Tearing Us Apart

Despite some help, public health care still at risk

Pages 10 and 11
Photo of the Month

VRRROOOOM — From left, CSEA members Julie Wadams, Finger Lakes DDSO Local President Kathy Button, Cindy Hoag, Lorri Schicker, Josh Wadams, Debbie Dennison, Vicki Parsons, Jayne Halpenny, “Mel the Cook” and Michelle Lang gather for a picture in a kitchen at the Watkins Glen Speedway. The group was volunteering trackside during NASCAR’s Sirius at the Glen race weekend to raise money for Hospice.

CSEA member killed

ROCHESTER — Rochester Psychiatric Center housekeeping worker Carlton Crosbie was killed in July after being struck by a speeding vehicle.

Crosbie was walking along a city street when a driver lost control, jumped the curb and hit Crosbie.

“This was a very sad day for his family, friends and co-workers,” said Rochester Psychiatric Center Local President Leroy Thompson Jr.

“Carlton was well-liked and appreciated by his co-workers due to his mild manner and easy-going personality.”

Former CSEA staff member Vince Sicari

HAMBURG — Vince Sicari, a 27-year CSEA employee, died recently.

Sicari was hired in 1976 as a research assistant and retired in 2003 as a Labor Relations Specialist assigned to the Western Region office.

Sicari is survived by his wife Mary, daughter Andrea and son Thomas.

New Western Region Office Address

The CSEA Western Region office is now at:
120 Pineview Drive
Amherst, N.Y. 14228
Phone: (716) 691-6555 / Fax: (716) 691-5430

Monroe County report ‘from bad to worse’

ROCHESTER — CSEA is highly critical of a report issued recently by the Monroe County Budget Advisory Team that recommends layoffs and insults county employees.

CSEA Unit President Jim Volpone said the report, called “From Crisis To Stability” might be more appropriately titled “From Bad to Worse” because of flaws in its development.

Volpone cited, for example:
• No effort was made to include county employees in the search for better ways of providing services;
• Unsubstantiated claims made that “county employees do not see this as a business to be run effectively for the taxpayers”; and
• Built in bias toward privatization;
• No real comprehension of government services;
• No understanding of human resources;
• No recognition that the federal formula that provides funding for public health facilities needs to be revised to relieve the financial burden they put on communities.

“Cheaper is not better,” said Volpone. “You get what you pay for.”

“This appears to be an effort to dehumanize county government,” the union leader said.

At press time, CSEA public policy specialists had just completed a detailed analysis of the report and the union will issue its own recommendations to the County Executive, the County Legislature and the community shortly.

Jobs, programs cut from Yonkers schools

YONKERS — Despite an aggressive CSEA campaign to save jobs and services at the Yonkers Public Schools, the City Council recently passed a budget that will cut jobs and programs at the district’s 40 schools.

The City Council passed a budget that provides an additional $14 million to the district over Yonkers Mayor Phil Amicone’s proposed budget. But the extra money, combined with an additional $9.6 million in state education aid, will not be enough to offset the $34 million in layoffs and program cuts that district officials made in late July. The schools’ budget deficit had been $50 million, and CSEA had lobbied for the city council to earmark $40.4 million in city revenue for additional school funding.

CSEA had also proposed the city raise its state income-tax surcharge to help fund the schools, a measure Yonkers officials can take without state approval. The union distributed information to more than 51,000 city taxpayers, met with community organizations, and intensely lobbied city officials to raise the surcharge.

Despite CSEA garnering early support for the surcharge, the proposal died when one supporter voted to pass the city budget without the surcharge.

“Our children desperately need this extra funding,” CSEA Southern Region President Diane Hewitt said. “This budget will not be enough for the Yonkers Public Schools to maintain a quality education. Yonkers and Albany need to stop blaming each other for these problems. We need to fix these problems for our children’s futures.”

The district had cut 536 jobs this summer, 114 of which were CSEA-represented positions that include public safety officers and school aides. While 39 CSEA members lost their jobs, the remaining eliminated positions had been vacancies.

— Janice Marra
Pataki threatens veto

Legislature’s budget again addresses key CSEA issues

ALBANY — The letters, phone calls and personal meetings between CSEA activists and state lawmakers made a marked improvement in the final version of the $101.3 billion state budget approved last month. The plan provides significant relief to school districts and localities, particularly for public health care.

The Legislature’s budget represents better choices than the plan proposed by Gov. George Pataki last winter. But as The Work Force went to press, the governor was threatening to veto some provisions.

Last year the legislature overrode the governor’s veto pen 119 times to enact their bipartisan budget plan. If the governor vetoes portions of this year’s budget, it is unlikely that any override attempts will occur before mid-September.

“New York is facing and will continue to face many serious challenges but the hard work of state lawmakers and the persistence of CSEA members made a difference on a wide range of issues that we care about,” said CSEA President Danny Donohue.

At the top of CSEA’s list of budget successes was an allocation of $30 million for disadvantaged nursing homes along with defeat of the governor’s proposed “Sick Tax” increase that would have broken the back of financially struggling public health facilities.

The governor’s proposal would have both increased the sick tax on public nursing homes and would have instituted one for public hospitals. The Legislature’s budget will phase out the existing tax over two years.

The additional $30 million in aid to nursing homes will provide help for facilities that have shown a three-year operating loss.

Additionally the Legislature authorized the state Department of Health to work with the Dormitory Authority to issue $250 million in bonds for improvements in health care facilities.

CSEA was instrumental in gaining action on these issues by a statewide media and grassroots organizing campaign. Public

CSEA delegates at national convention

From left, CSEA President Danny Donohue, CSEA members Tyrone Webb, Dora Wilson, Kathryn Johnson, Casey Walpole and Colleen Wheaton at the Democratic National Convention in Boston recently. All six were delegates to the convention. Missing from the picture is Mark Davis. (See Casey Walpole feature on Page 18).

CSEA members are encouraged to visit www.csealocal1000.org and click on the Political Action link for a complete list of CSEA’s endorsed candidates in the upcoming state and federal elections. The endorsements will also appear in the October Work Force.

September 2004 THE WORK FORCE Page 3
CSEA takes no vote for granted

There are scores of important issues on the agenda for CSEA members. All of them will be affected by how well we focus on our priority concern for the next two months: Making sure we elect John Kerry President of the United States.

Not every CSEA member may agree with that priority. That’s your right. But it is very clear in numerous ways that the overwhelming majority of CSEA members do agree and recognize its importance.

No one should ever vote for a candidate simply because your union endorses them. You should make a judgment based on the issues and the candidates’ records. Neither should you support someone strictly on party affiliation — you should support people who you judge will act in your best interests.

Still, you should know those are the considerations the leadership of CSEA makes when deciding who to endorse in the best interest of all our members.

On virtually every issue of concern for CSEA members and other working people, John Kerry’s stand, record and character made the decision to support him an easy choice.

But make your own judgment and then vote.

P.S. One place you can get more information and compare the candidates’ records for working people is the AFL-CIO’s website: www.votenov2.com. Also, if you’re not registered to vote, you still have until Oct. 8 and forms are available at all CSEA offices. Voting is what makes our democracy work and this November we must take no vote for granted.
Women’s committee brings cheer to ailing children

NYACK — Children receiving treatment at Nyack Hospital’s Pediatric Emergency Room will now have a little more happiness in the hospital thanks to the efforts of the CSEA Rockland County Local Women’s Committee.

The committee recently donated to the pediatric ER five, 20-inch combination TV/DVD players, 48 DVD features, numerous coloring books and crayons. Committee co-chairwoman Kim Delson said the group tries to alternate its outreach efforts between CSEA members and the community. For many of the committee members, the decision to help Nyack Hospital was easy. The facility opened its pediatric emergency room in late 2003, and its entire focus is on emergency care for children and young adults up to age 20.

“We wanted to help the community in some way,” said committee member Vi Martinez, a data entry operator for the Rockland County Department of Social Services. “We really wanted to do something for the kids.”

The committee reached out to other CSEA members and to their communities to raise funding for the donation. Initially, the committee was hoping to raise enough for one TV/DVD player and a handful of DVDs. Instead, committee members raised nearly $1,800 through raffle tickets — enough for four more TV/DVD players, more DVDs, coloring books and crayons. “Everybody sold a minimum of 25 tickets,” committee co-chairwoman Ivy Rowen said. “We’re a great team.”

Kevin McCarthy, executive director of the Nyack Hospital Foundation, said the new additions to the pediatric emergency room will help children — and their families — feel less stressed about obtaining medical care. “We always get requests (for more entertainment items),” he said. “CSEA gave us the opportunity to have it.”

— Janice Marra

Valhalla — More than 70 CSEA members will lose their jobs in Westchester Medical Center’s latest move to bring the hospital out of its ailing fiscal state.

Under a $75 million plan recently released by the private consulting firm that is operating the hospital, the 55-member courier department will be eliminated and contracted out to a private company. At press time, it was unknown what specific plans for the department’s privatization would be.

About 17 additional CSEA members, who are employed in administrative, clerical and ancillary positions, will also be laid off.

The new restructuring plan calls for Westchester Medical Center to fiscally break even in 2006. The fiscal turnaround plan is now aiming for a 2004 budget deficit of $31.6 million, down from the original projection of $46.6 million. Hospital officials in charge of the fiscal turnaround have recently said in published reports that this will be the “last big” employee layoff, a statement that CSEA Westchester Local President Gary Conley questions.

“What exactly is a ‘big’ layoff to the hospital?” he said. “I personally look at any layoff, even of one employee, as a big layoff because it’s not just the employees affected. Their families are suffering, too.”

— Janice Marra

“…”

It’s very important to come out and vote for the simple reason that it’s one way that you get to voice your opinion on the positions and concerns of those running for president.”

— Robert Rauff Jr., first vice president, Oyster Bay Local interviewed at the recent AFL-CIO COPE Convention.
Making OCFS centers safer for workers a goal in study

ALBANY — CSEA has secured a $2.5 million grant to conduct violence intervention studies at state Office of Children and Family Services facilities. The five-year grant will also be used to conduct studies at the state Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services.

There are no firm numbers on incidents involving violence at these facilities, but evidence suggests violent incidents occur and that there are a high rate of assaults.

Changes to programs at OCFS centers have led to increased chances for altercations. Youths previously housed permanently in Division For Youth centers may now be sent home on weekends or spend other time in their communities.

Difficulties can arise when OCFS staff are sent into the communities to return youths to the centers.

“They were anxious to work with us,” CSEA Occupational Safety and Health Director Janet Foley said of the state. The intervention study will be similar to a study done over three years at state Office of Mental Health centers and takes pains to get information from workers on up, rather than relying on managers and directors for data.

Focus groups, physical evidence, worker surveys, study groups, and training assessments will all be evaluated using federal and state occupational safety and health guidelines.

Study committees will include cross-sections of employees to make sure all concerns are addressed. “What came out of OMH was the pilot facilities saw a decrease in assaults and an increase in job satisfaction because of the participation of employees,” she said.

What came out of OMH was the pilot facilities saw a decrease in assaults and an increase in job satisfaction because of the participation of employees.

Operation Adopt a Soldier

WILTON — The CSEA staff at Mt. McGregor Correctional Facility are hosting a project to help bring mail and kind words to service men and women currently serving across the globe, including in the United States.

The staff asks that you write letters, send a card or a note to those serving their country.

