A sweeping overhaul of AFSCME will power political action programs, fund new organizing drives, open a leadership institute and mobilize a 40,000-member activist army. It’s just some of the impact of AFSCME’s historic 37th International Convention held in Chicago Aug. 7-11.

See Pages 3 and 4.
Cattaraugus County part-time workers join CSEA

LITTLE VALLEY — Part-time workers in Cattaraugus County are the newest members of CSEA.

The Public Employment Relations Board recently certified the part-time county workers as a new bargaining unit. The PERB recognition follows an administrative law judge’s recommendation earlier this summer that the workers be granted certification without an election.

“The officers and members of the Cattaraugus County Local are the driving force behind this effort,” said CSEA Western Region President Flo Tripi. “They recognized the importance of bringing the part-time workers into the union and they went out and made it happen.”

The organizing effort began late last year and about 70 percent of the employees signed union cards, said Labor Relations Specialist Robert Mueller. The new bargaining unit has more than 220 members.

It is expected the unit will help stop a decline in working conditions in the county.

“The local held a strategic planning session last fall and we established organizing the part-time workers as one of our top priorities,” said Cattaraugus County Local President Clara Ramadhan.

“We are finding that when a full-time employee resigns or retires, the county is replacing that person with two part-timers. That, over time, erodes the strength and working conditions of the work force since the part-time workers had no protection.”

The new unit recently installed interim officers and formed a negotiations committee to prepare to negotiate its first contract.

“We are surveying the members of the new bargaining unit to determine the issues important to them,” Cattaraugus County Unit President Cheryl Smith said.

The part-time workers asked the county for voluntary recognition during the spring. The PERB pre-hearing conference took place in June after the county refused the voluntary recognition.

— Lynn Miller

New law gives Westchester Medical Center more state, county aid

VALHALLA — Gov. George Pataki recently signed into law a CSEA-backed bill that increases state funding to Westchester Medical Center, giving the hospital a boost toward achieving long-term fiscal stability.

The law provides the hospital $25 million in additional state Medicaid money annually for the next three years, beginning this year.

State Sen. Nicholas Spano sponsored the legislation in the Senate, and Assemblyman Richard Brodsky sponsored the law in the Assembly. Westchester Medical Center is included in both lawmakers’ respective districts. The law also includes a maintenance of effort clause to ensure Westchester County also meets its financial responsibility to the hospital. The county must contribute $85 million to Westchester Medical Center during the next three years.

CSEA represents more than 1,800 public and private-sector workers at the hospital.

CSEA President Danny Donohue poses at a recent Saratoga event sponsored by the Foundation of Advocacy for Mental Health along with Tom O’Clair of Rotterdam, State Assembly Minority Leader James Tedisco, former New York First Lady Matilda Cuomo, and New York State Sen. Majority Leader Joseph Bruno. Donohue and Cuomo are both members of the foundation’s board. O’Clair is the father of Timothy O’Clair, whose suicide sparked the effort to pass Timothy’s Law, which would require health insurance companies to cover mental illness like other illnesses. CSEA has supported the legislation, which lawmakers expect to approve later this year.

Westchester Medical Center couriers join CSEA

VALHALLA — Nearly 60 private-sector couriers employed at Westchester Medical Center have joined CSEA.

The workers are employed by Morrison/Crothall, which also employs the hospital’s private-sector laundry and housekeeping employees, who are also represented by CSEA. The union also represents more than 1,500 health care, technical, dietary and administrative workers at the hospital. The new CSEA members are making plans to negotiate their first contract.

CSEA President Danny Donohue to meet Southern Region members Oct. 18

CSEA President Danny Donohue will visit the CSEA Southern Region on Oct. 18 to meet with members.

The meetings will be held in the region office at 588 State Route 52, Beacon.

Donohue will meet with union members from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m. Please call the Southern Region office at (914) 851-1000 or (800) 778-2732 for an appointment and directions.
AFSCME 21st Century Initiative
A fight worth winning

CHICAGO — CSEA will be playing a major role in a sweeping top-to-bottom strategic overhaul of its international union, which has passed an ambitious reform agenda known as the 21st Century Initiative.

Delegates attending the International Convention of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), AFL-CIO, approved the key components to create a $60 million war chest to expand worker power and reclaim rights under assault.

“In the last six years, we have seen a newfound audacity from anti-union business leaders and the politicians they bankroll,” said AFSCME President Gerald W. McEntee. “They have become shameless in their attacks on working people. As a result, our wages are stagnant. Our jobs are being privatized. Our health costs are ballooning. Our pensions are disappearing. Our contracts are getting tougher to negotiate. Our middle class is shrinking. Even our basic rights to join a union and bargain collectively are now being taken away.”

CSEA leadership is ready to take on the challenge and lead the fight.

“We’ve faced a lot of enemies in our 95 years, and we’ve made a lot of friends. But one thing anyone who knows CSEA can tell you, when we fight, we fight with everything we have,” said CSEA President Danny Donohue, who along with Executive Vice President Mary Sullivan and Metropolitan Region President George Boncoraglio, serves as an AFSCME International Vice President.

“Just in the last 10 years, we’ve fought for and won a pension COLA for our retirees, we’ve fought for and won the Worksite Security Act, and we’ve won for our members across the state the best contracts possible under the circumstances,” Donohue said.

“We can’t grow without rising to the challenges of the times,” said AFSCME Secretary-Treasurer Bill Lucy. “We must fight back and take ground from those who would take it from us.”

To execute the 21st Century Initiative, delegates to the AFSCME Convention approved a dues increase.

CSEA will seek to strengthen our own union’s financial base for the future by reworking our current dues structure to make it fairer and more progressive. When delegates to CSEA’s Annual Delegate Meeting meet later this month, CSEA’s graduated structure based on salary has not been adjusted in more than 10 years. (See President’s Column, Page 4)

Town Hall Meeting
As part of the convention, nearly 4,000 AFSCME delegates, alternates and facilitators gathered to identify priorities to make the 21st Century Initiative happen.

Read the meeting’s final report, and get more information about the 21st Century Initiative at www.afscme.org or www.powertofight.org.

Photos provided by Jim West

“I grew up believing each and every person has a right to make a decent living. We are all working for everyone to have that chance.”

Actor Jimmy Smits

“As long as there are those who are jobless, I ask you to keep marching for jobs. As long as there are those who can’t organize or unionize or bargain for a better life, I ask you to keep marching for solidarity.”

Sen. Barack Obama

21st Century Initiative Goals
• Create a 40,000-member army of volunteers to register 90 percent of AFSCME members to vote on Election Day.
• A goal of signing up 25 percent of the union’s 1.4 million members to each give $100 or more annually to the union’s PEOPLE political action committee, one of the 10 largest PACs in the country.
• A new national legislative campaign to comprehensively reform the U.S. health care system and make affordable care universal.
• Fund new organizing drives to expand union membership and increase AFSCME’s power at the bargaining table, at the ballot box and in the corridors of government.

Under the 21st Century Plan, AFSCME is committed to win representation rights for 70,000 new workers per year.
• Open a Leadership Institute to train union leaders and activists at every level.
A stronger AFSCME means a stronger CSEA

It should come as no surprise to any of you that working people are under attack in our country. Whether it’s a National Labor Relations Board focused on undermining employee rights, a dismantling of hard fought occupational safety and health standards or the relentless drumbeat of greedy corporate power brokers seeking to eliminate pension benefits and protections, we must take nothing for granted.

Against this background, delegates to our 37th AFSCME International Convention meeting in Chicago last month approved an historic overhaul of our union to strengthen us for the fight. The comprehensive AFSCME in the 21st Century package focuses on enhancing our political clout, improving our ability to organize new members and better training our activists for what lies ahead.

None of this will be easily accomplished and will require some change and sacrifice on all our parts. But it is necessary to safeguard the rights and benefits that we have fought over the decades to achieve and ensure our union has the resources to keep fighting successfully at the national, state and local levels.

CSEA will seek to strengthen our own union’s financial base for the future by reworking our current dues structure to make it fairer and more progressive when delegates to CSEA’s Annual Delegates Meeting meet later this month, CSEA’s graduated structure based on salary has not been adjusted in more than 10 years.

For nearly 100 years, CSEA has changed and adapted to new circumstances in ways that have earned our reputation as New York’s leading union. We have never been better or stronger, but the challenges we face have never been greater. I urge you to learn more about AFSCME in the 21st Century at www.afscme.org or www.powertofight.org.

When we fight, we win!
OMH concerns go to commissioner

BROOKLYN — In an effort to improve the overall working conditions at Kingsboro Psychiatric Center, especially staffing levels, CSEA members recently took their pleas directly to state Office of Mental Health Commissioner Sharon E. Carpinello.

“Kingsboro has seemingly received stepchild status at OMH,” said Kingsboro Local President Fitzroy Wilson after describing how inadequate staffing, workplace violence, lack of a secure unit and disparities in promotions are affecting workers. State Sens. Carl Andrews and John Sampson facilitated the meeting. “Too often, we are told that staffing is limited and that there aren’t enough bodies to cover the facility,” said Crispin Booker, Kingsboro Local vice president. “We are not properly staffed at this facility.”

Booker spoke about the night shift, when two, often female, workers would supervise about 24 male patients. He told of a patient recently choking one worker.

CSEA recently led the successful statewide effort to pass the Worksite Security Act, which Gov. George Pataki signed into law in June. The legislation, a comprehensive measure requiring the assessment of risks and appropriate measures to reduce them, will improve security and protect people.

The new law requires public employers with more than 20 workers to assess risk and develop a plan of action to prevent potential workplace violence. The law also establishes a complaint procedure for workers to call attention to the potential for violence. “There isn’t anything you said that I’m not going to take very seriously,” Carpinello said. “If there is a big umbrella here, it is staffing. It’s an issue statewide and something we need to address.”

Fitzroy also called for establishment of a secure unit for patients arriving from forensic psychiatric centers and prisons, and hazard duty pay for workers dealing with these patients. He proposed housing these patients in buildings on the campus that are now vacant. “Those buildings should not be mothballed; they should be utilized,” he said.

Wilson and Booker also discussed the workers’ frustration with disparities in promotions, especially when qualified workers are overlooked in favor of candidates outside of Kingsboro. “It affects the way you work and it affects your morale,” said Wilson. “There are some things that I want to digest with my staff and then come back and start to plan around,” said Carpinello, who joined by Martin Darcy, Kingsboro’s acting executive director.

