“I was crying and shaking. I became more and more hysterical. It felt like forever!”
Nadine Ferebee
Important retiree information

CSEA's power comes from the combined strength of our active and retired members. It is a winning combination that makes CSEA a powerhouse in New York State. It is absolutely essential that we continue growing in both areas and there is something local and unit presidents can do to help the retiree division grow.

“Locals and units are urged to pay the first year’s dues for all retiring members,” said CSEA President Danny Donohue. “The cost is only $12 and it is an eligible expenditure. Locals and units can pay the $12 outright or share the expenses,” Donohue said.

CSEA’s success in winning retired public employees automatic and permanent cost-of-living adjustments in their pensions is certainly proof that retiree membership pays off.

Retiree applications are available by calling 1-800-342-4146, ext. 1411 and can also be accessed on CSEAs web site, csealocal1000.net.

Note: Each month, The Work Force will feature an excerpt of the union’s agenda for the future. To read the entire agenda, visit www.csealocal1000.net.

Westchester Co. fired up

WHITE PLAINS — CSEA gave Westchester County officials an ultimatum at a recent county Legislature meeting — contract now or face the power of CSEA's political action on Election Day.

Hundreds of CSEA Westchester County Unit members and their supporters gathered outside the county’s Michaelian Office Building to rally in support of winning a fair agreement from Westchester. Nearly 100 members later packed the County Legislative chambers to announce to county officials that the gloves are off in CSEA's fight for a contract.

The entire Westchester County Legislature faces election in November. The union, the largest among Westchester County employees, has been working without a contract for 18 months — with no resolution in sight.

“We are a representation of almost 4,000 CSEA members and over 1,000 retirees who intend to vote in November for these (county Legislature) seats based on your support for our needs — basically our contract,” CSEA Westchester County Unit President Jack McPhillips said.

— Janice Marra

Pataki hints of layoffs; remains mum on talks

CSEA is on guard that Gov. George Pataki still plans an assault on the state’s work force now that the state Legislature has completed its session and left Albany for the summer.

Such an action would further complicate state contract negotiations which remain at a standstill due to an apparent lack of instruction to the governor’s negotiators.

There have been rumblings in recent weeks that the governor will seek revenge on the legislature’s budget restorations by announcing state cutbacks and layoffs. State Comptroller Alan Hevesi recently certified this year’s budget as balanced but Pataki has continued to insist that the spending plan needs to be slashed.

The governor’s Budget Division also recently stated that there is no money available for state contracts. Their postponing echoed a similar outrageous proposal by the State Business Council calling for a freeze on all public employee salaries statewide.

Much of the state’s financial difficulties are the result of ill-conceived policies and actions of the Pataki Administration, including overly optimistic tax cuts enacted during the boom years of the late 1990s that have now left the state short on revenue.

CSEA criticized those actions at the time and other unrealistic commitments made by the governor during last year’s election season.

The state Legislature’s budget override of the governor’s vetoes, including a targeted income tax surcharge on the wealthiest New Yorkers, go a long way toward filling the state’s budget gap for the current year. They are also a vast improvement over the governor’s original proposal. But there is still more work to be done and it will be difficult to move forward if the governor reverts to his slash and burn approach.

“If Governor Pataki wants to continue his campaign against the state work force and other working New Yorkers, he does so at his own risk,” said CSEA President Danny Donohue. “CSEA is prepared to work hard at the bargaining table to creatively seek solutions to the state’s challenges. But we are also prepared to deal with the governor in other ways if he continues to be irresponsible.”
CSEA urges safe workplaces

CSEA members across the state have been testifying in hearings before the state’s Hazard Abatement Board, demanding the state pass a long-overdue workplace security standard.

“Workplace violence is now the second leading cause of death on the job in the United States and the leading cause of workplace fatalities for women,” CSEA President Danny Donohue said.

“If our members aren’t secure in public worksites, then neither is the public,” Donohue said. (see President’s Column, Page 4)

CSEA’s call for a statewide security standard has tragic roots in the deaths of four CSEA members more than 10 years ago in Schuyler County, when a man upset with the Department of Social Services shot and killed four CSEA members — Florence Pike, Nancy Wheeler, Phyllis Caslin and Denise Miller Van Amburgh in their office in Watkins Glen in October 1992.

One of their co-workers, Sue Brill, CSEA Schuyler County Local president, testified with Donohue recently in Albany, giving a chilling account of her firsthand experience with the murders and their subsequent aftermath.

“All of us realized there would have been more deaths if the gunman hadn’t run out of bullets,” Brill said.

What CSEA wants the state to institute statewide, the small, rural Schuyler County has had in effect for 10 years, Brill said, adding that the Office of Court Administration helped cover costs for some of the increased security measures.

On Long Island, the hearings heard from CSEA member Nadine Ferebee, a nurses station clerk. She gave a first-hand account of a recent hostage crisis at University Hospital.

CSEA Schuyler County Local President Sue Brill testifies in Albany recently before the state Department of Labor’s Hazard Abatement Board. CSEA members have participated in hearings across the state calling for a statewide workplace security standard. CSEA President Danny Donohue is seated behind her.

at Stony Brook. Although the incident was short-lived and no one was injured, Ferebee says she no longer feels safe. “I was crying and shaking. I became more and more hysterical. It felt like forever. It was long enough for me to be fearful for my life,” Ferebee said.

“Going to work to feed your family, should not put your life in danger,” said CSEA Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte said at the hearing. “These are dedicated public servants, who have endured threats, menacing, and physical assaults, just because they were doing their jobs. Their plight clearly illustrates the dangers of funding cut backs, inadequate staffing, client overloading, and the shocking lack of security at many public workplaces,” said LaMorte.

Another witness was Pilgrim Psychiatric Center Aide Catherine Custance. “We are continually short handed, and most of my co-workers are women,” Custance said. “There can be one staff member at night to handle 130 clients, and many of them can be abusive and even violent,” said Custance.

In Rochester, CSEA Western Region President Flo Tripi said a security standard is long overdue.

“It is the least we can do, if we wish to call ourselves a progressive state that shows it’s caring and concerns for working families,” Tripi said.

Also testifying at hearings were CSEA Southern Region President Diane Hewitt and Capital Region President Kathy Garrison.

CSEA member Yvonne Brown echoed Tripi’s sentiments.

“No family or friend should ever have to experience such a senseless loss of a mother, grandma, aunt, sister or wife again,” Brown said.

The NYS Hazard Abatement Board has jurisdiction over the safety and health regulations that apply to employees of state and local government agencies in New York. The series of three hearings were held around the state with the objective of issuing new regulations to protect both state employees and the public.