To download a list of service people who would like to receive mail, complete with addresses, visit the CSEA web site at www.csea-local1000.org/region4.php

You can also contact Mt. McGregor Local President Cliff Seguin Jr. at (518) 587-3960, ext. 3801.
Ground Zero move raises doubts

MANHATTAN — A Sierra Club study is boosting resistance from three CSEA locals to Gov. George Pataki’s plan to move them to a building severely contaminated following the attacks on 9/11.

“While we support the rebuilding and revitalization of Lower Manhattan, we cannot support a decision to move hundreds of public employees into a building that may jeopardize their health and safety,” said CSEA Metropolitan Region President George Boncoraglio. “The bottom line is that the health and safety of our members and the public are of paramount concern and we will not allow them to risk their health for the sake of political expediency.”

9/11 debris

Hundreds of workers from several city agencies have begun moving into 90 Church St. The building was hit by landing gear from one of the two hijacked airliners. It sustained structural damage and was heavily contaminated by a variety of toxic substances including asbestos, fiberglass, heavy metals and mercury.

The Sierra Club report, Air Pollution and Deception at Ground Zero: How the Bush Administration’s Reckless Disregard of 9/11 Toxic Hazards Poses Long Term Threats for New York City and the Nation “identifies how the federal government — not only the EPA but also the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) — misinformed residents and workers about hazards and failed to take proper action to prevent exposures.”

Too little looking

The report cites instances when the “EPA failed to find toxic hazards because it did not look for them.” After months of trying to get specific information from the state about 90 Church St., details from the report justify the repeated requests and steady skepticism on the part of CSEA workers who are being asked to move.

“We have been asking the Governors Office of Employee Relations (GOER) serious questions about the safety of this building for several months,” said CSEA Local President of Health Research Incorporated Deborah Hanna. “However, trying to get answers has been an extremely slow process and we are not getting the full picture.”

CSEA members and safety and health specialists recently obtained and are studying a copy of the building’s lease, via a Freedom of Information request.

CSEA and other unions continue to raise questions about the environmental testing results for airshafts and on floors members are expected to occupy. Additionally, union members are concerned about material used on the air intake system and air dampeners.

90 Church St. is bordered by the former site of the World Trade Center, the construction of 7 World Trade and by a still vacant and contaminated building owned by the Borough of Manhattan Community College.

“We will continue to work with other unions and raise questions about this move until we are satisfied with the answers,” said Rene Jackson, Local President of the Public Service Commission. “I’m sure the governor would not want to risk the health and safety of hundreds of state employees by having them work in an unhealthy building.”

— David Galarza

“We will continue to work with other unions and raise questions about this move until we are satisfied with the answers.”

“T"his election is going to be the turning point for labor. The Bush administration has personally attacked labor and I think now is the time that labor has to fight back with everything we have not just for unions but all people.”

— William Ricaldo, Rockland County Local president, Southern Region first vice president, interviewed at the recent AFL-CIO COPE Convention.

A view of 90 Church St. in Lower Manhattan. CSEA is questioning the wisdom of a state proposal to move workers into the building, which was contaminated in the 9/11 attacks.
One’s trash is another’s treasure

MERRICK — Mount Trashmore has been conquered.
Rising 12 stories between the Merrick Road Golf Course and Meadowbrook Parkway, the old Merrick landfill smelled awful and littered the suburban landscape.

“That dump was built over many years, with the hard labor of Town of Hempstead sanitation workers,” said CSEA Town of Hempstead Local President Bill Flanagan. When the dump closed in 1984, CSEA members played a key role in its metamorphosis.

“They had an eyesore, a 115-foot high pile of trash, and made it into something that everyone can enjoy,” said Ranger Bob Eckstein. “Now it’s good for the environment and good for residents and visitors,” he said.

Instead of capping the old dump with a liner and a layer of topsoil, the Merrick Landfill was transformed into the Norman J. Levy Park and Preserve. Levy was a state senator and longtime friend of CSEA who died in 1998.

“The reclamation was done by our employees,” said Assistant Ranger Susan Nurmi. “Our people planted the grass, trees and the flowers,” she said.

They also built the 500-foot fishing pier that juts into Merrick Bay, the canoe and kayak launch, 18 exercise stations, five miles of walking trails and the two man-made ponds that grace the plateau. On a clear day, you can see the Manhattan skyline and Jones Beach.

Town employees act as stewards and ambassadors of goodwill. They give guided tours, make sure people don’t get lost or hurt, and identify new plants and birds. The preserve is now home to 150 species of birds.

“There’s the mundane stuff too, but I don’t mind general gardening, weeding and taking care of our park,” said Eckstein, who made a self-described “pest of himself” for seven months until he was hired at the

Above, a view of the canoe and kayak launch at the park. Below, rangers left to right Bob Eckstein, Michelle Boudreaux, Susan Nurmi, and Scott Oglesby at the base of the Preserve.

preserve. He was that excited about the landfill’s transformation.

Town Deputy Commissioner of Sanitation Mike McConnell gives the CSEA members a lot of credit for the preserve’s success. “It takes a dedicated team of employees who really believe in its mission. It really is, for the town, and I think for the rangers who work here, a labor of love,” said McConnell.

“Everyone who comes here leaves happy. Everyone who comes here for the first time leaves in awe,” said Nurmi, who said she loves her job on the hill strewn with wildflowers. “I have an office with a great view.”

— Rachel Langert

Rangers Stephanie Urio and Jonathan Gunther at the canoe and kayak launch.
Ready for a New School Year

Across New York, CSEA members working in school districts have spent their summers polishing, cleaning, painting, repairing, mowing, grading, seeding, vacuuming, shampooing, tuning, and doing everything else it takes to prepare their school districts for the coming school year.

Clean classrooms, nutritious meals, safe school buses, neat playgrounds and bright school buildings are all key components to enhancing a child’s learning and fostering a sense of pride in community.

Without CSEA members working behind the scenes, those unseen supports to education would not exist.

CSEA Communications Associate Rachel Langert spent some time in the Levittown and Central Islip school districts, photographing CSEA members on the job. Some of her photos appear here.

“‘Without CSEA members working behind the scenes, those unseen supports to education would not exist.’

‘It’s important for our members to know their labor history and realize that the benefits that they have and enjoy could very easily, in a wink of an eye, be gone.’

— Thomas Murray, Southern Region second vice president, NYS Bridge Authority, interviewed at the recent AFL-CIOCOPE Convention.
More help needed for public health care centers, nursing homes

ALBANY — CSEA has seen several victories across the state in the fight to help cash-strapped municipalities continue to operate public health care facilities.

Unfortunately, the fight is far from over. Where the proposed $101.3 billion state budget offers some first aid to the state’s ailing public health care system, what is needed is critical care, including larger commitments of funding, Medicaid distribution that’s on a fair par with other states and, most importantly, revisions to the Health Care Reform Act.

Evidence of needed reforms is apparent throughout the state as counties and municipalities, one after the other, vote to sell or contract out publicly operated nursing homes and health care centers.

“We’re in a crisis in New York right now and unless some fundamental changes are made, public health care could become a thing of the past,” said CSEA President Danny Donohue.

“It’s appalling that in as great a country as the United States, with all our wealth and resources, we find ourselves unable to fund one of the very things that sets us apart and above every other country in the world — excellent, publicly operated nursing homes and hospitals,” Donohue said.

Stemming the tide

In Montgomery County, the Montgomery Meadows nursing home will receive a substantial boost in state aid.

A beneficiary of the state budget’s proposed $30 million in aid for financially troubled nursing homes, the Meadows is set to receive several hundred thousand dollars in additional funding this year and next.

Earlier this year, the county’s Board of Supervisors sought proposals to sell or lease the property.

“The timing of this couldn’t be better,” said CSEA Capital Region President Kathy Garrison, referring to pending votes by the county Finance Committee and the full board that many fear will result in a sale to an unknown buyer for an undisclosed sum.

CSEA is optimistic that some of the supervisors who have reservations about a sale will be less inclined to vote for a sale given the fact that there is money on the way.

From left, Western Region President Flo Tripi, IES Candy Saxon, Niagara County Unit President Fran Faery, and Region Director Roger Sherrill attend a news conference regarding attempts to sell the Mt. View Nursing Home.

“They keep saying it’s about the money and they keep asking what the union is doing. While they have been meeting behind closed doors and keeping secrets from the taxpayers, CSEA has been working with the nursing home’s administrator to reduce operating costs and we’ve been working overtime to lobby for money for distressed homes,” the union has been successful in both cases. We’ve put in a good faith effort, now it’s their turn,” Garrison said.

CSEA members at the Andrew Michaud Nursing Home care for patients earlier in the summer. Despite CSEA’s efforts, Oswego County chose to sell the nursing home, a situation CSEA is fighting across the state.

The campaign mirrored a highly successful fight CSEA mounted in Madison County to fight off efforts to contract out that county’s Mental Health Department.

CSEA has been battles against contracting out in Niagara County, where the county is proposing to sell the Mt. View Health Care Facility in a scenario similar to Montgomery County’s.

CSEA leaders along with members from Mt. View Health Care Facility met recently at the home of Majority Leader Malcolm Needler to counter misleading statements Needler made to the press recently about the county’s willingness to keep the facility public.

In a recent article published in the Niagara Gazette, Needler was quoted as saying “the doors have never been closed,” to further discussions with the union to try to save the publicly operated nursing home from being sold or closed.

But CSEA Unit President Fran Faery produced documents from the union’s negotiating sessions with the county she said indicate county officials decided long ago to sell the facility.

Out-of-date funding formulas are part of the problem at Mt. View. Mt. View is being reimbursed at a federal and state level set in 1983. If the center were renovated, a new funding base could be set, increasing state and federal reimbursements. The state would reimburse up to 90 percent of the renovation or remodeling, but to date, no plans have been made for such a project.

CSEA is hopeful the recently approved aid increases can promote a solution for Mt. View to remain public.

Victories

Due to the efforts of hundreds of CSEA members in Ontario County, the Ontario County Health Facility will not be contracted out. CSEA members lobbied the Ontario County Board of Supervisors, wrote letters to the editor and mobilized taxpayers and residents to oppose the privatization of the public nursing home.

This announcement that the Ontario County Board of Supervisors will not privatize the Ontario County Health Facility was met with a huge collective sigh of relief from 150 CSEA members at the facility and the residents they serve,” said Western Region President Flo Tripi.

The focus now turns to fighting efforts to contract out the Ontario Mental Health and Substance Abuse departments.

Meanwhile, the Steuben County Legislature unanimously rejected an undisclosed purchase offer for the county’s health care facility. Legislators also turned down a proposal to look for other buyers of the facility by a 19-3 vote.

CSEA aggressively opposed the sale and on short notice put together a media campaign as well as special ALERT mailing to mobilize the public.

The Steuben County Legislature attempted to sell the facility without any public discussion. CSEA learned of the county’s intentions only days before the vote was scheduled.
Training at issue in state park worker’s fatality

WATERTOWN — CSEA is pointing to an apparent failure to properly train workers on heavy equipment as a likely contributing factor to the recent on-the-job death of state Parks Department worker Richard Parker.

Parker, 51, was killed in June when the 8-ton vibratory roller he was operating along a newly built trail in the Village of Black River went off the side of the trail and overturned. CSEA Occupational Safety and Health Specialists Lynnet Witherell and John Bieger both investigated the incident and accompanied state Department of Labor investigators on their investigations.