Wilson stressed that Darcy had already attempted to address a few of these longtime concerns, but was pleased workers had an opportunity to meet with Carpinello. “She appeared to be listening to us and taking what we said under advisement,” said Fitzroy, who received assurances a response or follow-up meeting would take place in a few months.

“The important thing is that she came here and heard our grumble about workplace violence, low staffing, promotions and the need for a secure unit,” said Wilson.

— David Galarza

CSEA prevails in class action grievance

MANHATTAN — CSEA members employed at Manhattan Psychiatric Center have won a class action out-of-title grievance stemming from Gov. George Pataki’s decision to place convicted sex offenders in the facility. “It was Governor Pataki’s choice to place this population in our facilities. It was our union’s decision to make sure our members were treated with respect,” said CSEA Metropolitan Region President George Boncarozzo.

“We fought for their safety, promotions, training and jobs, and I’m proud to report that we won.”

Pataki’s measure was met with controversy and fear. Workers were not given advanced notice or training to deal with the sex offenders, who were arriving from prisons across the state after completing their sentences.

“It’s a different level of patient,” said Manhattan Psychiatric Center Local 1st Vice President Joey Horsford. “They are not psychotic or require medication. They are highly intelligent and sophisticated.”

CSEA members demanded and got additional training, promotions and staff to address these patients.

After several of the new patients threatened workers, the state transferred the patients to a secure unit at another state psychiatric center.

Despite the transfers, CSEA filed a grievance on behalf of 19 mental health therapy aides who had been performing work usually assigned to secure care treatment aides.

The Governor’s Office of Employee Relations ordered the state Office of Mental Health to pay the mental health therapy aides at the secure care treatment aide rate.

As a result of CSEA’s involvement, nine mental health therapy aides were also promoted to secure care treatment aides. The center also hired four new secure care treatment aides, and two more positions were to be filled internally. All of the new aides received training.

“We now have new members and workers, and the selection process has been really good,” said Lee, who, a secure care treatment aide. “The people who are working in this unit are the best of the best.”

— David Galarza

“CSEA Voices

“CSEA is many different unions in many different places but we have so much in common.”

— Deb Hanaa, Health Research Inc. Local, (New York City) and first-time CSEA delegate to the AFSCME International Convention. (For more on the convention, see pages 1, 3 and 6).
Dutchess probation officer honored for work

POUGHKEEPSIE — For Roger “Norm” Roush, a brief college internship opened the door to a career helping at-risk youths and adults.

Now, the state has honored him for his excellence on the job. Roush, a Dutchess County probation officer and member of the CSEA Dutchess County Unit, recently received the state’s top honor in his field when the state Division of Probation and Correctional Alternatives named him Probation Officer of the Year. His department’s director, Mary Ellen Still, nominated Roush for the award.

“We’re very delighted that Norm was selected to receive the award,” Still said. “The reason I nominated him is that Norm is always looking for ways to enhance our service delivery. He takes a real proactive approach and has a solution-oriented focus. Rather than complain about gang activity, he finds ways to address it.”

From class to career

Roush began working for the county 17 years ago following the internship he completed while finishing a juvenile criminal justice degree at Marist College. Before earning his degree, Roush worked in direct care at several facilities, including a stint as a youth aide worker with the state Division for Youth facility in Highland.

“I had to do an internship for my degree program, but I wound up really liking the work here,” said Roush.

Working with youths

While he has spent some of his time with Dutchess County working with adults on program, it’s his work with at-risk youths that has earned him statewide kudos.

Roush is a probation officer for a new juvenile drug court program offered through Dutchess County Family Court. He also teaches a life skills program to middle school students in Poughkeepsie called Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.), a program offered through the federal Bureau of Justice Assistance. He is also the lead probation officer organizing a new electronic monitoring program for Dutchess County youths on probation.

“I had 27 messages on my voice mail just today,” said Roush, who said he enjoys the busy pace.

He also enjoys making a difference in the lives of at-risk youths. That is where he sees his time with middle school students making an impact.

“There are so many things kids today need to learn, such as how to communicate effectively with each other, how to listen to one another, how to make good decisions and pick good role models, and how to deal with their anger,” Roush said.

On the right path

While Roush works most closely with children in age groups considered to be the biggest target for gang recruitment, he feels efforts need to be made from as young an age as possible to keep children on the right path.

“The best thing to keep out of trouble is to get them involved in something,” said Roush, who credits Big Brothers & Big Sisters and several other Poughkeepsie-area programs with helping preteens.

“Unfortunately, a lot of grant money has dried up for youth programs, but our county keeps pushing for funding,” he said.

Though working as a probation officer can at times be exhausting, Roush said the biggest reward comes directly from the clients he works with.

“The most rewarding is when people come up to me on the street and say hello,” he said. “It shows you’ve made an impact on their lives.”

— Jessica Ladlee
Labor Day celebrations across the state

Labor Day is Sept. 4, and CSEA members will participate in Labor Day events across the state. The following is a listing of Labor Day events, and additional events will be added as more details become available.

For more information, contact your region office (numbers listed on Page 4) or check your region page regularly at CSEA's web site at www.csea.com. Open.

Long Island, Metropolitan and Southern regions: Manhattan: New York City Labor Day Parade, Sept. 4. The CSEA parade will meet at 11 a.m. sharp on East 46th Street between 5th and Vanderbilt avenues. Lunch, refreshments and T-shirts will be available, and the event will include door prizes. All members from these regions are urged to march with CSEA and bring their families and friends. More details are available on your region’s page on the CSEA web site at www.csea.com or contact your region office.

Southern Region: Fishkill: Valley Area Labor Federation, Hudson Valley Renegades baseball game, Dutchess Stadium, Fishkill, Sept. 2. Join the Hudson Valley Area Labor Federation and the Hudson Valley Renegades for a Labor Day weekend baseball game and celebration. The first pitch will be thrown at 7 p.m. and fireworks will follow the show. Cost is $8 per person and includes free entry to a play area for children. Units/locals are encouraged to present tickets in blocks. For more information or to reserve tickets, call the federation at (845) 965-7190 or contact the Southern Region office.

Capital Region: Menands: Labor Day Picnic, hosted by the Solidarity Committee of the Capital District. Sept. 4, noon to 5 p.m., Ganser Smith Memorial Park, Menands Road, off Broadway in the village. The event will include music and activities for children and adults, free food and drink, speakers and awards honoring labor and community activism. This year’s theme is “Youth Are Our Future,” so please bring along plenty of kids and other young people. For more information call Doug at (518) 426-0883.

Schenectady: Hip Hop for Labor Festival, co-sponsored by the Capital District Area Labor Federation and the City of Schenectady, Sept. 4, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m., Central Park Music Haven Stage. This family-friendly festival, which is free and open to the public, will feature music, other activities and food vendors. The Central Park swimming pool will be open from noon to 7 p.m. and grills and picnic tables are available on site. For more information, contact the Capital District Area Labor Federation at (518) 272-1000.

Central Region: Syracuse: Greater Syracuse Labor Federation Labor Day Parade, New York State Fair, Sept. 4. The CSEA will meet at 10:30 a.m. between gates 5 and 6 near the fair’s Indian Village. Marchers will get free admission and parking, and the first 200 marchers will get free T-shirts. Members should contact their local or unit president for tickets, who can receive their supply from Communications Associate Mark Kotzin at the Central Region office.

Binghamton: Broome-Tioga Federation of Labor annual Labor Day celebration and picnic, Ross Park Zoo, Aug. 31, 4 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Admission for the event is free. For more information, contact Bonnie at (607) 741-4581.

Massena: Massena Solidarity Day Parade, Sept. 4. The CSEA will meet at 10 a.m. at the corners of Willow Street and Liberty Avenue in Massena. Free picnic lunch at Springs Park immediately following the parade.

Price wins Retiree Mission Achievement Award

Price said he enjoys being a union and political activist. “He knows the power of solidarity,” Donohue said. “When we fight, we win.”

Price serves as vice president of the New York Metropolitan Retirees Local. He retired in 1985 from 31 years of service at the New York State Psychiatric Institute.

Price said he was overwhelmed by receiving the award, which was unexpected.

“I feel that all that I’m doing for the members has been compensated in some small way with this award,” he said.

Price said he enjoys being a union and political activist. “He keeps informed on the issues facing retirees so he can answer questions from other CSEA retirees.”

He said one of his biggest fears is that current employees will not be active in union issues after they retire.

“It seems that when we go to the parades and other events, the retirees outnumber the active workers,” he said. “I’m afraid that when the present employees retire, they’ll go crawl into a hole and not be active on our retiree issues.”

Price also serves as a delegate and member of JPAC and the Congress of Senior Citizens and works as a volunteer bereavement counselor through his church.

“I think Harold was a great choice,” said Peritore. “He’s a longtime, dedicated servant.”

— Mark M. Kotzin

CSEA members marching will get a free T-shirt. Raffle tickets will be sold for a drawing to win 2006 Chevy HHR. For more information, contact Betty Thomas at (315) 379-2230.

Bhaca: Midstate Labor Council 23rd Annual Labor Day picnic, Sept. 4, Main Pavilion, Stewart Park on the south shore of Cayuga Lake, Ithaca, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Join union families and elected leaders for the picnic. Free burgers, hot dogs, ice cream and soda are provided for those who bring a dish to pass. Live music, prizes, raffles, awards, rides and activities for children are planned.

For more information, contact UAW Local 2300 at (607) 272-4108 or the Cortland Workers’ Rights Board at (607) 756-5582.

Western Region: Buffalo: Labor Day Parade, Sept. 4. CSEA members wishing to march in the Buffalo parade should meet at 11 a.m. at the corner of Abbott and Stevenson in South Buffalo.

Rochester: Labor Day Parade, Sept. 4. Members wishing to march in the Rochester parade should meet at 10 a.m. at East Avenue and Strathallen.
Workers save docks from Mother Nature’s fury

TROY — In the aftermath of the damaging rain and floods that swept across the state June 28, a city Department of Public Works crew worked tirelessly to minimize damage and preserve a key piece of city real estate, the Troy docks.