What is the Worksite Security Standard?
The state Department of Labor’s Hazard Abatement Board is considering the need for the security standard drafted by CSEA in coordination with the AFL-CIO. The Worksite Security Standard would simply require employers with more than 50 employees to analyze dangers, educate employees and make improvements to protect their employees against workplace violence.

When CSEA first proposed the standard nearly 10 years ago, the state Department of Labor’s Commissioner was John Sweeney, who has since been elected to the U.S. House of Representatives.

The Sweeney Labor Department dismissed the proposal based on a questionable cost basis alone, ignoring the very real security risks in New York worksites.

“There is no undue burden.

The standard simply requires employers with more than 50 employees to analyze dangers, educate employees and make improvements to protect their employees against workplace violence,” said CSEA President Danny Donohue.

The Hazard Abatement Board has the authority to recommend a standard to the state Department of Labor, which then decides when the proposed standard is enacted.

Once the standard is enacted, it would provide employers with guidelines to help prevent violent acts from occurring in the workplace.

Visit the Occupational Safety and Health pages at csealocal1000.net

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CSEA DSS Workers Help Out Jobless Marsellus
Casket Union Brothers & Sisters

by Joe Alcaro, DSS Unit President

Many of you know the tragic story of the closure of the Marsellus Casket Co. Here we had a national corporation suddenly close a profitable subsidiary that employed hundreds of area workers. This was a tragic blow to the Central New York economy and to the many skilled labor employees. County Executive Piro has asked state Attorney General Eliot Spitzer to look into the matter.

In a joint Labor-Management venture, and in the spirit of CSEA working in our community, CSEA DSS workers recently responded to the challenge, and came to the aid of their fellow union members represented by SEIU.

In early May, Social Service workers who work in the Public Health Insurance and Temporary Assistance programs, along with representatives from the various health insurance plans which interact with our agency and programs, made a group presentation to the company’s displaced workers. Income Maintenance Specialist Cecilia DeGregorio, Administrative Supervisor George Docher, Managed Care Coordinator Dan Kishman, and Caseworker Joe Alcaro were the presenters. Available benefits were explained to the laid off employees in an effort to streamline their application processes and reduce the amount of turmoil and trauma that were already in their lives as a result of the plant closure.

This was the first time DSS had gone out into the community to do this type of “recruitment,” and it was an experience we all learned from, and hopefully will never have to repeat. If the need arises in our community, however, our DSS workers will be ready to meet the challenge.

School Workers, Save This Date!

CSEA Central Region Schools Committee Chair Donna Gavett from our Syracuse City School District Unit reports that Saturday, Sept. 20 will be the date for the CSEA Central Region’s bi-annual School Workers Workshop, a day-long conference for all CSEA-represented school district workers. The conference will be held at the new Marx Hotel in Syracuse, and feature workshops and topics of interest to all areas of educational support workers. If you’re interested in attending, please talk to your Unit President. A mailing will be sent out this summer with registration details.

CSEA Local 834 Co-Sponsors Summer Jazz Concerts

Grab your lunch and soak up the sounds of cool jazz as CSEA helps bring free live jazz concerts to downtown Syracuse! Join us, rain or shine, for the Summer Jazz 2003 lunchtime concert series at the Everson Plaza every Monday in July and August from 12 noon to 2 p.m.

Enjoy live jazz music performed by local jazz musicians, all members of the musicians’ union! Food and drink will be available.

This concert series is brought to you by County Executive Nicholas Piro in partnership with CSEA and several other community groups. The rain location for the concerts will be the Banner Room on the Lower level of the Civic Center.

Come Out for CSEA Night at the Salty Dogs!

Jon CSEA and Syracuse’s new professional soccer team, the Salty Dogs, for CSEA Night on Saturday, Aug. 9. CSEA members will be able to gain admission at a great discount! The game starts at 7:30 p.m. against the Montreal Impact at P&amp;C Stadium.

Watch for posters at your worksite, advertising the CSEA package deal of only $4 for a ticket and an extra-large T-shirt bearing the Salty Dogs logo! The package deal will be available only for advance sales, for a limited number of 750 tickets, first come, first served! Tickets will be on sale at the Local Clambake, and also by calling Robyn at the Local Office at 446-0330.
DDSO case highlights rights of new members

BROOKLYN — After working a little over a year at the Brooklyn DDSO, Novelette Hickling felt hopeless and was about to turn in her keys after management told her she was terminated.

"I didn’t know I was still on probation," said Hickling, a developmental aide. "I didn’t get a written letter or anything."

CSEA immediately sprang to action after Hickling approached Brooklyn DDSO president Denise Berkley and Labor Relations Specialist Bart Brier.

"Normally, these cases are very hard to win, but in this case, it was clear that management was wrong in terminating her employment," said Brier.

In order to save her job, the union argued that Hickling’s probation was extended another six months after completing a full year at Brooklyn DDSO without her knowledge. She had already completed all but one of the 47 prerequisites needed for her position when she was fired.

“This victory just shown that the union will fight for the rights of even relatively new members,” said Berkley.

“Happy to have my job back. I plan to get more involved with CSEA,” Hickling said.

— David Galarza

CSEA future secured in ECMC change

BUFFALO — The state Legislature, in the closing hours of its recent session, passed a bill that allows the Erie County Medical Center to become a public benefit corporation.

The PBC status will allow the center more flexibility in several areas of operation, including contracts with other medical groups, purchasing arrangements, etc.

But one thing will not change, and that is the public employee status of the nearly 1,000 CSEA members working there, and their pension benefits. Their contract will continue to be a part of the Erie County Employees Unit.

“CSEA stayed with this hospital succeed in its mission — all of us. We work here because we care about helping those in need of medical care. There’s no reason why we can’t continue to serve our community under a new status,” Bender said.

“The employees here form a valuable asset to management. We don’t want to be taken for granted, or looked at as a number. We have the skills this community needs and deserves. We intend to continue working with the new director, and the board in making ECMC better,” Bender said.

— Ron Woford
OSWEGO — After years of hard work, education, and thousands of her own dollars spent on equipment, CSEA member and Senior Court Reporter Weta Hayden isn’t upset that her job is slowly being phased out by machines, she’s outraged.

“I’m offended that anyone would think that a trained, professional court reporter could be replaced by a machine,” Hayden said.

Managers in the Unified Court System’s 5th Judicial District are transitioning to digital recorders, which record audio versions of courtroom proceedings that are later transcribed by uncertified non-professionals for courtroom use. CSEA Region V Judiciary Local President Sharon Carraway said the machines were meant to cover proceedings when reporters weren’t available. But their use has become more widespread due to a hiring freeze and lack of staff.