According to Witherell, it appears Parker was given no training on the proper use of the equipment, which was borrowed from the Jefferson County Highway Department, and should not have been operated close to the roadway’s edge.

State Parks Local President Fred Gerloff, OSH Specialist Lynnet Witherell and Department of Labor Safety and Health Inspector Mark Smarr talk outside the garage where a roller involved in a worker fatality was stored following the incident.

Union members have legal rights to OSH information

All workers and unions have the right to get safety and health information related to the hazards in the workplace. This information about hazards present in the workplace, including the types and numbers of injuries or illnesses that the workers are suffering, can be used to get these hazards corrected.

The laws that give the workers the rights to get the information from their employers are:

• Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA)
• New York State Department of Labor Public Employees Safety and Health Act (PESH)
• Taylor Law (New York State Collective Bargaining Law)

• Freedom of Information Act

Under OSHA/PESH, employees are entitled to request, in writing, such things as:

• records of work-related injuries/illnesses (OSHA 300 Logs for private sector or PESH SH-900 logs for the public sector);
• reports/monitoring results (chemical, noise, air quality, etc.) as stated in the Access to Exposure and Medical Records Standard;
• workers’ medical records that are kept by the employer, as defined in the Access to Exposure and Medical Records Standard; and
• information on the health hazards of chemicals in the workplace. This means access to Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs), labels, training, a written Hazard Communication Plan as stated in the Hazard Communication Standard.

This information must be provided to the employee when requested. The request must be in writing, and if it is not received a PESH complaint should be filed.

Public employees under the Taylor Law may request: accident/incident reports; manuals; guidelines; inspection records; MSDSs; reports of monitoring performed to determine exposure to health hazards present in the workplace; reports from outside agencies, consultants or insurers that may identify types of safety issues, trends, hazards, etc.

If you think there may be a risk to your health or safety in your work place, contact your shop steward or local president and let them know.
Nursing home’s workers caring and sharing

BALLSTON SPA — The atmosphere on a recent summer day at Maplewood Manor was more like a festival than a nursing home. There were balloons, music, games, craft and bake sales, raffles and a client dance.

CSEA members at the publicly operated Maplewood Manor in Saratoga County play a key role in a popular annual event that’s a big hit with residents and family members alike.

Every year, union members in the activities department put on “USA Day.” The event, now in its 26th year, raises money for residents who might not otherwise get any gifts during the holidays. The fund also covers the many entertainers who visit the home for numerous social events throughout the year.

This fun and lively residence also has line dancing, square dancing, family events and a variety of musical guests.

Employees from all departments play a role. Dietary worker Ruthanne Kilburn has been at Maplewood for 27 years. This year her department made spare ribs, fresh fruit salad, potato salad and baked beans.

Resident Henry Marmile said he looks forward to the gathering throughout the year. He likes the entertainment, everyone getting together and “all the beautiful women” said Marmile with a mischievous smile.

Resident Betty Retell has been coming to USA Day for 10 years and she said the music is her favorite part of the festivities. “Everyone looks forward to it,” she said.

Roberta Petrys, an activity aide, has been working at Maplewood for 25 years. Her department coordinates the event. “We start planning as soon as we finish. USA Day is our largest event,” she said.

Pia Kellogg, CNA and 28-year employee is also a fan of the event and doesn’t mind the extra work. “We all pitch in. We are all very dedicated. It’s not your average home,” she said.

Ellen Palmieri was at Maplewood Manor enjoying the festivities and a visit with her mother. “I think it’s wonderful, a most cheerful place. Her husband, the Rev. Henry Palmieri, couldn’t stop singing the praises of the dedicated staff. “I’ve seen such care by the nurses, they are fantastic. This is a lovely place. I thank God for places like this. It’s so important to have a place where older folks can go.”

The staff are so dedicated that some can’t seem to stay away even after retirement. Such is the case for Sharon Coleman, former CSEA officer who retired last year after 25 years at the home. She and former colleague Elsie Flint have been working the raffle table together for several years. “I like getting to see everyone again, all my old friends,” Coleman said.

Mona Ross, a licensed practical nurse and 23-year employee, summed up the dedication of Maplewood Manor employees: “We’re like one big family. When you care about people you want to try to make their stay here as comfortable and fun as possible.”

— Therese Assalian

Maplewood Manor residents Betty Retell and Henry Marmile enjoy the recent USA Day, put on by staff at the home. Behind them are from left, CSEA members Roberta Petrys and Pia Kellogg.
26 years ago ...

In 1978 CSEA not only became part of the AFL-CIO by affiliating with the American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) but also launched its own union newspaper, The Public Sector.

The late Western Region President Robert Lattimer (see remembrance, Page 15) played a leading role in both events. Lattimer was a key supporter of establishing the union newspaper and chaired the AFSCME affiliation committee which evaluated the dynamics of the relationship and recommended that it become permanent in 1981.

Before The Public Sector was established, CSEA regularly purchased several pages to present union news in the NYC civil service newspaper, The Civil Service Leader. The Public Sector was renamed The Work Force in 1990.

Also in 1978 ...

- Israel and Egypt sign the Camp David Peace Treaty.
- John Paul II is elected Pope.
- President Jimmy Carter declares a federal emergency at Niagara Falls’ Love Canal.
- San Francisco Mayor George Moscone and city Supervisor Harvey Milk are assassinated.
- Prince and Van Halen release their debut albums.
- Nancy Lopez is the leading money winner on the LPGA tour.
- Affirmed wins horse racing’s Triple Crown with close victories over Alydar in the Kentucky Derby, Preakness and Belmont Stakes.
Longtime Western Region President Robert Lattimer’s union activism remembered

BUFFALO — Longtime CSEA activist and Western Region President Robert Lattimer died on July 24, ending the final chapter of a life that saw 30 years of service to the union, including 25 as region president.

“Bob’s contributions to CSEA cannot be underestimated,” CSEA President Danny Donohue said. “He was a key player in our transition from an independent association into a powerful AFL-CIO union,” Donohue said.

“Bob was gruff and Bob was tough, he had the heart of a lion when it came to fighting for the union but no one commanded more respect, and that was because he truly cared about our members and believed in fighting the good fight,” said Western Region President Flo Tripi.

A eulogy of Bob Lattimer’s union life serves as a history of the union he loved.

Mirroring the union’s growth, Lattimer’s activist involvement included:

- Formation of the Department of Labor Local 352 in the early 1970s, which Lattimer and fellow members pushed for and successfully appealed, after initially being denied;
- First full-time region president, when he succeeded Bill McGowan, who later became CSEA statewide president in 1978;
- Chair of the CSEA committee that studied, then recommended affiliation with AFSCME, bringing CSEA into the AFL-CIO family;
- With others, successfully advocated a CSEA Political Action Department to educate and prepare the membership, and address and lobby the passage of CSEA-endorsed legislation;
- Helped launch the Work Force predecessor, The Public Sector, as the official CSEA publication, including expansion of a professional communications department;
- Spearheaded CSEA’s federal issues committee;
- Represented CSEA on the Democratic National Party committee that selected the 1988 Democratic National Convention site.

Matching Lattimer’s breadth of activism was a personality that could be both gruff and caring.

Known for a disdain of microphones, Lattimer was able to rely on his booming voice to get attention. His imposing physical presence helped to get his point across at union demonstrations and meetings.

But he also helped establish a Sunshine Fund, supported by member donations to help fellow union members in need, held a little-known love for cats, exercised a witty sense of humor and earned outright the respect and admiration of his fellow unionists.

Most telling of Lattimer’s service to the union were the comments made at the time of his retirement four years ago.

The words “thank you” were heard in each salute, from Donohue and AFSCME President Gerald McEntee to a long list of friends from the ranks of staff, fellow officers, members and retirees who had faced the forces of labor’s opponents with a strong labor leader.

Lattimer is survived by his longtime friend, Ramona Gallagher.

Clockwise from right, Bob Lattimer at an AFSCME Rally; with U.S. Sen. Chuck Schumer; with Bill Clinton; with the Rev. Jesse Jackson; relieving a retirement gift from AFSCME President Gerald McEntee; with CSEA President Danny Donohue.

Memorial contributions to Hospice Foundation, 225 Como Park Blvd., Cheektowaga, NY 14227 or SPCA and Robert L. Lattimer Sunshine Fund c/o CSEA, 120 Pineview Drive, Amherst, NY 14228.

September 2004 THE WORK FORCE Page 15
Protecting Your Benefits

Full-Time Student Requirements Under NYSHIP

If your child is going off to college, the end of summer is more than just a change of season. It is a time of transition and this process can be stressful on many levels. This change will be easier if you make sure your soon-to-be student has what he or she needs. In addition to laptops and books, don’t forget about keeping your health insurance up to date. The following information is an attempt to help reduce the level of stress surrounding health insurance coverage.

Did you know

- Unmarried dependent children of CSEA state enrollees are eligible for NYSHIP coverage if they meet all of the following guidelines:
  - age 19 or over but under age 25, and
  - full-time student at an accredited secondary, preparatory or trade school, college or other educational institution, and
  - otherwise not eligible for employer group coverage.

Proof of eligibility may be required at the time of claim submission. This documentation is separate from that required by the CSEA-Employee Benefit Fund (EBF).

Students who want to continue their health insurance coverage during the summer must have been enrolled in the previous spring semester and must be enrolled as full-time students for the fall semester.

If you have an unmarried dependent child who will become eligible until the end of the third month following the month in which they complete course requirements for graduation, or they reach age 25, whichever occurs first.

You must sign the enrollment card, submit the form to the Benefits office and send a copy to Student Health Services for processing.

How to Enroll

- Complete the CSEA enrollment form.
- Your CSEA enrollment form should be submitted to Student Health Services with the health insurance application.
- The health insurance application must be submitted to Student Health Services by October 1 for fall coverage.

Claims Processing

- CSEA will pay the full amount of your health insurance premium for the fall semester.
- Your health insurance coverage will begin on October 1 and continue through December 31.
- If you have any questions, please contact Student Health Services at 1-800-323-2732.

An Ever Better Future
Summary of July 2004 CSEA board of directors meeting

Editor's note: The Work Force publishes a summary of actions taken by CSEA's board of directors. The summary is prepared by CSEA Statewide Secretary Reeves Barbara Reeves for union members.

Reeves Barbara Reeves for union members.