Following the rains, water levels quickly rose 15 to 20 feet above normal, wreaking havoc on boats, marinas and docks up and down the Hudson River. In this waterfront community, a group of public works employees used sheer strength and determination to fight back against Mother Nature.

Supervisor Gene Bechard coordinated repair efforts and commended the group for their teamwork. “This is a great team,” he said. “They worked tirelessly from start to finish. No stops; no breaks — everyone knew what they had to do and just did it.”

A relay of workers set about to first raise, then repair, about 15, 20-foot sections of dock that were mangled together and flipped upside down, ripped out of their hinges by the force of the water.

Troy Department of Public Works employee Patrick Shufelt was working as part of a boat crew. “We were jumping from dock to dock, and they were all strung together,” Shufelt said.

Crew members went to work unbolting the docks, connecting them to a fire boat which raised them up to the wall and uprighted them. Once there, workers checked the dock sections for damage.

“They were pretty well shot,” said Bob Freemantle, a crew member. “They took a beating.”

Repairs were done on site and a few heavily damaged dock sections were taken back to the shop for repair. Once repairs were complete, the sections were lowered back into position and secured in place.

The combination of working in water and the long workday was challenging for the crew but they were up to the task.

“It was pretty hairy being in the water,” Shufelt said. “The current was strong, but we had to stay focused and deal with the task at hand.”

Troy Department of Public Works Commissioner Bob Mirch applauded employees for their efforts in the face of Mother Nature’s fury.

“It doesn’t matter what the situation is; there is no such thing as a clock,” Mirch said. “They work as hard as it takes until the job is done. Troy DPW has always had that commitment to getting the job done.”

“We hammered each dock back down in place,” said Department of Public Works employee Larry O’Brien. “I’m proud of what we were able to accomplish.”

— Therese Assalian

Troy Department of Public Works employees revisit the Troy docks during calmer weather. In the front row, kneeling, are, from left, Larry “The Leaner” O’Brien and Patrick Shufelt. In the second row, from left, are Tracey Thompson, Jeff Quinlan, Bob Freemantle, Wayne Yando and Sean Kiley. In the back row, from left, are Victor Ferrer and Joe Winarowski. Not shown are Mike Hayner and Joe Valenti.

Dockmaster Joe Berlino points to the location of the water level at the top of the wall.

I really liked the Town Hall meeting. For the first time, I felt like I had input and the suggestions that were made will happen.”

(For a report on the Town Hall meeting visit www.alscme.org.)

— Diane Russ, Nassau County Local and first-time CSEA delegate to the AFSCME International Convention. (For more on the convention, see pages 1, 3 and 4.)
Heat wave doesn’t cool school preparations

BUFFALO — Recent oppressive heat didn’t keep CSEA members employed by school districts from preparing buildings for the school year.

Buildings and grounds workers across the Western Region and the state faced high heat both outdoors and indoors. Many of the region’s schools do not have central air conditioning, and temperatures and humidity levels soared.

“For several days in August, our region — and the entire state — faced unusually high temperatures with high humidity,” said CSEA Western Region President Flo Tripi. “We encouraged our members to heed the warnings, to keep hydrated and to be careful as they did their jobs. Health and safety are nothing to take lightly.”

Finish and refresh

Crews in the Newark Central School District worked during the heat wave to seal hardwood flooring in one of the schools’ gymnasiums.

“That floor really gave us a few fits,” said Jim Foster, the unit’s vice president and a head custodian. “Without air conditioning, it was very humid in the gym. We had a problem with the seal. We had to sand it all off and start over. What should have been a three- or four-day job took a lot longer.”

The extra work was the least of the problem.

“We had the doors open, and some fans running,” said Custodian John Benne. “We ran the ceiling exhaust fan. We just sweated it out.”

Newark custodial workers also spent August preparing the classrooms.

“The rooms have been cleaned from top to bottom,” Foster said. “Carpets have been shampooed; walls and windows washed.”

At the Clarence Central School District, buildings and grounds crews faced challenges due to a major district-wide expansion project. Each of the district’s four elementary schools has been fitted with portable classrooms to be used this year by sixth grade students who will be moved because of construction at the middle school.

“They are adding two classroom wings, new parking and a new auditorium,” said building and grounds worker and Unit President Ed Schmidt.

“We tried to keep things going at the middle school. We have been doing our jobs with a sense of humor because we can’t make everyone happy.”

Construction often forced power to be off in the building, limiting the use of fans.

“We used the fans when we could and we drank a lot of water,” Schmidt said. “We worked hard to do whatever we could; but if it is too hot, it’s too hot. It was a battle to clean those rooms when it was so hot. We were telling people to make sure they took breaks. What else could you do?”

In the last week before school started, every buildings and grounds worker throughout the district converged on the middle school for a final blitz.

Keep plugging

At the Victor Central School District, buildings and grounds workers kept their focus while trying to keep cool.

“During the heat, we kept plugging ahead, doing what we needed to do,” said Joyce Gibson, unit president. “The guys made sure they took their breaks in an air-conditioned room whenever possible.”

Construction has taken place this summer at four of the district’s schools. Gibson said, CSEA members worked this summer to move classrooms and prepare the buildings after construction crews left.

“We had a real strong push to get ready the last couple weeks of August,” Gibson said. “We gave it our all.”

— Lynn Miller

School workers face roadblocks

PORT JERVIS — CSEA-represented bus drivers and mechanics employed by the Port Jervis School District were, at press time, awaiting news of their future after a defeated vote to buy land for a new transportation garage sparked rumors of contracting out bus services.

The April 2005 floods were the first of several blows to the Port Jervis School District’s transportation operation, when flooding from the adjacent Neversink River left the garage condemned.

Repairs resulted in mechanics being allowed to return, with a commitment to state officials that a new facility would be built.

Recent flooding exacerbated an already tough situation. Mechanics were again temporarily forced out of the garage, while bus drivers and their supervisors occupied a rented trailer.

Taxpayers defeated the district’s Aug. 15 proposition to use $360,000 in reserve funds to buy land for a new garage.

Local media reported residents objected to the fact the district already owns other vacant land, purchased in 2004 for construction of a future school, and taxpayers did not want to approve another district land purchase.

“I’m very disappointed,” said Unit President Betty Lou Kranz. “Now, the district has to meet again to figure out their next move. If they do contract out the transportation department, it could end up costing much more money and they will lose total control of the busing operations. The routes will be run the way the companies want to run them, instead of the way that’s best for the district.”

— Jessica Ladlee

“We encouraged our members to heed the warnings, to keep hydrated and to be careful as they did their jobs. Health and safety are nothing to take lightly.”

T The Town Hall meeting really impressed me.

The whole idea of everyone coming together and getting feedback immediately was really tremendous.

— Vianna Boyko

Rensselaer County Educational Local and first-time CSEA delegate to the AFSCME International Convention. (For more on the convention, see pages 1, 3 and 4.)
Flood experiences reflect those of hundreds of CSEA members

Frustration, anger, sadness and acceptance

CSEA retiree member Mary Palmer sits outside her flood-damaged Sidney home showing one of several rejection letters she received from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, from which she requested assistance. Palmer's frustrations and losses mirror those of hundreds of CSEA members, family and friends in the Southern, Capital and Central regions.

CSEA Madison County White Collar Unit members worked with administrative staff to collect food and school supplies for flood victims. They also raised money by paying to participate in a "Jams day" at work. Pictured standing are: Linda Jackson, confidential secretary to the Commissioner of Social Services, Russell Stewart, CSEA White Collar Unit President, Karen Bright, CSEA member, Knossel are CSEA members Tiffany Canning and Jonell Stanhope.

How to help

• Visit www.csea.com to see what items you can donate, or send a check.
• Anyone with donations can mail them payable to "CSEA Central Region, " with a notation in the memo column stating "flood relief efforts" and send them before Sept 30 to CSEA Central Region Office, 6055 Kirkville Road, East Syracuse, N.Y. 13057.
• CSEA members may also make donations to the American Red Cross chapters in the Central, Southern and Capital regions by going to www.arccr.org and selecting the chapter in their area by clicking on the link "Browse a List of Chapters with Websites."

Region, CSEA reach out to flood victims

EAST SYRACUSE — Several weeks after severe flooding affected hundreds of CSEA members across Central New York's Southern Tier, CSEA Central Region leaders and activists are helping with recovery efforts.

Central Region President Jim Moore established a Flood Relief Committee, chaired by region Executive Vice President Ginger Shirley, to act as a clearinghouse for relief efforts and help union members affected by the flooding. The committee is working hard at raising money and assessing victim needs through several initiatives.

Relief effort website

A website, www.csea.com, lets visitors know the needs of the union members who suffered losses, and solicits help. CSEA members who have suffered flood losses can fill out an online form to request either financial or material donations.

People with items to donate can also use the site to find out how they can help. Donations will be accepted until Sept. 30. After that date, the region will distribute donations to members who have registered online for assistance.

The committee also sold bright, "safety" green T-shirts, bearing the slogan "CSEA — New York's Caring Union," and held a flood relief and fundraising raffle at the recent Central Region Fall Convention. The committee will also sell the shirts at the union's Annual Delegates' Meeting in New York City. Shirley said she's very encouraged by members' response to flood victims.

"We're really encouraged by the donations that have been coming in and people's willingness to help out their own brothers and sisters," she said. "Some of our members lost everything and need more help than we'll ever be able to give them. We're proud to be doing what we can to help through the generous contributions of our members."

Finally, the committee is urging locals and units to get involved in flood relief efforts by holding their own fund-raising activities and letting them out their brothers and sisters.

— Mark M. Kotain

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THE WORK FORCE

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SIDNEY — From a distance, CSEA member Mary Palmer's two-story house on Oak Street in a quiet, residential neighborhood appears typical of any street in suburban America. Noted among flower beds, a smiling tin cat perched atop a cherry welcome sign by the front steps greets visitors. A peaceful breeze whispers through the street's nameake oaks lining the street, peppered by an occasional ‘pop’ as an acorn falls to the asphalt. Listen longer, however, and what you hear disturbs the serenity — the highpitched whine of a table saw, staccato bursts of a hammer pounding nails. Looking closer, you notice mud coating the welcome sign and pieces of crumbled Sheetrock in the front flower bed amid muddy remnants of dying plants. Alongside the house, you can't help but notice a gaping hole where the first floor meets the basement, a dingy puddle of water and a waist-high mud line marking the garage door. A smell of fuel, damp basement and feel of mud hangs over launes littered with debris, some with small white tufters on them. That's when it hits you. This is no average neighborhood — this is a disaster zone.