In some courtrooms, reporters are available but courts aren’t using them, while office workers are taken from work to operate the machines. Hayden’s 34-year career has required instruction in stenography and legal and medical terminology. She’s spent thousands of dollars for her own equipment, which court reporters are required to provide.

“It used to be that we were in the courtroom daily. Now we’re in the courtroom about once a month for a trial, even though we’re here and available to work,” Hayden said.

Senior Court Reporter Donald Lyskey, who works in the Oneida County Courts and serves as executive vice president for CSEA Region V Judiciary Local, noted the machines are often not capable of separating voices from background noise, cannot stop the proceedings to get correct spellings of important names or terminology, or even identify separate speakers. It can also take much longer to get a CD recording transcribed onto paper.

“Most of the attorneys you talk to are horrified by the condition of the transcripts they receive at times,” Lyskey said.

“We’ve had meetings with the district to bring up our concerns about the ineffectiveness of these machines, and we’re at opposite poles,” Carraway said. “We’ve made requests to them, to show us the cost savings, and we haven’t seen anything. I think the whole integrity of the courtroom proceedings is being compromised,” she said.

Hayden agreed, saying that she feels the worst for those wrongly convicted of crimes, who rely on accurate transcripts for appeal purposes.

“The court reporters are there to provide a complete and accurate transcript of the proceedings for the defendant. I know the transcripts from the CD recordings are not complete, so if the defendant appeals, they don’t have a complete record of what happened.”

— Mark M. Kotzin

"One of the major union-building tools we have is negotiating a decent contract for our members, then showing them that without the union, and a unified ratification, things would be a lot worse."

— Donna Vickman, President Cattaraugus County Employee Unit interviewed at the Local Government and Private Sector Workshop.
CSEA grassroots fight saves library

NEW ROCHELLE — The New Rochelle Public Library appeared to be on its deathbed earlier this year.

The two libraries in this Westchester County city had faced closure on July 1, had city voters shot down the proposed library budget for a third time on June 3.

But CSEA employees at the library, joined by numerous community supporters, brought the two libraries back to life and helped secure the library’s future in the process by launching a grassroots campaign to get out the vote in favor of funding the library.

Voters approved the library budget — and a new corresponding city tax levy — by a margin of about 7,098, or 63 percent of the votes cast.

“This is wonderful,” CSEA New Rochelle Public Library Unit President Mary Miceli said soon after hearing the results. “We saved this library for our community, as well as our jobs.”

But things weren’t looking so rosy for the library early this year.

The city’s faltering economy and rising taxes, coupled with a 1996 state law that requires small-city libraries like New Rochelle’s to put their budgets to a vote, had made the library’s closure a strong threat.

Not only would city residents lose their library, but they would not have access to libraries in neighboring Westchester County communities, either.

Additionally, about 40 CSEA members employed at the library would lose their jobs.

The city, which previously had funded the library system, withdrew its financial support in the face of budget difficulties. But only a “yes” vote for the library would secure its funding as of July 1, when the city’s funding expired.

Voters had already shot down the library budget in two previous votes, and many city Republican leaders were loudly opposing the library proposal.

But Miceli, other CSEA members and community library supporters were determined to save the library.

“That library’s been there for years,” she said. “The people who work there are dedicated to their work, and to saving our library.”

Miceli and other libraries’ supporters turned to CSEA and other organizations for help in keeping the library open. The AFL-CIO was also a key player.

CSEA not only assisted in organizing community events aimed at raising public awareness such as rallies and meetings, but CSEA flexed its political action muscle. The Southern Region’s Political Action Committee endorsed the budget, and the union worked at getting out the vote.

Southern Region President Diane Hewitt, in a letter announcing the library budget endorsement, noted that CSEA was concerned about saving the library not only because its closure would leave union members without jobs, but would leave city residents without access to a library.

But with a successful vote and a library in place in New Rochelle, Miceli is praising the union’s and community’s “incredible” grassroots efforts.

“We worked 100 percent to get this vote passed,” she said. “I thank CSEA and everyone else for helping us save our library. It’s about time we won.”

— Janice Marra

CSEA members took part in an Albany rally in the spring to protest proposed budget cuts to libraries. CSEA’s activism in New Rochelle helped keep a public library there from closing.

“We saved this library for our community, as well as our jobs.”

“...we, the working people, are hurting — high gas prices, taxes, the cost of living — it’s gotten ridiculous.”

— Henry Shaffer, Amsterdam Head Start Local, interviewed at the recent Irving Flamenbaum Local Government and Private Sector Workshop.

July 2003 THE WORKFORCE Page 7
CSEA workers put shine on ‘gem’ in Glens Falls

GLENS FALLS — East Field is kind of a fixture in Glens Falls. For almost 30 years residents have been taking their family to games and events here. Some now take their kids to a place they first came to with their parents. That sense of continuity between generations gives meaning to the concept of community, something that’s important to the residents of this quaint city at the foothills of the Adirondacks.

East Field has a lot to do with that.

Building teamwork
The responsibility of maintaining the area that includes a stocked pond and a pool, lies in the capable hands of CSEA-represented DPW employees.

They also maintain six other parks around the city. Those responsibilities combined with reduced staffing from a recent layoff gives new meaning to “teamwork.”

“We pull together to get things done,” said foreman Steve Berkowitz, a 25-year CSEA member who remembers working on the field as a laborer when he started on the job.

Maintaining the field
Keeping the turf in top shape is no little feat. Prior to the installation of a sprinkler system this year, hoses had to be dragged out and moved around. Kevin Aratare, 15-year CSEA member, takes the field after games and makes repairs.

“Especially after a football game, there might be big chunks missing,” Aratare said workers try to stick to a weekly schedule, but sometimes Mother Nature has a different idea. “This year, the challenge has been the rain,” he said.

Priork to a baseball game you might see Aratare on the tractor, mowing or dragging the infield. Or, you might find him lining the baselines. In addition to baseball, they also set up the grid and hash marks for football games and a popular Drum and Bugle Corps competition.

Attention to detail
Each event comes with it’s own set of specifications. Berkowitz explains that aerosol type spray paint is used on the grass because lime — often used for baselines — will burn it. Lime is used on the dirt in the infield.

For football games, the crew has to set up the goal posts. “I can’t do those myself,” jokes Aratare. The crew frequently goes back and forth between baseball and football. After a football game, the grass grows a bit and when the grass is mowed, “the field starts to disappear” explains Berkowitz.