ALBANY — CSEA's statewide Board of Directors met on July 8. In official business, the board:

• Combined in a one-year pilot project 2005 state and local government/private sector workshops into one event scheduled June 3 to 5 in Lake Placid;
• Authorized Local 631 (Auxiliary Services Corp. of St. Vincents Corp.) to participate in the AIP Employee Family Fund;
• Approved revised Local 860 (Westchester County) building acquisition and financing arrangement for purchase of 595 W. Hartford Ave., White Plains;
• Authorized copier leases for Local 523 (Jefferson County) and Local 828 (Monroe County);
• OK’d 36-month lease for office space at 67 W. Buffalo St., Warsaw for Local 861 (Wyoming County);
• Mandated each local receive a list of agency shop fee payers annually to facilitate membership drives prior to calculation of voting strength on June 17;
• Approved adjustments in CSEA's budget to accommodate an increase in projected retirement expenses;
• Increased by $9,420 the line item in the Legal Department budget for "attorneys and arbitrators;"
• Raised per diem fee for Legal Assistance Program Arbitrators from $700 to $850;
• Allowed associate members of Local 108A (Day Care workers) to be eligible for discounts and services available through the CSEA Member Benefits Program in addition to existing rights and privileges (of associate membership) for a period not to exceed five years;
• Determined sites and dates for upcoming Annual Delegates Meetings in 2006 (Sheraton New York in New York City/Sept. 25 to 29); 2007 (Lake Placid/Oct. 15 to 19); and 2008 (Marriott Wardman Park in Washington D.C./Sept. 22 to 26);
• Approved appointment of Chris Marsh to the Long Island Regional Political Action Committee;
• Authorized appointments of Charlotte Adkins, Joe Alcaro, Ken Bailey, Barry Bell, Mark Benzo, Sue Brill, Sharon Conner, Bruce Damalt, William Garrett, Doreen Gilbert, Denise Golden, Alice Greene, John Hartin, Kathy Johnson, Michael Kaiser, Nick Kochan, George Lawson, Rose MacIlhine, Joe Mc Mullen, Lori Nilsson, Tony Scalse, Fred Senburgh, Ginger Shlette, Annette Testani, Robert Timpiano, Casey Waple, Colleen Wheaton, Olga White, Rick Finch, Stacey Pooley, Rick Barrisford, Tom Pizioleto, Norm Jacobson, King Davis and Anthony Tutino to the Central Region Political Action Committee;
• Established ad hoc committee to study reimbursements for expenses to AFSCME Conventions;
• Waived M/C Grade 10 maximum for position of General Counsel by adjusting base salary $7,000;
• Approved addition of "A" designation to M/C salary schedule; and
• Created staff positions including Legal Systems Administrator, M/C 6; two Health Benefits Specialists, HSU 1A/1B; Director of Strategic Campaigns, M/C 7; Field Mobilization Specialist, FSA Grade 15/18/20; and Director of Member Benefits and Community Relations, M/C 7;
• Created position of Lead Organizer by reclassifying a vacant Organizer position;
• Restored funding to position of Director of Education and Training, M/C 8;
• Deleted positions of Director of Education and Training/Member Benefits, M/C 9 and Assistant Director of Education and Training/Member Benefits, M/C 7;
• Reclassified various positions

The SNT provides for needs not met through government aid such as private caregivers, vacations, entertainment, education and vocational programs. The public benefits cover basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter and health care.

There are different kinds of SNTs. An SNT funded by a parent or grandparent is a Third Party SNT and can be made effective while the parent/grandparent is alive or created as part of a will. There is no "payback" to the state or Medicaid upon the child's death. At the creation of the SNT, the parent/grandparent directs who will inherit any remaining funds after the child has passed. A disabled individual under age 65 may fund his/her own SNT from money obtained from insurance settlements or judgments. Even so, this trust must be created by someone other than the intended beneficiary; it may also be created by a court. In this instance, though, there are "payback" requirements to the state and Medicaid for the public benefits received by the trust beneficiary. There are many ways to ensure a disabled family member continues to have a quality life while you are there to care for them as well as after.

TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS: you, your family, and your life

Editor's note: This is the second in a series of articles by CSEA's expert attorneys to provide valuable information to you and your family members regarding the important areas of protection available to you through the CSEA Legal Services Program (LSP). The LSP covers many areas of law that affect us every day. Get more information about legal plans in the LSP by calling CSEA Headquarters at 1-800-342-4146, extension 1434, or by visiting and clicking on the legal services menu item.

PROVIDING FOR DISABLED FAMILY MEMBERS

How do you provide for a quality life for disabled family members without losing their government benefits? Medicaid treats funding for chronically and severely disabled individuals differently, depending on the source and ownership of the benefits.

An important legal planning tool called a Supplemental Needs Trust (SNT) allows a disabled individual to maintain public benefits, while SNT benefits are used to improve their quality of life.

Questions concerning the summary should be directed to CSEA Statewide Secretary Reeves Barbara Reeves, CSEA Headquarters, 143 Washington Ave., Albany, N.Y. 12210, 1-800-342-4146 or (518) 257-1253.

The CSEA ELDER LAW PANEL includes Cliff Mowicz and Penny Kassel, both of whom provided content for this column. Mowicz offers elder law representation to CSEA members in the Metropolitan Region; Kassel offers elder law representation to CSEA members in the Long Island Region. Both can be reached through the CSEA Legal Services Plan extension listed above [ext. 1454].

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Good advice and guidance from a knowledgeable elder law attorney and advance planning are keys to ensuring this happens. Failure to plan or to consult with the experts in this area could have serious consequences that could well make your loved one's life even more difficult.

To learn more details about providing for a disabled loved one, visit www.cselaocal1006.org and click on the legal services menu item. Once in the legal services area, follow the prompts to "Elder Law."

The CSEA ELDER LAW PANEL includes Cliff Mowicz and Penny Kassel, both of whom provided content for this column. Mowicz offers elder law representation to CSEA members in the Metropolitan Region; Kassel offers elder law representation to CSEA members in the Long Island Region. Both can be reached through the CSEA Legal Services Plan extension listed above [ext. 1454].
Kathleen "Casey" Walpole's daughter, Katy, will never forget the day she learned the importance of her vote.

Although Katy wasn't feeling well, Walpole, a CSEA member active in the Central Region's Political Action Committee, would not allow her daughter to pass up on her first opportunity to vote. Katy had recently turned 18 and there was a "pretty nasty fight going on" in her legislative district.

"I dragged her off the couch and told her that I didn't care who she voted for as long as she voted," said Walpole, who chairs the Oswego County Coalition.

The following morning she could barely believe the news.

"Our candidate won by one vote," said Walpole, adding that her daughter had voted for the winning candidate. "I think she understood right then and there why people died for her right to vote and she's been voting ever since."

Walpole, a supervisor at the SUNY Oswego Registrar's Office, is also determined to let other CSEA members, and everyone she encounters, know about the importance of their vote in the upcoming election.

I personally believe that we really need to fight hard to get John Kerry into the White House because I think none of us is better off than we were four years ago," said Walpole. "We need to make things better for everybody."

A 25-year member of CSEA, Walpole serves as vice president at her local and is also a member of the statewide PAC. She credits her local and regional PAC for her political activism.

Despite her strong commitment to the Democratic Party, Walpole proudly notes that members of the Oswego County Coalition "interview everyone. If we have 26 seats we interview 26 people and their opponents."

As a longtime resident of a region in New York state that is not exactly a hub for Democratic Party loyalists (Walpole herself switched parties about nine years ago), Walpole remains convinced that while people may register for a particular party at the polls "they'll vote the way they want to."

After all, "I live in a Republican County and we did carry Hillary (Clinton)," said Walpole.

The Work Force's David Galarza recently spoke with this Oswego political powerhouse, who has been married to George Walpole, also a CSEA member, for 33 years, and is the proud grandmother of Katy's children, Tyler, 8, and Emily, 3. They all live, and would love to remain, in Oswego.

WF: What do you tell people to get them to register and vote?

KW: I try to let them know that whoever is in office will affect them now and later in their lives and the lives of their children and grandchildren. This deficit we have may not affect me right now, but my children and my grandchildren are going to carry that load and I think we have to let them know that if you don't vote and get involved it's going to affect generations to come.

WF: In the normal course of an election year, what kinds of activities are you engaged in?

KW: We do phone banking and literature drops. But what I like is one-on-ones because when you are talking to somebody you can better explain where you are coming from, hear their concerns, and relay that to the candidate.

WF: Why is it important for union members to become active in politics?

KW: I don't even think they understand how important their union is sometimes. I think they need to get out there and get involved and realize not everybody has what we have. We are very lucky and need to support people and legislators who support us to keep what we have.

WF: What are your main concerns?

KW: The economy with gas prices the way they are and too many low-paying jobs. Health care is very important. Education is very important as well. With the late state budget, all these school districts had no idea about the money they were going to get.

WF: What do politicians need to know about jobs in counties and towns like the one you live in?

KW: Three times in the last 10 years the company my daughter and her husband work for has threatened to leave. (The county has given them tax breaks and incentives) and they have stayed. That's one of the reasons I fight, to keep my family together.

WF: Why should people vote for Kerry?

KW: New York has lost so many jobs. I think working families just want a decent life. Nobody wants to be a millionaire. They just want to have a decent life with a decent wage. I think the Kerry and Edwards campaign understands that.

WF: You recently attended the Democratic National Convention in Boston, what was that experience like?

KW: It was so exciting. My Political Action Coordinator Mike Ottaviano came down and helped me carry petitions door to door so that I could get my signatures and then I got on the ballot and got the most votes in my district. I think I heard from every Democratic congressperson in the U.S. including one from Hawaii at the convention, I was so full of hope when I left there. Maybe we can change this situation and get somebody back in the White House who respects working people.

WF: Any plans to run for office yourself?

KW: They approached me this year to run for alderman in my ward. Right now, with everything I have on my plate, it's not possible. But when I retire, I'm either going to run for alderman or mayor. I think I'd get a lot of support. I think people can trust me. And I try not to promise things I can't deliver."

— David Galarza
Fight for unions! March!

CSEA is encouraging members across the state to take part in Labor Day-related events in their areas. Working families are facing challenges that haven’t been seen in decades, and need to stand up and fight.

Thursday, Aug. 26
• Binghamton — Broome-Tioga Federation of Labor/Central New York Area Labor Federation (CNYALF) will hold its Labor Day celebration at the Ross Park Zoo in Binghamton. For more information, call Ken Smith at 607-763-3662.

Wednesday, Sept. 1
• New York City — The city’s early labor day rally has been confirmed for Wednesday, Sept. 1 at 4 p.m. on Eighth Avenue and 38th Street. This will be a massive demonstration just a few short blocks away from Madison Square Garden, the site of the Republican Convention. Call Communications Associate David Galara at 212-806-2156 for additional information.

Monday, Sept. 6
• Albany — Capital District Area Labor Federation (CDAFL) is planning a Hip Hop for Labor Festival in Washington Park park from noon to 6 p.m. For more information and to volunteer to help, contact Prairie Wells of the CDAFL at 518-785-4672 or at prairie@cdafl.org.

• Ithaca — Midstate Central Labor Council/Central New York Area Labor Federation (CNYALF) will hold its annual picnic at Stewart Park in Ithaca. For more information, call Linda Smith at 607-766-2582.

• Massena — CSEA members should arrive for formation at 10 a.m., at the corner of Willow Street & Liberty Avenue. Parade begins at 11 a.m. CSEA T-shirts will be provided to members who march. There will be a free picnic at Springs Park immediately following the parade.

• Rochester — Rochester and Genesee Valley Area Labor Federation (RQALF) will hold the annual Labor Day Parade at 11 a.m. Unions will begin to assemble at 9 a.m. off of East Ave. in Rochester, between Alexander and Goodman Streets. A picnic will be held after the parade. Check the RQALF Web site, www.rochesterlabor.org, for details or call the CSEA Monroe County Local office at 585-328-5250.

• Syracuse — Parade begins at 11 a.m., with a rally to follow at 11:30 a.m. A casual luncheon and awards ceremony will be held at 12:30. CSEA members should assemble by fair gate 6 at 10:30 a.m. (look for the CSEA banner) and free CSEA T-shirts will be available for the first 250 members who participate. Local/Unit presidents can get supplies of free admission tickets and parking passes by calling Communications Associate Mark Kotzin at the Central Region office. Tickets for the luncheon are $15 and can be purchased from the Syracuse Labor Federation at 315-422-3363.