One of hundreds

Palmer is only one of hundreds of CSEA members affected by the severe late June flooding across much of New York's Southern, Capital and Central regions. In Sidney, the rain fell so fast that the Susquehanna River, about three blocks from Palmer's house, had nowhere to go but up, flooding about 30 blocks worth of low-lying neighborhoods around Oak Street.

Palmer was out of town at the time for the birth of her granddaughter and was lucky she didn't have to endure the neighborhood's evacuation. That seems to be where her luck ran out. Flooding filled the basement and about five feet of the first floor her 105-year-old house. "When I got home I found out that I didn't have much to come home to. It was a total horror," she said. "Everything you worked for all your life, your family pictures floating outside in contaminated water. Where do you start?"

Palmer is a Ringham Area Retirees Local member, having taken a disability retirement in 1996 from working as a youth division aide at the State Office of Children and Family Services' Bruce Residential Center, in nearby Macedon. Now 81 and partially disabled, she works part time doing dispute resolution for Catholic Charities and doesn't know how she's going to recover financially from the flooding.

"I was going to retire in a couple years, but now I've got to keep working," she said.

Less than pleased with federal response

Structural damage to her home of 25 years, not including destroyed contents, was calculated at $80,000, none of which is covered by her homeowners' insurance.

She did have about $40,000 worth of flood insurance but was told she's only receive about $42,000. She's been told she may not be eligible for aid from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, which she said only gives major assistance to those with less than $127,000 worth of insurance or no insurance at all. So far, she's been less than satisfied with the federal response.

"Your heart is just ripped out and you're living paycheck to paycheck, wondering how you're going to survive and how this is all going to turn out. But, we were told that FEMA was going to help," she said, chuckling sarcastically.

To date she's received six letters of rejection from FEMA, which she has appealed, but so far she's only received $547 for rental assistance from the agency.

A FEMA representative told her theo Sean's showed she received $4,800, but she has yet to see that money.

Following the intervention of state Assembly candidate Pete Lopez and Rep. John Sweney's office, she learned FEMA would provide her a trailer, which would allow her to live on her property. Despite her displeasure with FEMA's response, she said she'd like to bash the federal government.

"I think they could have gotten trailers a lot sooner than two months afterward to accommodate people and I'm grateful for what they've done, but it's very frustrating getting letter after letter saying 'no, no, no, no, no, you don't qualify,'" Palmer said.

Since the flooding, she has lived with different friends while her home is repaired. It sits empty, the first floor stripped to bare studs.

She also lost items to thieves, who stole a relatively new computer and monitor she had bought for her 17-year-old granddaughter, who lived with her before the flooding. Her basement is still in disrepair and smells of bad oil. Her back porch is gone, and she's waiting for money to help pay contractors she's hired to rebuild.

She hasn't received her flood insurance check, because the insurance has to send it to her mortgage company, which will not release the money until half the repairs are done. She's nervous the contractors won't be able to do that much work without a paycheck.

"Nobody has gotten one penny yet. They're going to move on to paying customers. How am I going to get 50 percent done if nobody's got pants?" she said. "I am so sick of fighting over this."

Her health is suffering as a result. She's also upset the federal government won't let her 24- year-old son, who's currently serving in the Army on his second tour of duty in Iraq, come home for a 30-day release to help her rebuild the house they shared.

Meanwhile, Palmer continues to make her mortgage payments on time for a house she can't live in and is terrorized she won't get any money. She's gone to counseling to deal with the stress, which helps some, but she hasn't really given herself the opportunity to grieve over what she's lost.

Continued on Page 12
Frustration mounts for flood victims

(Continued from Page 10)

she’s lost. “I haven’t been able to cry over it yet,” she said. “I will lose it entirely if I do.”

Looking around, sitting on her slightly warped front steps, she talks about what she and others lost.

“It was a wonderful neighborhood — a nice place to raise a family. It was a great place and
now look at it. A lot of people aren’t going to be
able to come home,” she said, shaking her head
sadly and lighting a cigarette. “I had actually
quit smoking before this happened.”

Grateful for the help

Despite her worries, Palmer said she’s been
overwhelmed by the help she received from many
sources. She credited several agencies as being
especially helpful.

“I don’t even know whose clothes I’m wearing.
If it hadn’t been for Catholic Charities, Habit for
Humanity and various churches,
some people wouldn’t have any clothes,” she
said. “The Salvation Army gave us food
vouchers. The Red Cross has been
phenomenal. Everyone (affected) was beside
themselves and didn’t know what to do. The
Red Cross came in and supervised the
temporary living quarters at the middle school
in Sidney. They’ve been absolutely wonderful
to people, and so has the Chenango County Farm
Bureau.”

Palmer said she’s hopeful other CSEA
members will help.

“What you can give time-wise, material-wise
or money-wise to your union brothers and
sisters — you have no idea how much it will
mean to them,” she said.

One of the best ways to contribute is
through the CSEA Central Region Flood Relief
Committee, recently established by Central
Region President Jim Moore. (See Page 11)
Donations from union members will be
accepted through Sept. 30.

Palmer said she was surprised, but happy,
when she learned of the union’s relief efforts.

“I didn’t even think of calling the union for
help,” she said. “I almost cried when I saw the
flame and thought ‘they didn’t forget us.’”

Helping herself by helping others

Despite her hardships, Palmer remains
independent and determined. “I’ve been
through a lot in my lifetime and I’ll get through
this, but I need help,” she said.

Meanwhile, as she tries to rebuild and move
ahead, she’s found the best way she can help
herself is to help others. She and her co-
workers, who all sustained flood damage at
their homes, went around delivering water,
clothing, diapers and other supplies —
whatever people needed.

“It helps you take the focus off yourself and
what you’ve lost and it allows you to help
others,” she said.

Palmer is also trying to work with area
organizations and Farm Aid to bring singer
Willie Nelson to Otsego County to help the
agricultural community hard hit by the
flooding.

Palmer said her advice for others affected by
the flooding or similar disasters is to contact
their elected officials if they aren’t getting
enough help.

“They’re the ones who have the power to get
things done,” she said.

She also advises people to seek counseling,
if needed. “They shouldn’t be ashamed to go
to counseling to help them through this,” she said.

Olga White’s story

Olga White, president of the Binghamton
Area Retirees Local, lives in Vestal, about 50
minutes southwest of Palmer’s home. Severe
flooding also affected White.

“We had (firefighters) come knocking on our
doors (saying) that we needed to be
evacuated,” she said. With the help of her
daughter and granddaughter, she escaped to
higher ground but left behind her house, the
cellar of which was completely flooded with
water and backed up sewage.

“My refrigerator was floating,” she said.

CSEA Binghamton Area Retirees Local
President Olga White tells of her losses after
Southern Tier flooding.

Along with it, she lost her washer and dryer,
her hot water heater and furnace. She also lost
don’t lot of personal papers and possessions.

“Everything was inundated with water. I had to
throw everything out.”

White had no flood insurance and said the
FEMA assistance wouldn’t cover all her costs.

She was surprised and grateful when high
school kids from her granddaughter’s class
came through her neighborhood handing out
department store gift certificates to those in
need, using money they had raised selling hot
dogs and lemonade.

“They were angels — they did such an
awesome job in raising money. I was so
thankful,” she said.

White said she feels disoriented by the whole
experience, especially after her basement
flooded from a less severe storm in April 2005.

Still, she hasn’t given up her optimistic
outlook. On July 4, soon after returning to her
home after the power was restored, she opened
a jug of wine to celebrate with some neighbors.

“It was yucky, and my house was a mess, but
we still celebrated and said a toast to bless
America with a glass of wine in our paper
cups,” she said.

She was also buoyed with hope when a
group of volunteers from an organization called
Samaritan’s Purse, a non-denominational,
evangelical Christian organization and relief
agency, showed up at her house to help remove
moldy insulation from her basement.

“I was sobbing (with joy) to think that they
would go into my crawl space and take out the
insulation,” she said.

Overall, White said the aftermath of the flood
left her with a positive outlook.

“My priorities have shifted and now I don’t
pay attention so much to material things,” she
said. “The response I had from people I didn’t
even know was awesome.”

— Mark M. Kotzin

Delaware County heavy equipment operator Terry Constable, left, rebuilds County Route 47 shoulders in Tompkins. At right, Delaware County bridge engineer Tom Markus caps the ‘wing wall of a County Route 47 culvert, also in Tompkins. CSEA members in the Capital, Central and Southern regions are working hard to help rebuild flood-devastated infrastructure.
Proposed amendments to CSEA's Constitution and By-Laws

Since the 2005 Annual Delegates Meeting ("ADM"), the Constitution and By-Laws Committee met (5) times: January 19, 2006, May 16, 2006, June 19, 2006 and July 11, 2006. The Committee has, amongst its functions, the duty to review proposals and make recommendations to the Delegates regarding proposed amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws. All Committee recommendations are presented to the Delegates, together with the reasons for the recommendations. This report includes proposals submitted for the 2006 ADM. (New language is [underlined]; deleted language is [brackets].)

THE FOLLOWING ITEM IS BEING PRESENTED TO THE DELEGATES BY THE COMMITTEE AS A PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE STATEWIDE CONSTITUTION, PRESENTATION TO THE DELEGATES AT THIS MEETING CONSTITUTES A SECOND READING OF THIS AMENDMENT.

The following proposal was submitted by Region 1 President Nicholas Lamorte, Local 805.

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 15th, and one Local Government Educational Local representative from each CSEA region elected by the Local Government Education Local (LGE) members within each Region. One additional member of the 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 15th, in addition to the foregoing, Local Government County Locals of any county having more than 10,000 members as of September 15th, in the year preceding an election, shall, for the term of office beginning the following March, be elected an additional representative. A region with more than 10,000 education members shall also 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 Locals shall be elected by each Local (L) by a four (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, following, if possible, the election of the affected Local(s), without an election with the approval of the Local Government Executive Committee. No state-wide 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 duties of office will result in automatic removal from the office currently held.