Glens Falls DPW employees are proud of the work they do and the role they play in the community. “The Glens Falls community really appreciates this park, it is a multi-use facility, said Berkowitz. “sports, special events, concerts, fireworks, there’s always something going on.”

— Therese Assalian

East Field is part of a large facility, including a pool and stocked pond.

Activities include football, baseball, concerts and a drum and bugle corps competition.

“We must continue to fight against management trying to blame the unions for everything bad. We must continue reaching out to members.”

— Dunbar John, Health Care Corporation Unit of Westchester County Local President, interviewed at the Irving Flamenbaum Local Government and Private Sector Workshop.

CSEA members Steve Berkowitz and Kevin Aratare maintain the grounds at East Field in Glens Falls, an area for residents to bring their families to enjoy games and events.
Geneva fights for unit president

GENEVA — As unit president, Mel Thomas is used to speaking out against any management actions that would negatively affect his fellow Geneva School employees. He is known for regularly attending school board meetings, and speaking out on behalf of district support staff.

Now, with the district’s budget plans for next year cutting his job, his members have joined in protest against any plan that would see him out of work.

The board’s budget called for cutting 13 jobs held by CSEA members. All the cuts would be handled by retirement, reassignment or bumping, except the job of the unit president, which is to be cut.

They picketed outside the school where the board was holding its budget hearing, then about 40 picketers went into the meeting carrying signs that read “No layoffs.”

“It seems very suspicious that Mel Thomas, the district’s only audio-video specialist, is slated to be cut,” said Region President Flo Tripi, who marched and spoke at the hearing.

“We’re sure that PERR (the Public Employee Relations Board) would look at this as we do — that it’s a case of anti-union animus. The one person that has a target on his back is an active unionist, and Mel Thomas has forged a reputation of being a unionist who speaks up for his members. How can they cut the only audio-video specialist? He even set up the equipment needed for the board’s budget hearing,” Tripi said.

School officials have denied Thomas was singled out, but have offered no reason for eliminating such a needed title.

CSEA has filed notice of intention of filing an Improper Practice charge against the district if the final budget leaves Thomas out of work. Thomas has also said he has evidence his job title was targeted because of his union involvement.

— Ron Woford

CSEA helps turn out school budget votes

CSEA members across the state were instrumental in helping get responsible and fair school budgets passed during votes in June.

The majority of school district budgets approved benefited from funding restored by the state Legislature — restorations fought for by CSEA and other unions.

Of nearly 700 schools districts across the state reporting, 94 percent approved their school budgets in the elections, surpassing last year’s mark of 90 percent approval. CSEA members across the state were instrumental in helping push for the passage of responsible and fair school budgets.

— Barbara Boster, Ontario County Local, interviewed at the Irving Flumenbaum Local Government and Private Sector Workshop.
New local government program creates a stir

There's a whole new avenue CSEA members statewide can now pursue for career advancement. While some CSEA units have negotiated tuition and career development funding in contracts before, CSEA now has a whole program to help provide guidance and administration to provide members and their employers even more value.

NORTH HEMPSTEAD — CSEA members in the town of North Hempstead unit are leading the way in partnering with CSEA’s new New York Institute. “A better educated, more skilled work force is a more productive work force, and an asset for everyone concerned. This program will help us become even better employees, and do an even better job of doing what we do best, which is provide an array of essential services to our community,” said Dan LoMonte, president of CSEA’s North Hempstead Unit, and 3rd Vice President of the Nassau County Municipal Employees Local.

Boosting confidence

“This program really is a win-win for everyone. We know that career advancement opportunities are very important for CSEA members. It’s also clear that employers benefit from helping workers improve their knowledge and expertise,” said CSEA President Danny Donohoe. “We hope all CSEA units will try to negotiate this program into their contracts,” Donohoe said.

While many town and county locals have negotiated tuition benefits into contracts in the past, the new Work Institute will provide assistance in administering programs. The Work Institute can also use CSEA’s large membership to leverage better value from schools and institutions for CSEA members.

The North Hempstead tuition benefit program had been in existence for more than six years but will now have even more impact. “In 1995, CSEA got this program implemented in the Town of North Hempstead. About a year after that, we were able to get it into the contracts for other bargaining units in the town,” said Stanley Freer, a CSEA Labor Relations Specialist.

All full-time permanent employees of the town are eligible to receive a voucher or tuition reimbursement for one course per year, up to a maximum of $548, as available funding allows. The course must be job related and approved by the employee’s department head.

“This benefit shows that when labor and management cooperate and respect each other, great things can be achieved,” said Nick LaMorte, CSEA Long Island Region president. “It also demonstrates CSEA’s commitment to improving contract benefits.”

Union member interest

At CSEA’s Local Government and Private Sector Workshop in Buffalo recently, numerous members from other regions expressed an interest in the victory in North Hempstead.

“I’m already making plans to bring this proposal to my friends on a local and unit level,” said Cindy Troy, Secretary of the Orleans/Niagara Local. “Right now, for people who want to increase their skills, there isn’t much help. Our reimbursement only covers about 25 percent of the real cost,” said Troy.

CSEA members working in local government and the private sector learn more about the WORK Institute’s tuition benefit program, which can be negotiated into contracts to help union members gain new skills.

The WORK Institute’s goal is to assist individuals in creating career paths that lead to career advancement and job security.

“This would be extremely valuable to my members,” she said. “In my case, I already have two kids going to college and I’m looking at some courses myself. I’m sure there are many families like mine who could really use the help,” said Troy.

“I’m particularly interested in the language they used to implement this,” said Lou Roccozzi, of the Rye City School District, part of the Westchester County Local. “I want to make sure that I have the key phrases to use so that as many members as possible can benefit from this,” said Roccozzi.

Getting management to take part

Although it took years of negotiation to make the program happen in North Hempstead, the key was simple, LoMonte said. “We had to allow management to participate in the system as well. That was really crucial. But remember it’s not the union’s funds. It’s a negotiated benefit that CSEA can help enhance.”

CSEA created the WORK (Worker’s Opportunities, Resources, Knowledge) Institute last year as part of union’s mission to recognize all working men and women as our greatest resource. The WORK Institute’s goal is to assist individuals in creating career paths that lead to career advancement and job security.

“CSEA has also posted a requirements Q and A fact sheet on the union’s web site at cseaca1800.net.”

CSEA members working in local government and the private sector will benefit from the WORK Institute’s tuition benefit program, which can be negotiated into contracts to help union members gain new skills.
Smallpox vaccinations drop off

World Trade Center workers, volunteers stifled by government

Workers and volunteers who have become sick as a result of their exposure to toxic materials in the Lower Manhattan air are being stifled by the government, both federal and New York State. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has held up a $90 million appropriation that was supposed to pay for medical screening programs, which would identify workers and volunteers who have illnesses caused by exposure to the air and other hazards around Ground Zero.