Tuesday, Sept. 7
• Newburgh — Hudson Valley Area Labor Federation (HVALF) will sponsor a Labor for Kerry and voter registration rally from 4 to 7:30 p.m. in Newburgh. Union members will be treated to speakers, important messages, and food. For more information, call Jen Fuentes of the HVALF at 845-567-7766 or e-mail her at hvalfcon@verizon.net.

Saturday, Sept. 18
• East Meadow — Long Island Federation of Labor will hold Long Island’s Second Annual Labor Picnic from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. (rain or shine) at Eisenhower Park in East Meadow. The event will feature picnic fare, games, clowns, softball, volleyball, music and more. Tickets are $12 per person, with no charge for children up to age 12. Call the Long Island Federation of Labor at 631-396-1170 for more information.

• Albany — Capital Region Labor Parade. CSEA members will meet in Washington Park. Call 518-784-4419 for more details.

PEOPLE PERSON
— The PEOPLE recruiter of the month for July is Michael Flaherty of the CSEA Laborer Lakes DDSO Local in the Western Region. He recruited 24 new members to the program. PEOPLE is CSEA and AFSCME’s political action program. It is responsible for raising money and collecting voluntary contributions from the membership so that CSEA can effectively promote our interests at the state and federal level ... PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE — Gov. George Pataki signed a strongly supported CSEA bill allowing retirees the option of paying their voluntary PEOPLE contributions through automatic deductions from their pension checks. This bill allows retired members of the New York State and Local Employees Retirement System to make voluntary contributions to the political action committee of their recognized collective bargaining representative when they were employed ...

STRESSED OUT?
LIFEWORKS CAN HELP
— High stress levels can damage your family life, your job performance, and your physical health. That’s why LifeWorks is offering a helpful new audio recording, Managing Stress. Available in either audio tape or CD format, this 56-minute recording explains ways to reduce stress levels, including:
- Relaxation techniques
- Nutrition
- Exercise
- Positive thinking
- Expressing emotions
You can also go to www.lifeworks.com to read or download helpful information. User ID is rys, password is 2760. Or call 800.362.9874 ...

BOWLING FOR DAN
— The 3rd Annual Daniel X. Campbell Memorial Bowling Tournament, sponsored by the CSEA Albany County Local, is set for Oct. 2 in the Capital Region. Campbell was a longtime CSEA Capital Region communications associate who died nearly three years ago shortly after addressing the Albany County Legislature on a contracting out issue. Call 518-465-1361 for tournament reservations. All entries are due by Sept. 10.
**Proposed amendments to CSEA’s Constitution and By-Laws**

The Constitution and By-Laws Committee has met three (3) times since the Annual Delegates Meeting in 2003. The Committee meeting dates were March 26, June 7, and July 14, 2004. The Constitution and By-Laws Committee has, amongst its functions, the duty to make recommendations to the Delegates regarding proposed amendments to the CSEA Constitution and By-Laws. The Committee reviews suggestions made by individuals and Locals and it accepts referrals from the Delegates and Board of Directors.

Additionally, the Committee can initiate proposals which it deems to be in the best interest of the Association. All recommendations of this Committee are presented to the Delegates, together with the reasons for the recommendations. (New language is *underlined*, deleted language is in [brackets].)

**THERE ARE NO ITEMS TO BE PRESENTED TO THE DELEGATES FOR A SECOND READING THIS YEAR.**

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

The following proposal was submitted by Marcia Olszewski of Local 815.

**ARTICLE II. Membership**

Section 1. MEMBERS. Text remains the same.

Section 2. ASSOCIATE MEMBERS. Text remains the same.

Section 3. RETIREE MEMBERS. Any person who, while actively employed, was a member or an associate member and who has retired from active employment may elect to become a retired member or who receives a retirement allowance from the New York State and Local Employees Retirement System or the New York State Police Officers’ and Firemen’s Retirement System shall be eligible to become a retired member.

Retired members shall have [none] some of the rights or privileges of membership, [except that] They shall be eligible to vote for statewide and regional officers and [the extent] the insurance [program permits for participation in insurance] programs sponsored by CSEA, and they shall be eligible for membership in Retired Member Locals and such other rights and privileges approved by the Board of Directors.

**EXPLANATION:** The explanation provided with the proposal was as follows: "The organization consists of four statewide officers heading the membership with both active members and retirees making up the total of 265,000 strong that we boast about. Our new membership brochure is a prime example of this. How ridiculous is it that 50,000 of these members have no voice in their statewide leadership? The retirees should be afforded to vote for the four statewide officers who lead them. While I agree that they should not have the opportunity to run for statewide office, since the officers should be active activists, not retirees, the retirees should have a voice in who will lead them. The locals use retirees for special projects all the time. We use them in our numbers to make our total look more impressive. We use them to help us picket, count ballots in elections, lobby, etc. For some reason the feeling is that if you are a retiree, you cease to exist. It is absolutely appalling that they should not have an active voice in who leads them on a statewide level. They should continue to have their own units, locals, and convention. We should give them an active voice by giving them a vote. This is true democracy. While some might argue that this may escalate the cost of the statewide election, I don’t think you can put a price on democracy. If we are truly the most democratic union in the nation then this would certainly prove it. This is the fair and equitable thing to do. It shouldn’t make any difference where these retirees came from. If we solicit them to belong to CSEA, then regardless of what union they belonged to while they were actively employed, they are CSEA members and should be afforded the right to vote for the people who lead them. While the retirees have their own Units and Locals, we all share the same respective Region Presidents and Officers. Therefore, they should be given the same opportunity that active members receive and be afforded the right to vote for these region officers also. The same explanation is relevant to this action also.”

The Committee does not support this proposal.

In 2003, President Donohue appointed the Ad Hoc Committee to Study Retiree Voting. The Committee reviewed the proposal and surveyed our membership on this issue. The Committee’s review and recommendations were not completed in time for the 2003 Annual Meeting, and the item was reported as “unfinished business.” The Committee submitted its Report and Recommendations to President Donohue in June 2004. The Committee on Retiree Voting does not support the proposal to grant Retiree Division members the right to vote for the ten statewide officers, nor to grant retirees access to all CSEA-sponsored insurance programs. The Committee, with the assistance of the CSEA Political Action Call Center, conducted two telephone polls to ascertain CSEA member support for retiree voting rights. The Committee canvassed close to 500 retiree members, asking whether retirees should have the right to vote for Statewide officers, Region presidents, and Region officers. Retirees were also asked whether they would be willing to pay more than their current $12 annual dues. Of the retirees polled, nearly 80 percent felt they should be able to vote for Statewide and Region officers; conversely 62 percent did not support paying more dues, even if the right to vote was tied to a dues increase. Of the 1,527 employed members canvassed, 75 percent did not support the retiree right to vote for Statewide or Region officers; and the overwhelming majority of employed members did not support an increase in retiree dues above the current annual $12.

The Statewide officers’ input recognized the contribution of our retirees as vital to CSEA and noted that retirees have been incorporated into every aspect of the Union, including positions on all Statewide committees and for many political action activities. Having recognized that our retirees are an important voice and aid with much of the Union agenda, the Statewide officers’ overall position is that the retirees should elect the Retiree Division leadership and the employed members should continue to have the responsibility to elect the Statewide and Region officers of CSEA. The Committee on Retiree Voting also sought input from other unions that have a structured and functioning retiree program. In six of the eight unions responding to that inquiry, delegates elect their union officers at convention. In these settings, where there is retiree voting, retirees vote through their delegate representatives who have one or two votes per delegate. Two unions do not have retiree delegates attend their conventions and, hence, there is no retiree participation in the election of officers. Two responding unions have officers elected by direct vote of the membership, as we do. In one union [International Association of Machinists], retirees can vote only if they pay full dues equivalent to employed members’ dues. In the other union, United Steel Workers of America, retirees do not have voting rights for the general officer positions.

Based on its investigation and deliberation, the Committee on Retiree Voting recommended to the President that the proposal to allow retiree members to vote for Statewide and/or Region officers not be adopted. The factors that Committee members relied on were: [1] Our current approach is consistent with how the labor movement in general addresses the question of retiree voting on general officers; [2] There is little

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**Special Supplement to the September Work Force**
general support for this proposal amongst our employed members or leadership. [3] There is no “pro-CSEA membership” requirement to become a member of the CSEA Retiree Division. Many of our retiree members never belonged to CSEA while working, and they come to us from management confidential positions, other unions such as PEF, or as spouses of members. The Committee believed that we should not open our vote to those who may have worked against our members’ interests during their working lives.

With respect to our insurance programs, the Committee learned that the only insurance unavailable to our retirees are our disability and our “critical illness” plans. Both of these plans have “actively at work” requirements inherent to the nature of the plan coverage and the benefits.

The Constitution and By-Laws Committee supports the position of the Committee on Retiree Voting and concurs with its recommendation that the proposal should not be approved. It also concurs strongly in the recommendation of the Committee on Retiree Voting that the President appoint a workgroup to include Retiree Division leadership to study the issues of retiree participation in our great Union. When creating this workgroup, this Committee urges the President to ensure that retiree participation in the workgroup reflects the same proportionality as that of the Retiree Division to the Union as a whole, so as to ensure that we have the widest input and best thinking on these difficult issues.

FOR THE PURPOSE OF PLACING THIS AMENDMENT BEFORE THE DELEGATES I, ON BEHALF OF THE COMMITTEE, MOVE THE ADOPTION OF THIS AMENDMENT. THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS A “NO VOTE.”

The following proposal was submitted by Region President Nicholas Lamorte of Local 685.

ARTICLE VII – Local Government Division

Section 1. LOCAL GOVERNMENT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The power and authority to transact business relating to employees of the political subdivisions of the state shall, except as otherwise provided herein, be vested in a Local Government Executive Committee which shall consist of the officers of the Association and one representative from the Local Government County Locals of each county having 100 or more members as of the preceding September 1st, and one Local Government Educational Local representative from each CSEA Region elected by the Local Government Educational Local members within each Region. One additional member of the Local Government Executive Committee shall be elected by the members of the Local Government Executive Committee to represent Local Government County Locals which have membership of less than 100 on the preceding September 1st. In addition to the foregoing, Local Government County Locals of any county having more than 10,000 members as of September 1 in the year preceding an election shall, for the term of office beginning the following March, be entitled to one additional representative. A region with more than 10,000 education members shall be entitled to one additional representative for that term. The Local Government Executive Committee may create one or more subcommittees to perform such duties as the Local Government Executive Committee shall delegate. The representatives of Local Government County Local(s) shall be elected by each such Local(s) for a (4) year term of office to be coincidental with the term of office for members of the State Executive Committee. The Local Government Executive Committee shall elect from its membership one member to be known as the Chairperson of the Local Government Executive Committee and one member to be known as the Vice Chairperson of the Local Government Executive Committee. Vacancies in the office of the Local Government representative including termination of employment with the political subdivision may be filled for the remainder of the term by the President of the Association, from name(s) submitted by the affected Local(s), without an election with the approval of the Local Government Executive Committee. No statewide officer shall be eligible to be a candidate for any position on the Local Government Executive Committee. If the office of Chairperson becomes vacant, the Vice Chairperson shall succeed to the office of Chairperson and a new Vice Chairperson will be elected by the Local Executive Committee at its next scheduled meeting. Failure to assume the higher office will result in automatic removal from the office currently held.