EXPLANATION: This proposal was submitted with the following justification: “Due to the inability of the recent proposal to restructure the Statewide Board of Directors to muster 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. For instance, 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 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 have sufficient support, presumably due to a potential loss of some Board seats. This proposal does not have that impact. Rather the proposal would add an additional Board seat for our educational members in Region 1. The proposal provides that if the number of education members grows significantly in any Region, additional Board seats could be created. Increasing the Board by one seat at this time will not have a serious financial impact. Also, a formula by which an additional education seat is provided when a region’s education membership constituency exceeds 10,000 is the same formula we currently use to determine the number of Board seats for Local Government County Locals. 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, ON REACH OF THE COMMITTEE, I MOVE THE ADOPTION OF THIS AMENDMENT, THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS A “YES” VOTE.

THE FOLLOWING ITEM IS PRESENTED TO THE DELEGATES BY THE COMMITTEE AS A PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE BY-LAWS, IF PASSED AT THIS MEETING, THESE AMENDMENTS WILL BECOME EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY.

The following proposal was submitted by Vice President Nick Lamorte and Vice President George Bonocorso.

ARTICLE IX – OFFICERS Section 3. VICE PRESIDENTS There shall be six (6) Vice Presidents who shall be the Region Presidents elected by the six (6) Regions. The Vice Presidents shall serve on a full-time basis. If the Vice President is unable to obtain a paid leave of absence from the employer, the Association shall, pursuant to law, obtain a paid leave of absence for the Vice President and the Association shall reimburse the employer for the cost of such leave. Each Region shall be under the direction of the Region President who shall be the responsible and chief administrative officer of the Region and who shall perform such other duties as assigned by the President of the Association or the Board of Directors of the Association. The Vice Presidents shall be bonded at the expense of the Association in an amount fixed by the Board of Directors.

EXPLANATION: “If this motion as a housekeeping amendment because the language already exists in the CSEA Region Constitution Article IV, Section 1.1.”

The Committee supports this proposal. The Committee agrees that it is appropriate to conform the Statewide Bylaws language to corresponding language in the Region Constitution and thereby have consistency in the description of the role of the Region Presidents.

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.

The following proposal was submitted by Norman Zobell, Local 602.

ARTICLE II – MEETINGS Section 1. ANNUAL MEETING
(a) ASSOCIATION. The Annual Meeting of the
Association shall be held on call of the President between the 1st day of September and the 30th day of November in each year. The President shall give notice of the date of such meeting to the President of each Local, Region and members of the Board of Directors before April 15th in each year. Each Annual Meeting shall last for five days. Prior to the convening of the general session, [but limited to no more than 2 1/2 days of meetings] shall be conducted which shall be consistent with the internal makeup of CSEA with direction toward balancing unit seminars and State Department meetings for the State Division delegates and appropriate workshops for the various components of the Local Government and Private Sector Divisions.

REST OF TEXT REMAINS THE SAME.

EXPLANATION: This proposal was submitted with the following justification: “At the previous convention fully three days were taken up with presentations of the leadership and various committees, with the result that the actual voting portion of the convention was rushed and half the proposals were voted on at one time. There needs to be greater balance between the antiquities of the leadership meeting with the delegates and the delegates communicating with the leadership.”

The Committee supports this proposal. This proposed language is not different from what is already in place in terms of our Annual Delegates Meeting (“ADM”) schedule. Workshops and required department and committee meetings take place during the first two and half days of the ADM, with our formal business session opening on Wednesday afternoon and concluding on Friday. The proposal does not deviate from our long-standing practice. This format has proven, over many years, to provide meaningful opportunities for the delegates to gain important information as delegates and as activists. Many of our delegates have other responsibilities, and the method of round robin, representative, and steward, and committee member. Many of the time spent at the ADM before the formal business sessions serve to provide the information and skills necessary to carry out those roles in the most effective manner. Other meetings provide new delegates with an orientation as well as opportunities for all delegates to inquire about constitution and bylaws proposals, resolutions, and other convention-related topics before the business sessions open. Once the formal business session opens, the delegates are able to focus on the business of the union and efficiently and knowingly take informed action when called upon by the Constitution and Bylaws Committee, the Resolution Committee, the various councils, and the numerous other statewide committees reporting to the delegates. The proposal opens the adjudication of the proposal to the Statewide Bylaws Language

FOR THE PURPOSE OF PLACING THIS AMENDMENT BEFORE THE DELEGATES, ON BEHALF OF THE CURRENT OR FUTURE ADMINISTRATION OF THIS AMENDMENT, THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS A “YES” VOTE.

The following proposal was submitted by Norman Zdibek Local 660:

ARTICLE III – STATEWIDE ELECTIONS

Section 2. ELECTION PROCEDURE

(a) ELIGIBILITY - TEXT REMAINS THE SAME

(b) NOMINATIONS – TEXT REMAINS THE SAME

(c) TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT – TEXT REMAINS THE SAME

(d) OATH – TEXT REMAINS THE SAME

(g) INTERNET FORUM – An Internet forum shall be created and maintained by the Union, open to all Members. Wherever possible, Regional, Regional and Local Offices may communicate with members without the great expense of mailing and for other purposes.

EXPLANATION: This proposal was submitted with the following justification: “Whereas the cost of mailing continues to rise, and the cost to candidates is becoming more significant, whereas the Union can no longer afford to have candidates who cannot communicate without free speech, or the objective ability to man their campaign without a union.”

Whereas CSEA is a Civil Service Union, without the right to strike; Whereas the natural consequence of that status is its inability to affect working conditions except by affecting public policy; Whereas CSEA therefore has a natural motive to lead the union movement, the state, the nation (and the world), Whereas, CSEA calls itself a “very democratic union” (annual delegates meeting handbook); Whereas the CSEA mission statement lists the “values and working principles” of “honest(y) with each,” “welcoming every idea,” “honoring our differences,” “celebrating(x) our diversity,” “(having) open communications across all parts of our union and in all directions,” “(being) accountable for actions and decisions” and “(commitment) to union democracy”; Whereas Art II, “Purpose & Policy,” of the constitution states that injury to one is injury to all, and not having real campaigns is injury to all. Therefore, it is resolved that BRI is the official policy recommendation and policy objectives of CSEA within CSEA itself, AFSCME and the AFL-CIO and within the rest of the union movement and for the state, nation and the world, and that the union leadership shall be required to give a report to the annual convention about what it has done to promote BRI. Therefore, may the motion to change the CSEA bylaws entitled “Internet Forum” be approved.”

The Committee does not support this proposal. First, the Committee notes that the CSEA website already allows for members to communicate by email to CSEA officers and staff. Furthermore, our website gives members a tremendous amount of information and regularly updates current issues. It also allows for the downloading of numerous publications and forms. Several departments, including Legal, Political Action, Organizing, Member Benefits, Contract Administration, Occupational Safety & Health, and Health Benefits, along with the Employment Law Department and the Work Institute, each have their own web page accessible through the CSEA members website. There is a page listing such material on the CSEA homepage. Departmental web pages provide information on department programs, as well as access to download department publications, forms, articles and other information. There are also links to the Partnership for Education and Training, to the CSEA Regions, and to many Local and Unit websites.

This is a complex issue, and while the proposal receives the full support of the CSEA membership, the Committee believes that it is up to individual candidates to decide whether to run their campaigns using the internet. In recent elections, several candidates did establish websites. As a result, several campaign issues were raised in election protests. The Statewide Election Committee (“SEC”) found that candidate websites allowed for viewer comments resulted in undue campaign mudslinging. Moreover, the websites allowed for candidates to be attacked by outsiders who had nothing to do with the union or its elections, thereby improperly involving nonmembers in our election process. Other sites posted candid pictures of candidates at CSEA events, thereby improperly creating the appearance of an endorsement or support. While the SEC does not encourage the internet use for campaign purposes, it will only address election-related interest issues when they arise in specific protests. The Constitution and By-Laws Committee believes that campaigning via the internet raises many issues that will serve to increase protests and to unsettle elections. Furthermore, the proposal seems to assume that all members, candidates and officers have access to computers and the internet, which is not the case. For these reasons, as well as the possibilities for defamatory suits against the Union itself, the Committee does not support this proposal.

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 “NO” VOTE.

The following proposal was submitted by Norman Zdibek Local 660:

ARTICLE III – STATEWIDE ELECTIONS

Section 1. TEXT REMAINS THE SAME

Section 2. ELECTION PROCEDURE. The Election Committee shall have the responsibility for supervising elections of the officers of the Association, members of the State Executive Committee, members of the Local Government Executive Committee, and members of the Retiree Executive Committee, who shall be elected by secret ballot. Persons running for office may petition and appear on a ballot as a slate or individually. Where candidates run as a slate there shall be an opportunity for members to vote for the whole slate and/or individually. The Election Committee shall supervise the distribution, receipt, and verification of nominating petitions, and the drafting, distribution, verification and counting of the ballots. The ballot must clearly recite the date, place and time for the return of the ballots and must be accompanied by instructions as to how a secret ballot may be cast. The names of the candidates shall appear on the ballot in the order in which they were drawn by lot. Such drawing shall be conducted by the Election Committee upon notice to all candidates. Commencing with the year 2000 election cycle, balloting is to be conducted for all elective offices between January 15 and February 15 of the election year. The distribution of ballots and the return of completed ballots shall be accomplished in a manner which will assure each member in good standing a fair opportunity to vote. Only CSEA members in good standing as of December 1 of the year preceding the election will be eligible to vote in the election. All candidates or their designees may be present to observe each state of the election process, including the ballot count and tally process. (The member receiving the greater number of votes for the office shall be declared elected.) The winner shall be chosen by the method of “additive”. The winner shall be the candidate who receives the majority of votes cast by each voter ranking all candidates in order of preference. Where there is a tie among the candidates, add one to the first choices, and if the first voter cast no votes for any of the candidates, the second choice, add one to the second choices, and so forth until one candidate has more votes than any other, that person is the winner. The Board of Directors of the Association establishes elections rules and regulations governing the conduct of the elections. Such rules and regulations may be adopted by a simple majority of the Board of Directors and may be amended thereafter. Printed copies of the rules and regulations shall be mailed to any potential candidate upon request at any time and to Local and Regional Officers of the year preceding the election. Written votes are tabulated and certified in a timely manner.

REST OF TEXT REMAINS THE SAME.