Even though the funds were appropriated four months ago, none of the money has been disbursed. According to a report in the June 10 Daily News, the delay is due to FEMA's failure to come to an agreement with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) “that would specify how to distribute the aid.”

The screenings, which are being conducted by the Mt. Sinai World Trade Center Worker and Volunteer Screening Program, identify workers and volunteers who have lasting health problems caused by their work at Ground Zero, and direct them to appropriate treatment facilities.

In addition to the undisbursed funds for medical screenings, people who worked at Ground Zero as volunteers have not been able to receive any workers' compensation, even though the federal government has provided New York State with $150 million in emergency aid to pay for workers' compensation, including $25 million earmarked as compensation for volunteers. Only $44 million of the money has been spent, none of it for volunteers.

Trench safety key to safe construction season

CSEA has a wealth of occupational safety and health resources available for free, including the Trenching Safety handbook, which describes procedures and practices aimed at keeping work crews safe on the job.

Many of these materials, including the trenching handbook “Safe Excavation, Shoring and Trenching,” can be downloaded for free from the CSEA web site (csea@local1000.net) by visiting the safety and health area.

A recent article in the May Work Force (“CSEA lifers ready to react”) focused on 16 CSEA members at SUNY Binghamton who are part of an emergency response team who volunteer to train for at least two hours a week in rescue skills, ready to respond to potentially life-threatening situations.

Confined space rescue, hazardous material response, and trench rescue are among their skills.

A grant funded by the CSEA/NYS Partnership helped cover the cost of instructors. The instructors certify the trainees. If you are interested in getting similar training that would be appropriate to your local or unit, contact your local or unit’s president, your local or unit’s occupational safety and health committee chair, or the CSEA Occupational Safety and Health Department for more information about safety training.
HELPING OUT FOR HEALTH — A. Holly Patterson Geriatric Center Unit President Les Eason checks the blood pressure of a Coalition of Black Trade Unionists conference attendee during the CBTU’s recent conference. Eason regularly volunteers to help staff the first aid station at the conferences.

"Unsung Heroes" do it for the kids

Two CSEA members have been named "Unsung Heroes" by a statewide school safety group for their dedication to school safety.

Patricia Dunkovich and Tracy Farley were recently named by the New York State Center For School Safety, joining 50 others from across the state in winning the awards.

Dunkovich, a member of the CSEA Montgomery County Local, has been a secretary with the Greater Amsterdam School District for 15 years. She was nominated for her dedication to school safety.

Farley, a unit president in the CSEA Rensselaer County Educational Employees Local and member of the maintenance staff, is an adviser to the school’s Key Club chapter, a service organization.

The club was inactive but has flourished under her leadership, winning awards at a statewide convention. Farley also led the Key Club members caroling through several neighborhoods to raise money for the local Ronald McDonald house. She also has served as the school’s yearbook adviser and is a mediator in her school’s dispute mediation program.

"I don’t do these things looking for recognition, I do it for the kids,” Farley said.

“I want to see them do better.”

Pilgrim Psych Local sends troops supplies

Some of the creature comforts of home — shaving cream, fresh socks and sun screen, to name a few — are on their way to U.S. troops far from home thanks to members of the CSEA Pilgrim Psychiatric Center Local.

“We figured they already had food, but that they might be in short supply of personal care items, and that’s what we collected,” said Dora Wilson, CSEA Pilgrim Psychiatric Center Local president.

The six boxes of items collected by the local included shaving cream, lip balm, foot balm, bug spray, sunscreen, and white socks.

“I’m a veteran myself, and I know the desert heat is probably one of the biggest challenges they’re dealing with now,” said Nelson Gutierrez of Brentwood, 3rd vice president of the CSEA Pilgrim Local. "We even included a variety of magazines, so they can have just a little bit of home, while they are doing their duty so far away from home,” he said.

The items were gladly received by Staff Sgt. Robert Brooks of the Army National Guard who will take the goods to the Army’s Fort Dix in New Jersey. From there they will be turned over to the Air Force and flown directly to the troops in Iraq.

"Even though many of our troops are returning home, following the part of the war dealing with active hostilities, there are still many troops being shipped out right now to replace the ones who left,” said Brooks. "So we are going to have a presence there for some time to come,” he said.

“We hope this tells the troops that there are people statewide who think about them, who care about their safety, and support them wholeheartedly,” said CSEA Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte. "It’s just a small gesture to let them know there are people who support them back home,” said LaMorte.

— Rachel Langert
In 1980 CSEA mourned the death of long-time union leader Irving Flaumenbaum at age 70.

Flaumenbaum, who at the time was serving as Long Island Region President, had previously served in a number of positions in CSEA including 25 years as president of CSEA’s Nassau County Local. He had recently been re-elected as one of CSEA’s International Vice Presidents of AFSCME.

“For more than three decades he was an active and vocal leader in our efforts to win equality and dignity for public employees in New York,” said then CSEA President William McGowan on Flaumenbaum’s passing.

Flaumenbaum was a pharmacist by training and was employed by the Nassau County Department of Social Services. To this day, CSEA honors his memory by holding its annual local government and private sector workshop in his name. A college scholarship program is also named for him.

Flaumenbaum was succeeded as Long Island Region president by Danny Donohue who had recently been elected region first vice president.

23 years ago ...

Also in 1980:
- Ronald Reagan elected president.
- British Airways is privatized.
- John Lennon shot and killed in New York.
- The world waits to see “Who shot JR?” in Dallas TV series.
- Dutch company Philips launches the ‘Compact Disc.’
- Rubik’s cube is voted Toy of the Year.
- U.S. boycotts Moscow Olympics.
- Lech Walesa leads Solidarity union movement in Poland against communist government.
- CNN launched.
Curiosity leads to 36 years of activism

“I was young, I had some time on my hands, and I wanted to see what it was all about.”

From that inauspicious beginning, Irena Kobbe, Putnam County local president and Southern Region executive vice president, built a 36-year career out of service in CSEA.

“I was working with the highway department of Putnam County when one of the people who was organizing the local, asked me to be secretary. Eventually he became my husband, Ron,” said Kobbe, with a smile.

Kobbe was recently recognized for her dedication and years of outstanding service, receiving the CSEA Mission Achievement Award for Local Government at the Irving Faumenbaum Memorial Workshop in Buffalo.