EXPLANATION: The explanation provided with the proposal was as follows: “Due to the inability of the recent proposal to restructure the Statewide Board of Directors to must support and passage, it is necessary to find other ways to achieve member representation equity. There are certain locals within the CSEA structure of the Local Government Executive Committee that will never achieve representation on the Board with the current language and formula. For example, the Educational Locals on Long Island have a combined membership which exceeds 10,000 but are still limited to one elected representative. This proposal is a small step to achieve additional representation for the our education membership where their numbers by region exceed 10,000.”

The Committee supports this proposal.

Recent proposals for restructuring the Board of Directors did not gain sufficient support to proceed further. One reason for this lack of support seemed to be the loss of some Board seats. This proposal does not have that impact. Rather it would increase the current Board by one seat presently, as an additional education seat in Region 1. The proposal’s formula ensures that where the numbers of education members grows, additional Board seats would be in order. Increasing the Board by one seat at this time would not have a serious financial impact either. For these reasons as well as those expressed by the proposer, the Committee supports this proposal.

FOR THE PURPOSE OF PLACING THIS AMENDMENT BEFORE THE DELEGATES I, ON BEHALF OF THE COMMITTEE, MOVE THE ADOPTION OF THIS AMENDMENT. THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS A “YES” VOTE.

The following items are presented to the delegates by the committee as proposed amendments to the By-Laws. If passed at this meeting, these amendments will become effective immediately.

The following proposal was submitted by Betty Lennon of Local 612.

ARTICLE III – Statewide Elections

Section 1. ELECTION TERMS

(a) Commencing with the close of the 1998 Annual Delegates Meeting, the term of office for the ten officers of the Association shall be extended and changed as follows: 1. [The Region Officer term due to expire on June 30, 1999 shall be extended to March 1, 2000. Thereafter, commencing with election year 2000, Region Officers will serve four year terms, commencing March 1, 2000.] The Region Officer terms shall expire on June 30, 2008. The election for Regional Officers in 2008 shall be for two years ending on June 30, 2010. Thereafter, commencing with the election year 2010, Region Officers will serve four year terms.

2. TEXT REMAINS THE SAME.

3. TEXT REMAINS THE SAME.

(b) Commencing with the election cycle in year 2004, elections for the [ten] four statewide officers of the Association and for the Board of Directors shall be held in such manner as to allow for the commencement of four year concurrent terms of office as of March 1 of the election year. The schedule for the elections shall be adjusted to allow for such term commencement.

TEXT REMAINS THE SAME.

EXPLANATION: The explanation provided with the proposal was as follows: “This change will affect several parts of the Statewide By-Laws including nominations, etc. The election this spring was very confusing with all of the elections that were held at the same time. This was the first time this was done and it just didn’t work. I believe voting by our members was down from the past. Moving the region officers election to two years later than statewide will not increase costs as the AFSCME election is held every 2 years.

The Committee does not support this proposal. The 2004 election was not the first time we had a consolidated election schedule for statewide, region and board seats. We had a consolidated election for the first time in year 2000. Voter participation has not declined since the 2000 election cycle, nor has it changed in any significant way over many election cycles. We continue to have the same relative level of voter participation as we have had over the past decade or more. Additionally, there is a major cost factor to be considered if this proposal was to be passed. Right now our “consolidated” election schedule means that we pay once for the election processing and ballot postage covering our entire membership, the cost for running the consolidated election approximates $210,000. If the region
Proposed amendments to CSEA’s Constitution and By-Laws

Page 3

elections were to be separated from the statewide elections, we would have to pay twice for much of the same costs. The postage cost alone for statewide mailings runs in the area of Eighty Thousand Dollars [$80,000].

By separating the region election from the statewide election cycle, we could incur significant additional costs, covering additional postage and of course the independent agency fee for processing the election itself. In a region election involving just one seat, we could be looking at over $50,000 in additional cost. With only the AFSCME election on the “off cycle” [AFSCME elections are every two years], CSEA is able to handle that sole election in-house, and avoid the costs of outside ballot printing, election oversight, tally and reporting. We did this in 2002 for the AFSCME election without any problems. Any additional drain on the budget for additional election costs would have to come from somewhere and most likely would come from program services, and staffing levels which arguably are already stretched thin. Additionally, staff time involved in any election impacts on many departments including Membership, Central Files, Communications, Computer Services, Print Shop, and Legal. The consolidated election approach has enabled these departments to work efficiently together on the elections with minimal disruption to their respective non-election workload and organizational priorities.

An additional election cycle creates the potential for disruption and delay in many program and service initiatives. The delegates recently changed the election cycles to create the consolidated election approach, in part, to simplify our elections. We had a history of having major elections every year. After many complaints and concerns, in 1998 the delegates approved the consolidated approach and extended the terms of office for statewide, region and board seats so as to have fewer elections. The Committee believes that we should not keep changing the election procedures every couple of years. The recent changes were made for good reasons and after much deliberation. FOR THE PURPOSE OF PUTTING THIS AMENDMENT BEFORE THE DELEGATES, ON BEHALF OF THE COMMITTEE, MOVE THE ADOPTION OF THIS AMENDMENT. THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS A “NO” VOTE. The following proposal was submitted by Nicholas Paulino of Local 815.

ARTICLE III – Statewide Elections

Section 1. ELECTION TERMS

(a) TEXT REMAINS THE SAME.
(b) TEXT REMAINS THE SAME.
(c) [Commencing with the election cycle in year 2004, elections for the ten officers of the Association and for the Board of Directors shall be held in such manner as to allow for the commencement of four year concurrent terms of office as of March 1 of the election year. The schedule for the elections shall be adjusted to allow for such term commencement.] COMING THE ELECTION CYCLE IN YEAR 2008, ELECTIONS SHALL BE FOR THE STATEWIDE OFFICERS AND THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS ONLY. The

Region Officers shall be elected as provided in Subsection (a) 1. of this Article.

EXPLANATION: The explanation provided with the proposal was as follows: “The justification for this change should be obvious. By removing the Region Officers from the election cycle and putting them off cycle it allows for Region Officers to run for any statewide office without placing their Region Officer position in jeopardy, should they lose the election. This allows for the most qualified candidates to seek a higher office in the Association.”

The Committee does not support this proposal. In addition to the financial and resource reasons set forth in the Committee’s position regarding the prior proposal to separate the region and statewide elections, the Committee believes that these elections should be run on the same cycle and serve concurrent terms for additional reasons. The Region Presidents serve as Vice Presidents of the Statewide Association. They are part of organization-wide planning and implementation. Budgets, long range program designs and expansion, legislative and political action planning are part and parcel of the work of the ten Association officers. Having the Region Presidents and other region officers elected to cycles inconsistent with the statewide officers would be disruptive to the union’s ability to plan and implement projects, programs, and engage in meaningful strategic planning. Additionally, internal union politics would become involved more frequently in matters that should be addressed with the good of the whole in mind and be less, rather than more, fractional. Having the region and statewide elections on the same cycle enables the region presidents and thereby the regions themselves to have more meaningful opportunities to contribute to union-wide budget and program planning. The delegates already have made an important change to consolidate our organization-wide elections and extend the terms of office to four years, so as to require fewer elections and provide more effective leadership, and better long range planning and goal setting. The Committee sees no reason to abandon this new course so soon after these changes.

FOR THE PURPOSE OF PLACING THIS AMENDMENT BEFORE THE DELEGATES, ON BEHALF OF THE COMMITTEE, MOVE THE ADOPTION OF THIS AMENDMENT. THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS A “NO” VOTE.

The following proposal was submitted by Betty Lenon of Local 612.

ARTICLE III – Statewide Elections

Section 2. ELECTION PROCEDURE

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

bonding claim by the Association or disqualified from being covered by the Association's surety bond. Members meeting these criteria may seek office for only one office at each level – statewide, region, or Board of Directors. For example: A member may seek office for region president and one of the four statewide officers. A member may seek office for the statewide Board of Directors and region president and/or Board of Directors and one of the four statewide officers. A member must choose which office he/she will hold if they are successful in winning more than one office.

(b) TEXT REMAINS THE SAME.
(c) TEXT REMAINS THE SAME.
(d) TEXT REMAINS THE SAME.

EXPLANATION: The explanation provided with the proposal was as follows: “This puts in writing a procedure so that the constitution is clear as to who can run for office and is not left for interpretation. While the constitution refers to the region presidents as statewide vice presidents, they are not elected statewide. To prohibit region presidents from seeking both offices at more than one level denies rights of those desiring to seek those offices. The question of costs in possibly having to run a second election, if by chance a member is successful in both processes, should not be a factor as in the last election, at least two individuals ran for Board of Director (where many seats are elected statewide) and one of the statewide offices and for region president. This amendment provides consistency. On the Federal level of our government, individuals can run for President or Vice President and a congressional office at the same time. Democracy should not prohibit those members who meet the qualification to run for office. A member may not be able to run for statewide president and statewide secretary; a member may not run for a region president and a region secretary.”

The Committee does not support this proposal. Once again, election costs are a significant factor that we must keep in mind. Establishing an election process that increases the likelihood of having to hold special elections is contrary to good planning and resource deployment. In our elections, a candidate can run for statewide position and board position at the same time. Similarly, a candidate can run for region and board positions at the same time. However, a candidate cannot run for statewide and region position at the same time. All the reasons set forth by the Committee in opposition to the prior two proposals to separate the region and statewide elections apply equally here.

FOR THE PURPOSE OF PLACING THIS AMENDMENT BEFORE THE DELEGATES, ON BEHALF OF THE COMMITTEE, MOVE THE ADOPTION OF THIS AMENDMENT. THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS A “NO” VOTE.

The following proposal was submitted by Betty Lenon of Local 612.

ARTICLE III – Statewide Elections

Section 4. ELECTION AGENCY

(The Board of Directors shall select an impartial, disinterested agency outside the public service,
The Committee recommends a "yes" vote.

The following proposal is submitted by the Chair of the Committee as a housekeeping matter.

ARTICLE V – Judicial Board
Section 3. PROCEDURE
(a) Charges against individual members.
(1) TEXT REMAINS THE SAME.
(2) TEXT REMAINS THE SAME.
(3) The Complaint must contain the name, address, last four (4) digits of the social security number, and Local of the member making the complaint and the name, address, and Local of any party against whom the complaint is made. The complaint must set forth a clear, concise statement of the alleged wrongful conduct together with the dates and places where the conduct took place, and the names, addresses and telephone numbers of any witnesses to the alleged wrongful conduct. If a violation of a CSEA constitution must be included; if the complaint alleges a violation of a mandate of the Board of Directors of the statewide Association, the specific mandate must be stated. The complaint shall be accompanied by documentation and/or a statement signed by the member which supports the complaint and must also contain a statement by the member making the complaint that the person against whom the complaint is made has been given a copy of the complaint. Thru (14) TEXT REMAINS THE SAME.