EXPLANATION: This proposal was submitted with the following justification: “Whereas CSEA is a Civil Service Union, without the right to strike; Whereas the natural consequence of that status is its inability to affect working conditions except by affecting public policy; Whereas CSEA is a ‘very democratic union’ (annual delegates meeting handbook); Whereas the CSEA mission statement lists the ‘values and working principles’ of ‘honest(y) with each,’” “welcoming every idea,” “honoring our differences,” “celebrating(x) our diversity,” “(having) open communications across all parts of our union and in all directions,” “(being) accountable for actions and decisions” and “(commitment) to union democracy”; Whereas Art II, “Purpose & Policy,” of the constitution states that injury to one is injury to all, & any lack of right liberty is injury to one & all Whereas the members & their community & world are in danger of any or all of the catastrophes of “Clockwork Orange” (over-population), “(1984) (global authoritarianism), “Category Scarcity” (Scarcity of services, stocks, space, things (terrorist success), excessive authoritarian retreatment, growing global militarist-industrial complex, &/or economic collapse, Whereas Ranked Ballot (“BB”) is the method of voting that ensures that each voter in order of preference, first the choices and then, if none has 50%+1, to lead in the next choices, &
so on, until someone, most exact in the middle of all voting, finally does have 50%-.

Because where RB always elects the candidate most exact in that process, it is therefore counter-extremist and therefore more anti-
terrorist than all the many recent retributions combined (and that cost-effectively so). Whereas RB gives an equal chance of winning to not just all parties, but all combinations of programs, & is therefore the most light-
footed & Trustee form of this union's previously discussed desire. Therefore, the ballot will result in improved application of all the above listed “values & working principles”, & the solution to all the potential catastrophes above also listed. Whereas RB is a perfect marriage of Freedom & Justice & Tradition & Modernity, Free Market & “Socialization”, Plaisuitin & Jew, & a REAL solution to terror. Therefore may RB be extant as the union’s means to elect its officers.

The Committee does not support this proposal. Use of the proposed “ranked ballot” in our elections would change the way in which candidates are elected by requiring that a candidate must have a majority of the votes [50% plus 1] rather than the current practice of winning with a plurality of the votes [highest number]. A “ranked ballot” system would require each voter to rank each candidate for each position on the ballot. At the tally, each candidate’s votes would be tallied by each different rank they received. For example, a ballot with ten candidates for one position will require the voter to rank the candidates as one through ten. When the ballots are counted, votes were tallied by candidate, by each rank received, that is, how many votes ranked the candidate #1, how many ranked the candidate #2, and so forth. Thus, there would be (10^5) counts for each of the 10 candidates, and therefore 100 separate vote counts for one position (10 candidates times 10 ranks). Then, all of the number one rankings (#1) for each candidate are added up, as are the number two rankings (#2), through the number five rankings to equal more than 50% of the total vote for that position, that candidate wins. But if no candidate has 50% plus 1 then the vote is added as #1, then the number two rankings (#2) are added to the #1 rankings for each candidate and the candidate with more than 50% of the vote based on their #1 and #2 combined rankings is elected. If no candidate has more than 50% of the votes after that round, the process continues with the number three rankings being added, then the number four rankings until finally a candidate receives more than 50% of the vote after all the rankings are factored in, a runoff election would be required.

The potential problems that would arise for the 1100 plus CSEA local and unit election committees using this system is staggering. Such a system would be overly complex, would involve a plethora of very costly, time consuming, and given the fact that recounts and run-off elections may be required, it is as opposed to the exception. A run-off election for just one position at the State level can cost upwards of thousands of dollars. Finally, if a candidate has more than 50% of the votes after that round, the process continues with the number three rankings being added, then the number four rankings until finally a candidate receives more than 50% of the vote after all the rankings are factored in, a runoff election would be required.

Moreover, due to the complexity of the necessary -

voting instructions, and the increased amount of voter attention required to rank the ballot, the Blog believes that voter participation would decrease. This proposal, if implemented, could potentially create a protracted election cycle, with much higher costs, considerable delay in the finality of the tally, and, in effect, dilute the democratic concept of “one member, one vote.” Our members complain now that our elections are too burdensome and costly. This process would serve only to further disconnect many of our members from the election process.

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 “NO VOTE.”

The following proposal was submitted by Norman Zellos.

ARTICLE III – STATEWIDE ELECTIONS

Section 2. Election Procedure (a) (A) RECOMMENDATION – TEXT REMAINS THE SAME
(b) NOMINATIONS – TEXT REMAINS THE SAME.
(c) ANNOUNCEMENT: Candidates who qualify for one of the four statewide offices, for one of the six region presidents; or for one of the six executive directors shall have the opportunity to announce and to have published in the

official union publication a picture and/or listing of their qualifications.

(4) OATH – TEXT REMAINS THE SAME.

EXPLANATION: This proposal was submitted with the following justification: “For a democracy to work the election process needs to be transparent and that means members have the right and the need to know who is seeking office. Publication in our official union publication will provide the members the opportunity to be educated as to the candidates running for office and their qualifications so as to make a decision as to who shall run our union.”

The Committee does not support this proposal. This is not a new issue for the Delegate. In 1997 the Board of Directors undertook a Plan of Elector Control (“SEC”) to review our formerly existing practice of allowing for publication of candidate statements and photos in our newspaper. This practice was limited to candidates in statewide, region and Board of Directors elections. Unfounded allegations of misconduct, mudslinging, publication errors, and other misfortunes had occurred in 1997 when statements were being published and this resulted in the Board decision to review this practice. After thoughtful review by the SEC, and consideration of alternative SEC proposals by the Board of Directors, the Board voted to eliminate the publication opportunity. Among its reasons for doing so, the Board saw serious problems with continuing the practice, as there is no practical means by which facts offered by the candidates as the truth can be verified, or offensive content can be censored. The 2000 statewide election proceeded without publication of candidate statements in our newspaper. At the 2000 ADM, the delegates considered a proposal to restore the practice of allowing published statements. The delegates debated that proposal for the same reasons as the Board had eliminated the practice earlier. The delegates recommended reinstating the Board of Directors that has the jurisdiction to promulgate our election regulations. The guidelines Committee believes that the Board’s elimination of the publication practice was a sound decision. It believes further that resorting back to the practice of publication of candidate statements will open the organization up for possible defamation suits based on the content of published statements. Additionally, an SEC survey indicates that, by far, the greater number of unions do not allow the use of their “house” publication for internal election campaign purposes. This consensus is based on a universal belief that it is not a Union’s responsibility to inform its voters about candidates but rather the candidates’ responsibility to reach potential voters. To allow 20,000 members to be the publisher, newspaper goes to people who are not union members; it is not acceptable to legislate political people, to government managers and to others. To allow unaffiliated and/or unendorsed candidates to have their statements published in our official union newspaper is not good for our union’s image or for its effectiveness at the bargaining table or in the legislative and political arena.

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 “NO VOTE.”

The following proposal was submitted by Danny Donohue, Statewide President; Mary E. Sullivan, Statewide Executive Vice President; Maureen S. Malone, Statewide Treasurer; Barbara Reeves, Statewide Secretary; Nick LaMorte, Region 1 President; George Boscarurgio, Region 2 President; Diane Hewitt, Region 3 President; James Maloney, Region 5 President; and Pio Tuits, Region 6 President.

ARTICLE IV – FINANCE

Section 1. FISCAL YEAR: The fiscal year of the Association shall commence on the first day of October and expire on the last day of September.

Section 2. DUES AND SHOP FEES.

Proposed amendment to CSEA's Constitution and By-Laws
(a)(1) TEXT REMAINS THE SAME.
(a)(2) TEXT REMAINS THE SAME.
(a)(3) TEXT REMAINS THE SAME.
(a)(4) Effective January 1, 2007, and annually thereafter, home earning under $10,000 are subject to
the following schedule: $40,000 to $49,999 $ 575.00
$45,000 to $49,999 $ 585.00
555,000 to $55,999 $ 520.00
$56,000 to $55,999 $ 535.00
(a)(4) Effective January 1, 2008, and annually thereafter, all rates shall increase by the annual
AFSCME minimum dues adjustment.
(a)(5) At an annual amount of three percent (3%) of the dues or agency shop fee or union shop fee paid by
an individual shall be appropriated by the Association for political or ideological purposes. Such annual amount shall
be collected and set aside on a bi-weekly basis in the same manner as dues are collected.
(a)(6) The State Treasurer shall report, in a manner acceptable and in a form prescribed by the
National Labor Relations Act as applicable in that persons choosing not to belong to
CSEA shall not be compelled to participate in CSEA's support of activities or causes of a political or
ideological nature otherwise incidentally related to terms and conditions of employment. The rates shall specify
procedural details relating to notice, dispute resolution and distribution of agency shop fee and union shop
fees.
(b) NEW MEMBERS: TEXT REMAINS THE SAME.
(c) RETIRED MEMBERS: TEXT REMAINS THE SAME.
(d) DISABLED MEMBERS: TEXT REMAINS THE SAME.
(e) LAID OFF EMPLOYEES: TEXT REMAINS THE SAME.
EXPLANATION: This proposal was submitted with the following justification:
"Since the early 1980s, our dues structure has been tied to salary ranges. The Delegates approved the last
revision to the dues schedule in 1995. That revision was made with only a few changes to match dues to earning
levels as of that time. The schedule has not been changed for members earning $40,000 and above. At that
time, less than 10% of our membership earned that amount. Today, a result of our successes at the bargaining
table, 23% of our membership reaches that level.
For the last several years, dues adjustments have been limited to increases for the average
increase, which has averaged 3% a year. The AFSCME minimum dues increase is determined based upon the average salary
increase at the bargaining table for AFSCME members across the country. As a result of these annual increases a CSEA member
paying at the top rate of the current CSEA
schedule pays $20.76 per bi-weekly, which is only
$3.41 more than the member was paying in 2001. Over the
same period, in this group, a typical member’s bi-
weekly salary has increased $523.
CSEA shares any dues increase with AFSCME, the
CSEA Political Action Fund and with our Locals in
the form of increased Local rebates. Only 48% of each
dues dollar increase remains with the CSEA general fund, to pay
the increased cost of our operations, which includes
organizing, legal assistance, education and training
programs, statewide workshops, committee expenses,
taxation, public relations, etc. The portion of
AFSCME dues increases retained after this sharing,
has not kept pace with the increases in our
statewide expenses. Over the last two fiscal years, our
operations have increased statewide. Consequently, this
has been offset by some investment gains. However, as we
all well know personally, investment gains cannot be
prudently counted on to cover operating deficits.
Financial markets do not always guarantee investment
 gains and do, in fact, at times result in losses.
Members earning under $40,000 pay at an average rate of
1.7% of their salaries as dues. The proposal
adapts our dues schedule for members earning
below $40,000 and expands the schedule to add three additional
steps above that level. These changes are necessary to raise required income to offset our increased expenses
and will help us to achieve that increase in a fair and
equitable way for the additional new
members who earn salaries in excess of $40,000 will still
be paying dues at a lower percentage of salary than
members who earn less. Their average dues rate will be
1.2% of salary. But, unless we set our dues at the same
level, the result will be draconian and endlessissa of
differences, some variance in dues as a percentage of salary is inevitable."
The Committee supports this proposal. There has
ever been a CSEA dues increase since 1995, despite
constant increases in the Union’s fixed costs and other
expenses. Except for the vigilance of our managers and
our Finance Department and keeping expenditures to a
minimum wherever possible, our financial picture could
be in a truly troublesome place. Our members have had
raises since 1995, even if not each year, certainly in most
years. For many of our members, since 1995 their
salaries have increased well above our current top salary
tier of $40,000 and now include salaries of
$80,000, $90,000 and in some cases over $100,000.
We could argue that even more salary tiers would be
appropriate, based on the large number of our members
earning salaries above $60,000. However, this proposal
seeks to adjust our current dues schedule in a fair and
equitable manner, without imposing large increases on
either end of the salary scale. We currently enjoy a
level of services and programs that exist nowhere else in
unions representing our jobs and titles. Even so, we
often seek additional staff and services. To grow as
a union through organizing new members and to be
able to maintain our current level of services and
staffing, we must increase our financial resources. Just
as each of us and our families have been faced with
increased costs, so has the Union which now needs our
help in order to continue to remain strong and effective
at the bargaining table and legislative and political
arenas, in fighting legal cases, and in organizing
new members. This new dues structure will result in
increases of only $1.35 to $3.65 per pay period for those
earning above the $40,000 salary level, allowing just
over 40,000 members. The proposal does not
decrease the dues of members earning under $40,000.
The Committee believes that the small increases per pay
period are sustainable at the higher salary levels and will
help generate a very necessary increase in income for the
general fund. The new structure will generate an
increase for our local dues structure, through corresponding
increases in local rebates. The Committee understands
that without this increase in dues income, the Union will
be unable to meet its obligations to cutting services, programs, and
possibly even staff.
FOR THE PURPOSE OF PLACING THIS AMENDMENT BEFORE THE DELEGATES, ON BEHALF OF THE
COMMITTEE, I MOVE THE ADOPTION OF THIS
AMENDMENT. THE COMMITTEE recomm similarly.
"YES" VOTE.