“When I think of Irena I think of respect, dignity and someone who really fights for her members,” said Statewide President Danny Donohue. “But I know that she’s not as sweet as she seems to be. Ms. Kobbe is probably one of the nicest, but one of the toughest women I know,” said Donohue. Over the years, Kobbe served as corresponding secretary, labor secretary, vice president, as well as on a variety of committees including the labor management committee and negotiating committees. But she says it’s always been a labor of love.

“Always felt I needed to stay involved, because there are such important decisions made about your working environment, and being part of the union gave me a voice in that. I was able to make sure that our rights were protected, and that we would have a secure future with retirement benefits,” said Kobbe.

“I’m proud to be a member of CSEA. It’s given me the background so that I felt the confidence to be able to speak to management people on behalf of our members,” said Kobbe. “I’ve met some wonderful friends along the way, and it’s just given me a sense of doing something to help other people,” she said.

“Irena’s professionalism and depth of caring in representing the members has just been exceptional,” said CSEA Southern Region President Diane Hewitt.

— Rachel Langert

Regina Howard, first private sector Mission Achievement Award winner

Regina Howard had no prior experience with unions in her work life at Family and Children’s Services of Niagara, a private sector social services agency in Niagara Falls.

“I and many of my co-workers, had trusted management promises, and saw no need to join a union,” said the 10-year senior financial assistant. “But when they repeatedly failed to follow through, we took a serious look at CSEA, and saw the value of coming together as a unified force, in a real union.”

Five years after that unifying group decision, Howard, now president of CSEA FACs Local 742, is a recipient of the CSEA Mission Achievement Award, for her steady, principled leadership.

“I have known Regina since the local was first organized about five years ago,” said Mark Higgins, contract administration deputy director. “Regina served on the bargaining committee for the first and second contracts with her employer. Both were quite contentious, and among the most difficult I have seen in my 25 years at CSEA.”

“Regina has provided steady leadership throughout and has won the respect of management, CSEA staff and her co-workers,” said CSEA Western Region President Flo Tripi.

Howard also has served her membership as vice president and grievance chair, prior to becoming local president. She exemplifies the principles of the CSEA Mission Statement: honesty, inclusiveness, full participation, respect, diversity, open communications, accountability and fiscal responsibility.

She has the distinction of being the first private sector member to win the award, which will now join the annual honor bestowed on state and local government members by CSEA.

— Ron Wofford

CSEA President Danny Donohue presents Regina Howard with the 2003 CSEA Mission Achievement Award for the Private Sector.
Fight the good fight: Join PEOPLE

When the going gets tough, the tough start giving. PEOPLE or Public Employees Organized to Promote Legislative Equality, is CSEA’s and AFSCME’s federal political action committee. PEOPLE collects voluntary contributions from the membership so CSEA can help elect candidates who are friends of working families. PEOPLE is also the official name of AFSCME’s federal political action committee. Federal election laws prohibit the use of union dues money to support candidates for federal offices.

As workers who provide important services to the public, CSEA is faced with unique issues and challenges. Elected officials may try to use public employees as “scapegoats” to justify layoffs, contracting out or closing facilities. Retired members may also face the privatization of Social Security and increases in prescription drug costs. It all starts with you. PEOPLE members work to have a say in their own destiny — working for a better quality of life for themselves, their families and their communities.

New York City State Employee Local Treasurer, Frank Coentino said he is a PEOPLE member because “it’s the only way CSEA can lobby to get what we need.”

PEOPLE members know that if they sit back and do nothing there will be more cutbacks, more contracting out and more heartache for those least able to care for themselves.

One of the best ways to assist in the growth of the PEOPLE program is to have payroll deduction available for all CSEA members. When bargaining agreements come around, encourage the inclusion of payroll deduction to strengthen this vital program.

CSEA activist David Lee said that instead of spending $2 a week on coffee, he invests in the PEOPLE program. “It goes a long way in protecting your future,” said Lee.

CSEA members should recognize that CSEA’s political involvement is more than important — it is vital. Get involved. Sign a payroll deduction for PEOPLE checkoff, make a PEOPLE donation, organize PEOPLE fund-raising events or become active in your region’s PEOPLE committee.

Hudson River Psychiatric Center Local President, Micki Thoms believes in the PEOPLE program. “The victories we’ve had show it works.”

Learn more about PEOPLE and PEOPLE programs by calling us at; 1-800-341-4146, ext. 1404
What’s In It For You?

Local Government Benefits Negotiations
Summer is here (at least according to the calendar) and everything that comes with it. One of those things is the expiration of Local Government unit contracts. With the state budget situation hanging over our heads and municipal and school district financial problems appearing in the papers every day, local government contract negotiations will be trickier than ever this year. A major cause for concern is the rising cost of health related benefits.

The CSEA Employee Benefit Fund, knowing these are not problems that will disappear overnight, has made a concerted effort to design plans to help meet the challenges that CSEA units face in negotiations. The EF has been providing cost effective benefit programs to CSEA Local Government units for over 23 years and has expanded its offering to help fit the diverse needs of counties, cities, towns, villages and school districts throughout New York State. Beginning with our most inexpensive program, the fund plans include:

Annual Physical Benefit — This plan reimburses up to $25 for the out-of-pocket cost of a routine annual physical once every year. Starts at $2.52 annually for dependent coverage.

Maturity Benefit — This program provides a $200 benefit upon the birth of a child to either the covered member or the member’s spouse. Starts at $6.12 annually for dependent coverage.

Hearing Benefit — This plan provides a benefit of up to $480 per ear every three years towards the cost of a hearing aid. Starts at $9.72 annually for dependent coverage.

Legal Benefit Plan — Under this plan, members can choose any attorney and reimbursement is sent to the member for covered services up to $1,000 annually. Starts at $18.72 annually for dependent coverage.

Vision Plans — The fund offers three benefit levels (Silver, Gold, Platinum) and the choice of either an annual (12 month) or bi-annual (24 month) benefit. These plans can be negotiated for the employee only or employee and family. Riders can also be added that expand the covered services to include items like ultra-violet coating, transition lenses or an occupational benefit. A list of participating plan providers accept the program as payment in full for covered services. Starts as low as $64.68 for a 24 month Individual only plan (2003-04 rate).

Dental Plans — The fund offers four benefit levels (Silver, Gold, Platinum, Diamond) with escalating annual and orthodontic maximums. The plans reimburse according to a fee schedule and any participating plan providers accept the program as paid-in-full for covered plan services. Certain specialists within participating general surgeons have the right to increase bill members for the difference between the specialist’s customary charge and the CSEA EF plan allowance. Starts as low as $200.04 for Individual only. Sunrise Dental coverage – $2,200.00 annual plan maximum (2003-04 rate).