EXPLANATION: The Committee supports this proposal. Throughout the Union, changes have been made to our practice of using a member’s full social security number on election nominating petitions and other forms; we now only require the last four digits of a member’s social security number, along with the first initial of their last name be used, to identify the member. This proposal seeks to conform the Judicial Board By-Laws Article V to this practice. In April 2004, the Judicial Board changed its own procedures to reflect this shorter identifier. Based on the introductory explanation above and the action of the Judicial Board, the Committee recommends the approval of this amendment.

FOR THE PURPOSE OF PLACING THIS AMENDMENT BEFORE THE DELEGATES, ON BEHALF OF THE COMMITTEE, I MOVE THE ADOPTION OF THIS AMENDMENT. THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS A "YES" VOTE.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS
The Committee received a proposal from Betty Lennon of Local 612 seeking to give Statewide candidates an opportunity to advertise in an Association periodical in amending By-Laws Article III [STATEWIDE ELECTIONS], Section 2(d) [OATH]. This matter was forwarded to the Statewide Election Committee for analysis. Analysis is incomplete.

ALL CORRESPONDENCE REGARDING PROPOSED AMENDMENTS RECEIVED BY THE COMMITTEE AS OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL DEADLINE OF MAY 15, 2004, HAVE BEEN REVIEWED. APPROPRIATE RESPONSES HAVE BEEN DIRECTED TO THOSE INDIVIDUALS.

Respectfully submitted,
Denise Berkley, Chair, Region 2
Sara Shapiro, Vice-Chair, Region 3
Kathy Martinez-Walsh, Region 1
Lester Crockett, Region 2
Robert Travis, Region 4
Casey Walpole, Region 5
Marcia Olanezkki, Region 6
Sam Mogavero, Retiree Division
Barbara Reeves, Officer Liaison
Nancy E. Hoffman, Staff Adviser
Steven A. Crain, Staff Adviser
Aimee L. Camp, Committee Coordinator
Message from CSEA Local 830 President Jane D’Amico

Kane Pledges Professional Management; Consolidation Issues Still Raise Concerns

ON THE NHCC SIDE

A committee of CSEA unit presidents, myself and the chief negotiator for the contract had its first formal meeting in August with Daniel Kane, the new CEO of the Nassau Health Care Corp. Based on our initial discussion, I believe that Kane is a no-nonsense manager who, as a professional health care administrator with many years of experience in the industry, understands the problems faced by NHCC. He gave us the impression that he will soon be replacing politically connected executives with professional management in an effort to turn the financially ailing corporation around. By the time you read this column, we anticipate that some moves will already be in the works.

Meanwhile, negotiations are continuing with the help of mediator Martin Sheiman. Unfortunately, there has been little progress because of NHCC’s insistence on givebacks in the area of health insurance and other concession demands as well. It was the hope of CSEA that the retirement incentive we initiated would result in the kind of savings needed to financially offset some of NHCC’s demands. However, with only a handful of employees taking advantage of the offer, the financial impact was minimal.

We also discussed the future of NHCC with the consultant Nassau County retained to advise County Executive Suozzi on the mountain of problems faced by the Nassau University Medical Center and the A. Holly Patterson Extended Care Facility. An area of immediate concern to us was the proposal to move A. Holly’s operation onto the NUMC campus. Although nothing was resolved, we received enough information to begin formulating a CSEA plan to protect the workers of both facilities in the event such a plan comes to fruition.

Meanwhile, CSEA has been reaching out to Legislators and a wide range of community-based organizations in an effort to educate them on the pitfalls of tampering with Nassau’s public health care system and to solicit their support in our efforts to save that system. Included among these groups are senior citizens, veterans, chambers of commerce, civic groups and others.

Good news from Albany that will help the NHCC. The state Legislature killed the governor’s proposed “sick tax” increase for public nursing homes and the creation of a new tax on public hospitals.

other departments will move to new quarters on Charles Lindberg Blvd. in Uniondale. However, CSEA has filed an “Improper Practice” against Nassau County with the Public Employees Relations Board (PERB) over the county’s refusal to properly protect the social services employees when they move to their new building. CSEA has offered reams of documentation on the very real dangers of not providing the protection of Plexiglas barriers between workers and clients. We will not compromise the safety of our members or the risk to the public.

We are also fighting the county’s plans to consolidate all vehicle repair work under the umbrella of one department of Fleet Services. Over the summer, we have had meetings with employees and management on this issue. We are skeptical at best that this plan is workable, cost effective or in the best interests of the departments it is intended to serve. The needs of each department are different, as are the training requirements, clearances and Civil Service job specifications for workers. The same is true for the county’s proposal to consolidate maintenance services by moving our employees in the Police Department maintenance area to DPW, a proposal we also believe to be unworkable.

The new county contract is now available on the CSEA website at www.csea830.org. Contract books are at the print shop nearing completion and will be distributed as soon as possible.

Yours in solidarity,

Jane M. D’Amico, President
CSEA Local 830

GOOD NEWS FROM ALBANY THAT WILL HELP THE NHCC. THE STATE LEGISLATURE KILLED THE GOVERNOR’S PROPOSED “SICK TAX” INCREASE FOR PUBLIC NURSING HOMES AND THE CREATION OF A NEW TAX ON PUBLIC HOSPITALS.

ON THE COUNTY SIDE

The majority of issues related to the movement of several major departments to the new location for Health and Human Services have been resolved. Under the proposed Real Estate Consolidation program, social services and several
LEGAL UPDATE

Retiree Health Benefits — Are They Untouchable?

By Nancy E. Hoffman
CSEA General Counsel

You may have heard or read recently about a new rule that could affect retiree health benefits. The area of retiree health benefits is very complex and often resolution of issues is so dependent on individual facts as to make it near impossible for us to give any “general advice or guidance.” With this new proposed rule, however, a little understanding will go a long way to minimizing concerns and enable you to understand exactly what the rule is and what it is not.

On April 22, 2004, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (generally referred to as “EEOC”) voted to approve a proposed final rule regarding retiree health benefits under the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (“ADEA”). The purpose of the rule is to create a regulatory ADEA exemption that would permit employers under certain circumstances to lawfully alter, reduce or eliminate retiree health benefits when the covered retiree becomes eligible for Medicare health benefits or other state-sponsored retiree health benefits program.

The new rule seeks to reverse a Pennsylvania court that found unlawful age discrimination when a county treated Medicare eligible retirees less favorably than younger retirees with respect to health insurance coverage. The EEOC believes its new rule will encourage employers to offer retiree health benefits up to Medicare eligibility, by eliminating the fear that such a retiree health care plan violates the ADEA prohibition against age discrimination.

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It should be emphasized that the EEOC rule is limited to eliminating potential liability for age discrimination under the ADEA. The rule should not impact breach of contract actions challenging an employer’s decision to unilaterally decrease retirees’ health benefit levels from those set in a collective bargaining agreement at the time the employee retired. Similarly, the rule should not impact the current duty of employers to negotiate in good faith regarding changes in retiree health care benefits.

As with any other changing area of law, should you believe that you have an issue or need additional information, please contact your Labor Relations Specialist and he or she will be able to answer your questions or refer them to the CSEA Legal Department for review.

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Oct. 17 at Jones Beach

Members Urged to Join CSEA Team At ‘Making Strides’ Cancer Walk

Local 830 President Jane D’Amico is urging all CSEA members to participate in the five-mile charity walk, called ‘Making Strides Against Breast Cancer,’ set this year for Sunday, Oct. 17 at Jones Beach. Last year’s CSEA team raised more than $20,000 for this important cause. CSEA’s Long Island Region has been designated once again a “Flagship Sponsor” of the event, according to Bobbi Eisgrau, Long Island Region Women’s Committee chair and Local 830 secretary.

“It’s a very important cause and we are proud of CSEA’s outstanding participation in the past. It is our hope that we can surpass all previous years,” D’Amico said. The walk begins and ends at Parking Field No. 5, proceeding along the Jones Beach Boardwalk and circling back to the starting point. Registration and “rolling” start will take place continuously from 9 to 11 a.m. at the CSEA tent. An estimated 2,000 Long Island women will be diagnosed with breast cancer this year, according to the American Cancer Society. Funding raised through the walk will support scientific research into causes of breast cancer and other important programs and facilities for Long Island residents.

Eisgrau urged all members and their families and friends to join the CSEA team for the Oct. 17 walk. Those wishing to participate or who desire additional information can call 571-2919. Sponsorship packets are available through your unit representative or at the Local 830 office in Mineola. All members of the CSEA team who submit a completed sponsor sheet with pledges totaling at least $50 will receive a specially designed commemorative long-sleeve T-shirt with the event logo and the CSEA logo. T-shirts will be distributed while supplies last on a first-come, first-served basis when pledges are returned to the CSEA office in Mineola on Wednesday, Oct. 13, between 10 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. T-shirts will not be distributed on the day of the walk.

If it hasn’t already, breast cancer will likely touch you or someone you know. The disease will strike more than 200,000 times this year and claim more than 40,000 lives. Join Making Strides and help make breast cancer a thing of the past. Making Strides is a non-competitive walk designed to raise awareness, foster camaraderie, and raise funding for breast cancer research, patient services, education, and advocacy.

“Making Strides” Cancer Walk

Sponsorship Information

What: Making Strides Against Breast Cancer 5 Mile Walk
Where: Jones Beach State Park
When: Sunday, Oct. 17, 2004
Time: Registration & Start 9-11 a.m. (Rolling start)
Purpose: To raise money for breast cancer research, programs and facilities
Sponsorship Packets: Get them from the “team captain” or at the CSEA office, 400 County Seat Drive, Mineola.
Returning Packets with Pledge Money:
Wednesday, Oct. 13 - 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., CSEA Office, Mineola.
Commemorative T-Shirts: While supplies last, all participants returning sponsorship packets with pledges totaling $50 or more, will receive specially designed T-shirts — first-come, first-served. Shirts will NOT be distributed on the day of the walk.
More Information: Call 571-2919
How to Complete a Voter Registration Application

Filling out the voter registration application must be taken very seriously. Improperly completed applications can be rejected by the Board of Elections, thereby depriving you of your right to vote. New York state recently simplified its voter registration applications. Although they are now much easier to complete, the following points should be noted:

1. **Type of application:** Check the appropriate box. If you’ve never voted before, check “New Registration and Enrollment.”
2. **Citizenship:** This section **MUST** be completed. If you are a U.S. citizen either by birth or naturalization, check “YES.” You cannot legally register and vote if you are not a U.S. citizen.
3. **Name:** Fill your name in completely - last name, first name, middle initial.
4. **Home address:** Enter your complete HOME address.
5. **Mailing Address:** Complete this section ONLY if your mailing address is different from your home address.
6. **Date of birth:** Fill in completely - month, day, year of birth.
7. **Descriptive information:** Circle, as appropriate.

To register to vote in New York state you must:
- Be a U.S. Citizen;
- Be 18 years old by Dec. 31 of the year in which you file this form. You must be 18 years old by the date of the general, primary or other election in which you want to vote;
- Live at your present address at least 30 days before an election;
- not be in jail or on parole for a felony conviction;
- not claim the right to vote elsewhere.

Oct. 8 Is Voter Registration Deadline; You Can’t Vote Unless You’re Registered

To vote, you must be registered.

The last day to postmark a voter registration application this year is Friday, Oct. 8. It must be received by the Board of Elections no later than Oct. 13. If you call CSEA headquarters in Mineola (571-2919) we will be happy to get an application to you. You can also have a registration form sent to your home by calling the Board of Elections Hotline — 1-800-FOR-VOTE. The call is free.