The following proposal was submitted by Danny
Donohue, Statewide President; Mary E. Sullivan,
Statewide Executive Vice President; Barbara Reeves,
Statewide Vice President; Mark S. Malone,
Statewide Treasurer; Nick LaRotta, Region 1 President;
George Boncoraglio, Region 2 President; Diane Hewitt,
Region 3 President; Kathy Garrison, Region 4 President;
James Meeks, Region 5 President; and Flo Tripi, Region 6
President.
Article IV - Finance
Section 2. DUES AND SHOP FEES.
(c) RETIRED MEMBERS (effective October 1, 1993)
January 1, 2007, the annual membership dues of retired
members shall be [twelve] twenty-four dollars ($12.00)
24.00, fifty (50) cents of which, exclusive of rebates,
shall be put in the political action fund.
EXPLANATION: This proposal was submitted with the
following justification: "The Retiree Executive Committee has approved this dues increase from 12.00
a year to $24.00, to help defray the costs of services and
time devoted to retiree issues. The Retiree Locals also have been experiencing increasing costs and limited
resources. In addition to helping with the overall budgetary strain, this increase will allow for
Retiree Locals to receive a small increase in their
benefits.
The Committee supports this proposal. In addition to the
reasons in the explanation that accompanies this proposal, the Retiree Executive Committee, which is comprised of all the Retiree Local Presidents, has
approved this dues increase already. Retiree Locals also have been experiencing increasing costs and limited
resources. In addition to helping our overall general
budgetary strain, this dues increase will allow for
Retiree Locals to receive a small increase in their
rebates as well. Our Retiree Division is over 65,000
strong now and continues to grow. A newly created position of Retiree Specialist, assigned to the Office of
the Statewide President, and requested by the Retiree Executive Committee, is helping to focus a more
comprehensive approach to addressing our Retiree Division needs. This dues increase will help to defray
some of the added costs of this new position and focus.
FOR THE PURPOSE OF PLACING THIS AMENDMENT BEFORE THE DELEGATES, ON BEHALF OF THE
COMMITTEE, I MOVE THE ADOPTION OF THIS
AMENDMENT. THE COMMITTEE recomm similarly.
"YES" VOTE.
The following proposal was submitted by Danny
Donohue, Statewide President; Mary E. Sullivan,
Statewide Executive Vice President; Barbara Reeves,
Statewide Vice President; Mark S. Malone,
Statewide Treasurer; Nick LaRotta, Region 1 President; George
Boncoraglio, Region 2 President; Diane Hewitt, Region 3
President; Kathy Garrison, Region 4 President; James Meeks, Region 5 President; and Flo Tripi, Region 6
President.
Article IV - Finance
Section 3. BUDGET AND REIMBURSEMENT.
(a) REQUIRES TO LOCALS. Each duly organized Local of the
Association which has complied with all of the
provisions of the mandated Local Constitution and this
CSEA Constitution and By-Laws shall receive from the
Treasurer an annual payment of [twenty-five] a
percent [as specified below in this Article IV] of the
membership dues [and twenty-five percent of the]
agency shop and union shop fees collected from the
dues of members in such Locals after the net per capita
taxation of AFSCME, based on the June 1 audit, has
been paid. Such payment shall be produced an amount equal to the net per capita paid to the
appropriate AFL-CIO federations and labor councils in
the State of New York. The expenses of the
deliberations to regulate the arrangement shall be
paid by the Local from such funds as hereafter
provided.
The per cent rebate specified above shall be as follows:
Effective October 1, 2006 24.5% Effective October 1, 2007 24.5%
Effective October 1, 2008 24.5% Effective October 1, 2009 24.5%
Effective October 1, 2010 24.5% Effective October 1, 2011 24.5%
Effective October 1, 2012 24.5% Effective October 1, 2013 24.5%
Effective October 1, 2014 24.5% Effective October 1, 2015 24.5%
Effective October 1, 2016 24.5% Effective October 1, 2017 24.5%
EXPLANATION: This proposal was submitted with the
following justification: "Locals have been paying 25% of dues and agency fees collected after the AFSCME per capita and the State Action Fund payments have been deducted. Rebates to Locals currently total more than $15 million, to the State Action Fund, for the current calendar year. We oppose such deficit budgets. This proposal would reduce the

Resolutions proposed for CSEA's Annual Delegates Meeting

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS for consideration by delegates attending CSEA’s 90th Annual Delegates Meeting, Sept. 25 to 29, in New York City.

1. Fight Against Human Trafficking

Submitted by Laramee (Lynd) Pound
Delegate – Local 918

The resolution proposes CSEA vigorously support Bills A-1858 (NYS Assembly) and S-3014 (NYS Senate) that establish crimes and penalties relating to human trafficking.

The Resolutions Committee recommends this resolution be adopted as amended.

2. Restrict Use of Eminent Domain

Submitted by Laramee (Lynd) Pound
Delegate – Local 918

The resolution proposes CSEA support Bills A-914 (NYS Assembly) and S-3038 (NYS Senate) which provides that the use of eminent domain to take property for the use of a private developer require unanimous vote of the local government board and be subject to a permissive referendum.

The Resolutions Committee recommends this resolution be adopted as amended.

3. Support Our CSEA Songs: “We’re Proud” & “We Are the Union”

Submitted by Sheila Sears
Delegate – Local 314
and
Donna Dutton
Delegate – Local 676

The resolution proposes唱 the delegate body encourages inclusion of these songs at the opening of the convention and each morning thereafter.

The Resolutions Committee recommends this resolution be adopted as amended.

4. Domestic Violence Education

Submitted by Catherine Colavito
Delegate – Local 418

The resolution proposes CSEA continue to develop and provide educational materials and training on domestic violence to its members and features a range of items including fully funding the Violence Against Women Act.

The Resolutions Committee recommends this resolution be adopted as amended.

5. Recognition of Political Discrimination by the New York State Division of Human Rights

Submitted by Gary Steckler
Delegate – Local 680

The resolution proposes CSEA support legislation that unifies treatment of differences in political affiliation, views or activity be recognized by the state Division of Human Rights as grounds for a charge of discrimination.

The Resolutions Committee recommends this resolution be adopted as amended.

6. Health Care Now

Submitted by Joel Schuettz
Delegate – Local 486

The resolution calls on Congress to pass universal health care legislation and proposes CSEA support a single payer health care system. It also directs that copies of the resolution be sent to AFSCME, the AFL-CIO and New York State Congress of_legislatives.

The Resolutions Committee recommended this resolution be adopted as amended.

7. Ranked Ballot as CSEA Policy

Submit by Normand Parent
Delegate – Local 660

The resolution proposes Ranked Ballot be the official policy and/or policy recommendation and objective of CSEA within both AFSCME and AFL-CIO. It also directs that the resolution copies be sent to AFSCME and AFL-CIO.

The Resolutions Committee recommended this resolution be adopted as amended.

8. Asbestos Related Illness Screening

Submitted by Jeannette Engel
Delegate – Local 838

The resolution notes the current scope of required tests for mesothelioma, an asbestos related disease, does not provide for early detection or identification of related diseases that can affect other organs of the body. It also directs that the resolution copies be sent to AFSCME and AFL-CIO.

The Resolutions Committee recommended this resolution be adopted as amended.

9. Member Participation in Organizing – 2006

Submitted by Mary Miguez
Delegate – Local 638

The resolution reaffirms CSEA’s commitment to organizing the unorganized, honors locals, units and members who have participated in that mission, and encourages all members to build our union.