Should any of these EF plans be negotiated, all members are covered free of charge for the fund’s Workplace Security Program, which provides a benefit to members who suffer from trauma associated with an assault or hostage situation while performing his/her job. As with all EF benefits, these plans and their cost must be negotiated into your collective bargaining agreement for the fund to provide benefits. The fund offers a Three-Year Rate Guarantee for it’s programs and several coverage options from Employee Only to a flexible composite coverage that includes dependent.

The Benefit Fund has a staff of Senior Benefits Specialists available to meet with local government units to discuss the plans offered by the fund and how they can be negotiated into your collective bargaining agreement. Representatives are available for Membership Meetings, Information Days, Health Fairs and negotiations with your employer in order to more fully explain how the Fund plans work on a day to day basis.

The following are the EF Benefits Regional Senior Benefits Specialists and their contact information:

Region 1 Linda Scalani (631) 462-5247 lscalanilife@road.com
Region 3 Colleen Foley (908) 323-2732 ext 815 cfoley@ceaseaef.org
Region 4 Kim Lucas (908) 323-2732 ext 818 klucas@ceaseaef.org
Region 5 Meghan Pastigione (800) 323-2732 ext 886 mpastigione@ceaseaef.org
Region 6 Mike Wagner (908) 323-2732 ext 808 mwagner@ceaseaef.org

The EF would like to congratulate the following groups which have recently joined the Fund for benefit coverage:

Island Trees S.D. Custodians
Remson S.D.
City of Newburgh Village
Village of Great Neck Plaza
and these groups that have either added a new benefit or upgraded an existing EF benefit:

City of Cohoes (Clerical)
City of Cohoes DPW
Village of Quiogue
Warwick Valley C.S.D.

Are you missing out on something you really can’t afford to pass up? More information about the CSEA EF and their programs, please contact the Fund at 1- 800-323-2732 or 1-800-EF-CSEA or visit the EF website at www.ceaseaef.org and click on the Employee Benefit Fund in the Member Benefits section.

Break in membership affects eligibility for union office, voting privileges

A break in union membership status can have long-term future implications. Your membership status affects your eligibility with respect to:

• serving or holding union office;
• signing nominating petitions for potential candidates;
• voting in union elections; and
• voting on collective bargaining contracts.

Only members “in good standing” can participate in these activities. To be “in good standing,” your dues cannot be delinquent.

If you go on unpaid leave or for any other reason have a break in your employment status, your dues will not continue to be paid through payroll deductions. You must make arrangements to pay your dues directly to CSEA to continue your membership status. If you are either laid off or placed on leave without pay status due to becoming disabled by accident, illness, maternity or paternity, you may be eligible for dues-free membership status for a period of one year. If you are called up to active military duty you may also apply for dues-free status.

Note, however, you must continue to pay dues to run for office. Dues-free or gratuities membership allows members to continue their insurance coverage while out of work. It does not protect your right to run for or hold office. This does not apply to members who are on leave due to being called up for military duty. Members on active military duty, upon return, are considered to have had continuous membership status for all CSEA election purposes.

Please notify the CSEA Membership Records Department at 1-800-343-4104, Ext. 1227, of any change in your status and what arrangements you are making to continue your membership in CSEA.

• Home illness therapy
• Certain home health care services when they take the place of hospitalization or care in a skilled nursing facility
• Enteral formulas

Exceptions:
• For diabetic supplies (except insulin pumps and Medicators), follow the FDA guidelines for reimbursement from the National Diabetic Pharmaceuticals (NDFP) at 1-888-306-7337.
• For ostomy supplies, following HCAP Authorization, call Byram HealthCare Centers at 1-800-354-4054.

Non-Network Benefits: When you don’t call HCAP or use a non-network provider.

If an enrollee does not call HCAP for preauthorization before receiving hospice services, durable medical equipment or supplies and/or if they choose to use a non-network provider, they will pay a much higher share of the cost. Charges for the first 48 hours of nursing services per calendar year are not covered and do not apply toward your Basic Medical Program annual deductible. After you meet the Basic Medical Program deductible ($125), the Enrollee Plan pays up to 50 percent of the HCAP network allowance for medically necessary HCAP-covered services, equipment or supplies.

Promoting Good Health

Health Benefits Department

Protecting Your Benefits

HCAP

(Case Manager’s Home Care Advocacy Program)

CSEA-represented State enrollees and their eligible dependents covered by the Empire Plan can call the Home Care Advocacy Program administered by United HealthCare, at 1-877-727-NYHCA (6942) to arrange paid-in-full home care services, durable medical equipment and supplies from an HCAP-approved provider. Enrollees/dependents must call HCAP before receiving HCAP-covered home care services and/or equipment/supplies. If HCAP is contracted, but an HCAP provider is not used, non-network benefits will apply. By following HCAP requirements, enrollees are guaranteed access to the network level of benefits.

Network Benefits: When you call HCAP and use a network provider, Empire Plan enrollees receive the following services with no out-of-pocket expenses:

• Durable medical equipment and related supplies
• Diabetic and ostomy supplies
• Insulin pumps and Medicators (enrollees must call HCAP for preauthorization)
• Skilled nursing services in the home

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(Case Manager’s Home Care Advocacy Program)
S is for statewide officer

CSEA’s top officers, president, executive vice president, secretary and treasurer are elected statewide by the CSEA membership. They are CSEA’s statewide officers along with the union’s six region presidents (profiled in last month’s edition) who also serve as statewide vice presidents.

CSEA President Danny Donohue initiates the policy and agenda of the union in coordination with the other statewide officers and the union’s 122 elected members of the Board of Directors. Donohue also has a wide range of responsibilities leading the union in its core activities of representation, political action and organizing.

“CSEA is New York’s leading union by action and example,” Donohue said.

“It is my priority every day to strengthen our union by doing what’s right and encouraging the active involvement of every one of our members — that’s where our strength comes from.”

Executive Vice President Mary Sullivan, Secretary Barbara Reeves and Treasurer Maureen Malone are the other members of CSEA’s leadership team. All of the officers have a significant role in advancing the union’s agenda as well as substantive areas of responsibility as part of their office.

The executive vice president handles many duties and projects assigned by the president and serves a leading role in coordinating the union’s activities and involvement with the other unions through central labor councils and Area Labor Federations. The secretary oversees detailed activities related to the union’s correspondence and record-keeping. The treasurer performs similar oversight functions related to the union’s financial activities.

All of the officers are deeply involved in the training and mentoring of the union’s elected local and unit officers.
CSEA recognizes young scholars with awards

The children of CSEA members from across the state will be benefitting this fall from awards and scholarships given out by CSEA locals and units.