Watch for CSEA Endorsements In October Issue Of The Express

John Kerry will work to:

- Create Jobs
- Protect Right to Organize a Union
- Protect Wages and Workplace Rights
- Protect Worker Safety
- Enforce Equal Pay
- Ensure Access to Affordable Health Care

‘We are proud to support a candidate who will stand up for America’s workers, fight to keep good-paying jobs here in the United States and make sure every American has access to affordable healthcare.’

‘Senator Kerry has a proven record of fighting for working families and a real plan to get this country back on track.’
Openings Available for Defensive Driving Course

A defensive driving course that will save participants a significant amount of money on their automobile insurance will be held again this fall. Two six-hour courses will be offered in three-hour segments, one on Wednesday and Thursday, Oct. 13-14, and another on Monday and Tuesday, Nov. 15-16 from 6-9 p.m. each night. A full six-hour class will run straight through on Saturday, Nov. 6, from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. with a half-hour lunch break (bring your own lunch).

When the program is completed, participants are eligible for an immediate 10 percent discount on their auto liability and collision insurance for a three-year period on all vehicles for which they are the principal operator. Those who have had moving violations will receive a four-point reduction on their driving record.

The location for all sessions is Nassau CSEA Headquarters at 400 County Seat Drive, Mineola, in the basement of the south wing. Family and friends of CSEA members are also welcome to participate, but no children are allowed in the class. Since class size is limited, early registration is suggested.

The cost of the course is $25 per person for CSEA members and $35 for non-members. For more information call Judy at 571-2919, ext. 10.

Now On Sale

“Entertainment 2005” Books Offer Members Terrific Savings

CSEA is once again offering as a member benefit “Entertainment 2005” books for just $20 each.

The books, now on sale, offer members discounts as high as 50 percent on hundreds of items, including air fare, fine restaurants, fast food restaurants, hotels, movies, car rentals, museums, limos, lift tickets, videos, hair salons, storage facilities and many more too numerous to list.

“These books will save the buyer many times the cost of the book even if used only a few times,” said CSEA Local 830 President Jane D’Amico.

Savings include such items as two-for-one entrees at neighborhood restaurants, big discounts on movie tickets, discounts and/or upgrades at scores of hotels, even discounts at local deli’s, McDonalds and Dunkin’ Donuts. Even though the discount books are designated as “2005,” purchasers can begin using them immediately and can continue to enjoy the great discounts they offer through Nov. 1, 2005.

“They also make a wonderful and thoughtful gift for birthdays, other special occasions and for the holidays,” D’Amico said.

CSEA members interested in buying an “Entertainment 2005” book can do so by calling Judy at 571-2919.

Event Set for Oct. 2

Tickets Now On Sale
For CSEA Annual Picnic

Tickets are now available for the CSEA Local 830 Annual Picnic and Information Fair, set for Saturday, Oct. 2, 2004. The Social Committee has once again held the ticket price for bargaining unit members to $6. Family members and friends pay just $10. The price is $5 per person for children ages 6 to 12. Children 5 and under are admitted free.

This year’s picnic will be held again at Eisenhower Park near Parking Field No. 5. It will run — rain or shine — from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

As always, the day promises to be a memorable one, with games for adults and children; dancing to the music of DJ Joey; information booths, and raffles, prizes and giveaways. Food will include hamburgers, hot dogs, corn on the cob, barbecued chicken, potato salad, watermelon, soda and punch.

Tickets may be purchased at the CSEA Local 830 Office, 400 County Seat Drive, Mineola, or through your unit president. Persons wishing additional information may call 571-2919 during regular business hours.

Crossing Guards to Celebrate 50th Anniversary Oct. 14

The Crossing Guards Unit will celebrate its 50th anniversary with a dinner-dance on Thursday, Oct. 14, at the Fox Hollow Inn in Woodbury.

According to Unit President Mary DeMare, the event will include a cocktail hour, full dinner, open bar and live music as well as raffles and prizes. The price is $65 a person.

“This is a wonderful opportunity for us to recognize the great job that our crossing guards do day after day in protecting our greatest resource, our children," said Local 830 President Jane D’Amico.

The event will run from 6:30 to 11 p.m. DeMare advises those interested in attending to reserve early because seating is limited. Unit members can contact their precinct representatives for tickets. Others can mail their checks to Carol Colwell, 345 North Kentucky Ave., North Massapequa, NY 11768. Checks should be made out to “Nassau County Crossing Guard Unit.”

The Fox Hollow Inn is located at 7725 Jericho Tpke in Woodbury, just east of the Seaford Oyster Bay Expressway.
Veterans Corner

Nassau Tax Exemptions Available for ‘Active Duty’ and Reserve Vets

By Edward G. Aulman
Nassau County Veterans Service Agency

According to Marc Michielet, Deputy Assessor in Nassau County, veterans of the Guard and Reserve who were called up for active duty for any service other than training during a period of war are entitled to veterans’ exemption on the town and county portion of their real estate taxes.

This is a change from past practices and may benefit many more veterans. A difficulty remains, however, since the veteran must provide proof that his service was for other than training. Copies of orders showing that the service was for other than training must be presented to the Assessor’s Office along with the application and a copy of the deed. If you think you qualify call me at the Veterans Service Agency at 516-572-8452.

Other improvements at the Assessors Office include keeping the Veterans Desk open year round including all of September to December and cross-training assessment personnel to handle veterans and other exemptions and updating the almost 70,000 files.

The veterans’ exemption is for wartime veterans and their spouses only. If the veteran dies, the widow retains the exemption but it cannot be passed on to other family members or a new owner of the home. This fall, numerous letters will be mailed to verify eligibility of some recipients.

Freeport National Guard Activated

For the first time since World War II, the 42nd Infantry Division Band headquartered at the Army National Guard in Freeport has been activated for duty in Iraq.

The unit that can provide music for military occasions is primarily a communications security unit and is going to a combat area to provide that service.

Nassau Invites Military to Use Pools

Active duty, Reserve and National Guard families are now permitted to use Nassau County pools free of charge. A Military ID must be presented to receive this privilege. Call 516-572-0200 for pool locations.

Veterans Service Agency Continues to Help the Homeless

The Nassau County Veterans Service Agency (VSA) has been awarded second year funding for the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program. A homeless veteran is any veteran who does not have a place of his or her own. He or she may be living on the street, at a shelter, or living with friends or family. The VSA working with the Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Social Services and many other private businesses and agencies are helping these veterans find employment.

Eisenhower Park Needs Vietnam Monument

A visitor to the Veterans Plaza in Eisenhower Park will see more than two dozen monuments to our veterans from every war and veterans organization. The location is quite beautiful and schools have begun bringing students there for history field trips. 58,000 American men and women died in Vietnam yet that war is not yet recognized with an appropriate edifice. If you would like to make a donation to construction of a Vietnam Memorial or if you would like to have a veterans name inscribed on the Walls of Honor, contact the Monument Fund at 516-681-8214.

Many Fun Trips This Fall

There’s still time to sign up for several remaining trips offered by CSEA Local 830 for 2004, according to CSEA President Jane D’Amico. Discount travel is open to members, family and friends.

And once again, CSEA’s in-house travel coordinator Alice Groody has teamed up with Coach One to put together nice mix of places to visit in a price range that members can afford. There are five remaining trips for 2004, including two one-day trips and three overnights.

“[I]f you’re looking to get away for an overnight or just for the day at a great price, these trips are tailor made for you,” D’Amico said.

Because space is limited on all trips, Groody strongly suggests interested persons make their reservations early. “Trips are booked quickly and I don’t like to see people disappointed,” Groody said.

CSEA trips are paid for in full by participants and are not subsidized in any way with union dues. As such, a small non-refundable fee of $3 for day trips and $5 for overnights, has been added to the price of the trips to help offset CSEA’s administrative costs. Prices, however, remain a great bargain.

Trips remaining for the year 2004 are as follows:

Sept. 8 & 9 — Three Little Bakers & Atlantic City including dinner show and breakfast, cash bonus. ($200 per person, double occupancy)

Sept. 19-22 — Williamsburg, Virginia including three breakfasts & dinners, museum visits, tours, etc. ($465 per person, double)

Oct. 11 — Fall Foliage — Colorful Catskills, lunch, tour, German beer & wine tasting. ($65 per person)

Nov. 3 & 4 — Atlantic City & Show — break & lunch, cash bonus, more. ($176 per person double)

Dec. 1 — Christmas in the City — Self-guided tour of Metropolitan Museum of Art, lunch at the museum, Rockefeller Center, Tavern on the Green, tour of St. Patrick’s Cathedral, more. ($63 per person)

Travel to all destinations is via Deluxe Motorcoach, departing from Field No. 6 in Mineola. Arrangements have been made for participants to safely park their cars.

For complete itineraries and prices, or for any additional details, members may call Alice Groody at 571-2919, Ext. 26 on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays or Kay at 573-7565 Monday and Friday during business hours.

A group of more than 50 CSEA members, family and friends toured several national parks in the West this summer as part of another successful CSEA-sponsored trip. Here, the happy travelers stop to pose for a picture at Jackson Hole, Wyo.
Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

As we celebrate the contributions of working Americans this month, I thought it was fitting to remind you that we are all part of a large and vigorous labor movement.

From the first Labor Day, celebrated Sept. 5, 1882, when working people marched for labor law reform, to the Sept. 1, 2004 AFL-CIO NYC march to Take America Back, we are all the proud heirs of a noble and activist trade unionist heritage.

The Labor Movement in America raised the bar for everyone. Without unions there would not have been an eight-hour day, paid vacations, pensions, health care, or decent wages. Without unions there would not have been Social Security, Medicare, civil rights or aid to education. But all around us, the reactionary Forces of Greed are chipping away at these gains and many of our working brothers and sisters are fighting tooth and nail just to keep these gains, which are so taken for granted.

So, the struggles of unionized telecommunications, health care, construction, retail, supermarket and manufacturing workers really are as important as our own. Because as the Wal-Mart-ization of America illustrates, where there is no union protection, the drive to cut wages, eliminate benefits, as well as any notion of job security, only gains speed and momentum, making it harder for us to maintain the protections that we have.

Make no mistake. When you shop at discount centers like Wal-Mart, guided only by the cheapest price, you cheapen the value of someone else’s labor. When you buy a foreign, non-union made vehicle, you are stomping on your union brother or sister’s ability to either get a job, or keep a decent job in this country. Turning the key on a new foreign car actually turns off another American’s ability to have a decent life.

When you buy cheap, foreign-made clothing, you are supporting companies that chain impoverished women and children to sewing machines and work them to exhaustion — without breaks, without decent pay, without any benefits at all.

And when you buy sweatshop goods, you make it easier for American companies to turn American workplaces into sweatshops, too. That’s for the few American companies that haven’t outsourced their jobs yet.

That’s why the cry of “Buy Union! Buy American!” is not an empty slogan.

When you buy union, buy American, you are defending the American dream for you, your children, and the children of other union workers in this country.

Let us remember the words of the great George Meany:

“Every piece of progressive social legislation passed by Congress in the 20th century bears a union label.” That’s why I encourage you to make buying union a way of life.

Because the reality is that men, women and children fought, and some died, to make that union label possible.

In solidarity,

Nick LaMorte, President Long Island Region AFL-CIO