CSEA officials that completion of the project would be a top priority. Boncoraglio, however, said members of his local would not return to portions of the floor that have had the loose cement removed until an engineer representing CSEA certifies the work site to be safe.

"Its a terrible shame that our members have to work under these conditions," Boncoraglio said. "We intend to pursue this matter with the South Beach administration until our members will have a work atmosphere that is safe; a clean facility at which they can take care of their patients."

LARGE CHUNKS OF CEMENT — fell from the ceiling of the Coney Island Hospital without prior warning. Local 446 President George Boncoraglio, left, and first Vice President Joe Matons, right, issued a formal complaint and emergency repairs are underway.

"Herbie" the bicycle speaks up about safety at Dutchess County Fair

RHINEBECK — It looks like any other bicycle, but it talks, and "Herbie" is his name.

"Herbie" belongs to a mobile crime prevention unit which is a project initiated, and sustained, by the Dutchess County Deputy Sheriff's Unit of CSEA. "Herbie" talks about bicycle safety, and he sometimes causes quite a stir when the unsuspecting pass by, laughs Deputy Roy Boice who adds, in a more serious tone, that the "cp" unit exists because, "the deputies care very deeply about our community."

Recently, the mobile unit spent six days at the Dutchess County Fair where an estimated 35,000 people checked it out, and learned about such things as drug abuse, door locks, burglary prevention, safe driving, vandalism, and, of course, bicycle safety. A special guest was "Echo" the bloodhound.

The mobile unit is staffed strictly by volunteers and financed by donations as well as an annual fund raiser. It's been in operation since 1976, and has at least 100 "bookings" each year, from scout groups to public schools to senior citizen centers.

Programs are individualized to each group, or as Boice says, "you have it, we cover it." He notes that its focus has expanded in recent years and, "while we were mostly geared toward children, we now go before all different groups, with everything from short courses in babysitting to safety tips for older Americans."

All the displays, signs, upkeep, and even "Herbie's" voice are done by the deputies themselves, on a voluntary basis, which prompts CSEA Unit President Dennis O'Keefe to observe, "these men are performing a necessary community service in attempting to educate people on how to avoid becoming victims of crimes as well as by working with our young folks."
PROMISES, PROMISES . . . Ulster County keeps on promising to correct overcrowded conditions

By Stanley Hornak
CSEA Communications Associate

KINGSTON — Thus far this year, Ulster County officials have received 36,949 tourist inquiries, but there's one place they would rather not have you visit, and that's their own county office building.

The union has been trying to have working conditions there improved for employees of the Social Services unit, but the county just hasn't moved fast enough. They hold out promises, but nothing more. So it was decided to go "public."

Section President Nancy Jaffer took her union representatives, including a photographer, on a tour of the facilities Aug. 15, and county officials didn't like that one bit. She explains.

"We didn't take pictures of clients, out of respect for their confidentiality. Nevertheless, when management saw us, they became very uptight and made us destroy the film."

"Later," Ms. Jaffer noted, "the county attorney indicated that we could take pictures, after hours, and with the consent of the Commissioner. We then went to him for his OK, but were told, he was out for a few minutes. We came back again, twenty minutes later, and were told, he just went to the infirmary. Shortly thereafter, when we were in the lobby, the commissioner came sneaking out of the elevator, and he was really surprised to see us. We immediately asked for permission to take pictures, but he flatly refused."

Anyone walking into the offices notices right away that they are far too overcrowded, there are numerous fire hazards, and that the noise level is intolerable. To make matters worse, a state mandated welfare management computer system is being installed, and that's taking up even more space. There is no room to interview clients, confidentiality can't be maintained, and as one employee adds, "that's a special problem when we're working with senior citizens."

The county has no sense of urgency. Nine months ago, the public health nurses were supposed to be moved out to give DSS more room, but it still hasn't happened. There is talk that trailers may be set up to provide additional space, but that will still mean employees working in less than satisfactory conditions, with the added problem of having fewer parking spaces in a section of the city where there aren't already enough convenient places to park.

Ms. Jaffer sums it all up by asking, "What does the county have to hide? Why are they acting like we live in a police state? After all, we are public employees working in a public building . . ."