It will take some of the pressure off me for my freshman year to know that I won’t have to work as many hours as I thought while going to school,” said Lisa Mihan, a 19-year-old from Levittown who will be attending SUNY Stony Brook as a psychology major in the fall. Her father is Vincent Mineo, a Computer Operations Supervisor who has more than 20 years of service with the town of Hempstead.

Marc Smith, 18, of East Islip will be a computer science major at the University of Albany in the fall. Smith graduated with a 3.9 grade point average. “I’m so proud of him, and his academic achievements speak for themselves,” said his dad, Albert (A.J.) Smith, who has served with the Town of Hempstead’s sanitation department for 29 years.

The following lists scholars and their awards granted by CSEA locals and units.

Cattaraugus County Local:

Ryan Paladino, whose father, Ray Paladino, is an employee of Cattaraugus County Probation Department

Megan Neary, whose father, Mike Neary, is an employee of the City of Olean

Adreana Fuller, whose mother, Nancy Fuller, works at The Fitness Cattaraugus County’s Nursing and Rehab Center.

Allicia Lengvasky, whose mother, Denise Lengvasky, works in County Social Services Department.

Westchester County Local:

Michael Betti, whose mother, Anne Marie Betti, works in the Bedford School District.

Andrew Genovese, whose mother, Debra Genovese, works for the Manhasset SD TAA.

Brian Grun, whose mother, Catherine Grun, works in the Harrison School District.

Alex Lentini, whose mother, Gilda Lentini, works in the Lakeland School District.

Christine Marus, whose father, John Marus, works in the Rye School District.

Brian Michiello, whose mother, Marrian Michiello, works in the Fort Chester School District.

Lisa Sages, whose mother, Jo-Anne Sages, works in the Harrison School District.

Peter Tse, whose mother, Samantha Tse, works in the Rye School District.

Michelle Velozquez, whose father, Miguel Velozquez, and mother, Jane Velozquez, both work in Westchester County.

Jacqueline Weimer, whose mother, Brenda Weimer, works in the City of Mt. Vernon.

Theresa Wray, whose father, Joseph Wray, works in the City of White Plains.

UnionPlus Credit Card Scholarship:

Desray Ciser, whose mother, Mary Ann Ciser, works in the state Department of Tax and Finance.

Matthew Galante, whose mother, Denise Galante, is a CSEA member

Cayuga County Local:

Michael Bona, whose mother, Elaine Bona, is a senior stenographer with Cayuga County Health and Human Services Department.

Matthew Gage, whose mother, Susan Gage, is a senior caseworker with Cayuga County Health and Human Services Department.

Jenna Gaurczewicz, whose mother, Loret Gaurczewicz, is a typist with Cayuga County Employment and Training Department.

Sarah Riester, whose mother, Marcia Riester, is a teacher aide with Cayuga County Mental Health Department.

Amber Ross, whose father, Randy Ross, is a truck driver with Cayuga County Highway Department.

Mohawk Valley Psychiatric Center Local:

Sharn S. Chappell is the son of CSEA member Brenda L. Chappell

Megan Elizabeth Haeckelborne is the daughter of CSEA members James & Kathy Haeckelborne.

CSEA Town of Hempstead Local:

Lisa Mineo, whose father is Vincent Mineo, a computer operations supervisor.

Joanne D’Iorio, whose mother, Jo-Anne D’Iorio is a clerk in the Town of Hempstead’s comptroller’s office.

Jennifer Ramney, the daughter of a CSEA member, also received a Hempstead Local scholarship.

PEOPLE PERSON — The PEOPLE recruiter of the month for May is Shari residence of the Long Island Developmental Center and more.

Children’s Psychiatric Center Local in the Long Island Region. She recruited 16 new PEOPLE members. PEOPLE is a CSEA and ASCME’s political action program aimed at getting friends of working families elected to Congress. See more information about the PEOPLE program and how you can join on Page 16...

FLANAGAN ELECTED KIWANIS PRESIDENT — Bill Flanagan, President of the Town of Hempstead Local, has been elected president of the Town of Hempstead Kiwanis Club.

Kiwanis is a community service organization which raises money for charitable causes, particularly those involving physically challenged children. Flanagan said his first goal will be to increase membership. Flanagan will be formally installed in October...

NURSES CONGRESS — Phyllis Lawless, school nurse from Sunnyside Central Junior High School, recently attended the Nurses Congress in Washington, D.C. The focus of the Congress was mainly on the shortage of hospital nurses, mandatory overtime, and recent Medicaid cuts. Lawless was fortunate enough to be able to speak with representatives on Capitol Hill about several bills that address the safe staffing issues and the health and job satisfaction of nurses. Other sessions included in the Congress were nutrition, ergonomics, smallpox, tuberculosis, bio-terrorism, and SARS...

MEMBERS OK CONTRACT — Montgomery County CSEA members have approved a contract that includes a salary increase with the increase, union members’ health plans will be switched to a county self-insured health insurance plan with APA Partners, and payday will be changed from Thursday to Friday...

FIRST CONTRACT RATIFIED AT ELLENVILLE REGIONAL HOSPITAL — CSEA members at Ellenville Regional Hospital recently ratified their first union contract, putting to an end a year of negotiations after initially being recognized as a union in May 2002 by hospital administrators. The three-year agreement focuses mostly on non-economic improvements to working conditions at the facility, including the establishment of a “full union shop...” the formation of a labor-management committee and binding arbitration on disciplinary procedures and grievances. Union members will also have the opportunity to join PEOPLE through paycheck deduction, as well as take advantage of improvements to their pension plan. Because Ellenville Regional Hospital continues to face fiscal difficulties, the contract contains no salary increases. CSEA will enter into negotiations with the hospital for salary increases by November 1. “I’m quite pleased that this contract was ratified by these workers,” CSEA Southern Region President Diane Hewitt said. “This will allow us to continue working side-by-side with the hospital administration, the Ellenville community and our members employed at Ellenville Regional Hospital.”

Don’t forget to clip coupons from the August and September Work Force, giving you and your family members half-priced admission to the New York State Fair during CSEA Weekend. More details coming in August...

July 2003 THE WORK FORCE Page 19
Skillful health care; road repairs where you need them; safe and orderly school bus rides; calm, professional responses to your 9-1-1 calls.

Your CSEA Work Force does all this and more!

Precise college course registrations; aides teaching the developmentally disabled; probation security and monitoring; caring service for people with mental illness.

Your CSEA Work Force makes it happen!

Every day of every year, the 265,000 members of CSEA make these and so many other vital services work for you.

Caring... Capable... Doing the jobs RIGHT!