The Resolutions Committee recommended this resolution be adopted as amended.

10. Support Our Troops and Veterans: End the War and Bring Them Home!

Submitted by Joel Schuettz
Delegate – Local 486

The resolution notes that our troops have accomplished their mission of removing Saddam Hussein from power and ensuring that Iraq possesses no weapons capable of threatening the United States and proposes CSEA express its profound gratitude and admiration for the men and women in uniform who supports a time limited support that bring our troops home as soon as possible consistent with their safety and urges the Bush Administration to stop cutting veterans’ benefits.

The Resolutions Committee recommended this resolution be adopted as amended.
What’s In It For You?

It’s back to school time with the CSEA Employee Benefit Fund

What does back to school time mean to CSEA EBF members? Let’s start by taking a look at some things everyone should know about their dental and vision benefits, specifically for those who have eligible, dependent children.

For many CSEA members with school age children, the end of the summer is a time when parents bring their children for dental and vision checkups before the school year begins. The questions you might ask yourself when considering your child’s dental and vision benefits under EBF.

Does my child qualify as a dependent on my benefits? The CSEA EBF covers dependents who meet certain criteria. Dependent children include:

• Your unmarried children, including stepchildren who permanently reside with you and legally adopted children, under age 19.
• Your legal ward under age 19 who permanently resides with you, pursuant to a court order awarding legal guardianship to you.
• Any child or ward described above, regardless of age, who is incapable of self support by reason of mental or physical disability, provided he or she became so disabled before reaching age 19.
• Any child or ward described above under age 25 who is a full-time student (minimum of 12 undergraduate or six graduate credit hours) enrolled in a regionally accredited college or university working toward a bachelor's degree, master’s degree or associate's degree. Technical courses of short duration do not qualify, even if a diploma is awarded. EBF requires that current proof of student status be provided annually, such as a letter or statement from the college’s Registrar's Office or completion of a student status form available from EBF. Student proof forms can be downloaded from the EBF website at www.cseaefbf.com.

Have I enrolled my child under my benefits? You can enroll your child to be covered under your benefits by filling out and submitting an enrollment card to EBF. Enrollment cards can be ordered by calling (800) 323-2732. Press “1” when prompted.

Is my child eligible to receive dental treatment? If your child has never been to a dentist before or if you’re unsure of which dental program you belong to, please call the EBF Dental Department at (800) 323-2732 and press “2” when prompted to find out your child’s eligibility status. If you’ve already seen a dentist in the past and feel comfortable using your plan, please call your provider to schedule an appointment. The provider should have a record of your last visit and what services were performed.

Is my child eligible to receive vision services? CSEA EBF’s plans are available on either a 12 or 24-month benefit basis. If you are unsure of what vision program you belong to, or when the last time the benefit was provided, contact the fund at (800) 323-2732. Press “3” when prompted.

If there are additional questions we can answer for you, please call EBF at (800) 323-2732 and good luck to all our students this school year.

An Ever Better Future

Protecting Your Benefits

Full-time student requirements under NYSHIP

If your child is going off to college, the end of the 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 that 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 students at an accredited secondary, preparatory or trade school, college or other educational institution, and
• Otherwise ineligible for employer group coverage.

Proof of eligibility may be required at the time of claim submission. This documentation is separate from the form the CSEA Employee Benefit Fund requires. Students who want to continue health insurance coverage during the summer must have been enrolled during the previous spring semester and must be enrolled as full-time students for the fall semester.

Unmarried, dependent children will continue to be eligible until the end of the third month following the month in which they complete course requirements for graduation, or if they reach age 25, whichever occurs first.

If your unmarried, dependent child loses his or her NYSHIP eligibility, you have 60 days from the date coverage ends to apply for continuation of coverage under COBRA. Enrollees must send a written request to the Employee Benefits Division within that 60-day period.

If you would like to know more about full-time student eligibility, please see your NYSHIP General Information Book or contact your agency health benefit administrator, usually located in the personnel department.

Promoting Good Health
Summary of July 13 Board of Directors meeting

Editor's note: The Work Force publishes a summary of actions taken by CSEA's board of directors. This summary is prepared by Rebecca Reeves, Statewide Secretary.

ALBANY — CSEA's statewide board of directors met on July 13. In official business, the board:

- Approved a lease for office space at 256 Clinton Ave., Kingston, for Local 856.
- Created a "reserve" to offset Jan. 1, 2007, AFSCME dues increase.
- Appointed Jack McPhillips as a trustee of the Political Action Fund.
- Appointed Michael Flavin to the Directors' Appeals Committee.
- Appointed Abraham Benjamin to the Directors' Budget Committee.
- Appointed Deborah Downey to the Directors' Publications Committee.
- Created Local 528 for state Department of Transportation Region 3/Syracuse.
- Created Local 762 for LiferEmerge.
- Approved appointments of William Bailey, Matthew Zachariah, Mary Horvath, Betty Jo Johnson, Ed Collins, John Vaughn, Lynn Wool and Chris Merrill to the Central Region Political Action Committee and designated Diane Hanson, Anthony Zimbrata, Toni Elmore, Yvette Neu, Tanya Watson, Margarita Wilkerson, Cheryl Melton and Brenda Gamble to the Southern Region Political Action Committee; and
- Placed into administration Westchester Housekeeping and Laundry Local 731 and Riverhead Teacher Aides/Teacher Assistants Unit 8752-01/Local 870.

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

People Person

The People recruiter of the month is July is Jayne Clancy of the Rockland County Local in the Southern Region. She recruited 28 new People members. CSEA's People program protects and improves our jobs, the benefits and protections in Washington, Albany and in your community. Your support and participation is essential in strengthening CSEA's clout in the workplace, in the legislature, in your community and in the labor movement — CALLING DENTAL ASSISTANTS — In July 2003, the state Education Department passed a law that expanded the services a dental assistant could perform. Dental assistants were required to become certified to perform these additional supportive services which include the following: take impressions for space maintainers, orthodontic appliances and occlusal guards, remove temporary cement (not including temporary fillings), apply topical anticariogenic agents to teeth, apply desensitizing agents to teeth, place and remove temporary separating devices and place orthodontic ligatures. CSEA is investigating whether dental assistants who have become certified are being required to perform the aforementioned duties. The current classification standard does not require certification or performance of additional supportive services as a minimum qualification. If you are a dental assistant who is certified to perform the six new supportive services, please call Darcy Micelli in the CSEA Research Department at (800) 342-4146, ext. 1358, to discuss this issue in depth — SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS — The Western Region CSEA Judiciary Local recently awarded its annual scholarships. The high school senior recipients are Eamon T. Doyle, son of Patricia Korzelius of Erie Family Court and Kevin Doyle of the Appellate Division; Claire R. Hourihan, daughter of Maureen Hourihan of Buffalo City Court; Kristin Kindel, daughter of Barbara Kindel of Geneva City Court; and Ian Murphy, son of Robert Murphy of Rochester City Court. The continuing college student recipients are Richard Orlewski, son of Faith Mason of North Tonawanda City Court; Marissa Collett, daughter of Lisa Collett of Canandaigua City Court; Megan Vacanti, daughter of Judy Vacanti of Niagara Falls Supreme and County Courts; Richard Keirstock, son of Marlene Keirstock of Monroe Family Court; Jessica Vario, daughter of Carolyn Vario of the 8th District Council High School and Brennan Briggs, son of Sharon Briggs of Niagara Family Court.

More Scholarship Winners — CSEA's Monroe County Local recently awarded scholarships to 11 students, and the Monroe County Unit recently awarded scholarships to two students. The local scholarship winners are Benjamin Norris and Jessica Quatro, seniors at Gates Chili High School; Jerica Jade Smith, a student at Wayne Central High School; Stephanie Connell, a senior at North Star Christian Academy; Ashley Wilson, a senior at Hilton High School; Estevan Pagan, a senior at Webster Thomas High School; John D. Friedeman, a senior at Pittsford Mendon High School; Michael McMann, a senior at Webster Schroeder High School; Rachel Hawkins, a student at Canisius College, Kristy Guerra, a student at St. John Fisher College, and David Trottier, a student at Monroe Community College.

The unit scholarship recipients are Katherine Barker of Kenda High School and Laura Nemeth of Fairport High School — CHEMUNG COUNTY SCHOLARSHIPS — The Chemung County Local recently awarded its annual college scholarships. Six $800 awards were selected by lottery and given out to children of CSEA members as follows: David Brown, whose mother Erika Brown works at Spencer Van Etten High School; Christine Berghund, whose mother Elizabeth Berghund works at the Chemung County License Bureau; Brendan Crowley, whose mother Jacqueline Crowley works for the Chemung County Purchasing Department; Amy Buchanan, whose mother Karen Buchanan works for the Food Service Department at Horseheads High School; Christopher Jacobs, whose father Clifford Jacobs works for the Chemung County Building and Grounds Department; and Richard N. Kinner, whose father Mark D. Kinner Sr. works for the Elmira Maintenance Department.

Break in membership affects eligibility for union office, voting privileges

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

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

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

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

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

Please notify the CSEA Membership Records Department at 1-800-342-4146, Ext. 1327, of any change in your status and what arrangements you are making to continue your membership in CSEA.
CSEA members save $4.00 off admission on Sept. 2 and 3, 2006 during CSEA Weekend.

Clip one coupon at right for each CSEA member and family member and bring coupon(s) to any fair gate to get $4 off the price of admission on Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 2 and 3, 2006, only.

The New York State Fair is at the Empire Expo Center located off Exit 7 of I-690, 3 miles west of Syracuse. Hours of operation are 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily.

Saturday, Sept. 2 and Sunday, Sept. 3, 2006, is CSEA WEEKEND at the New York State Fair in Syracuse. CSEA members and their family members will receive $4.00 off admission that weekend compliments of CSEA and the New York State Fair.

CSEA will maintain a booth in the Verizon Center of Progress Building on the fairgrounds throughout the entire fair, so stop by and visit the CSEA booth at any time.

The coupons for $4.00 off admission however, are only good during CSEA Weekend, Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 2 and 3, 2006.

CSEA members pay only $6.00 per admission.
EMPSTEAD — The population has exploded, yet village officials have been cutting back. It’s a combination that is beginning to catch up with Hempstead, and CSEA members working for the village are feeling the pinch every day on the job.
Hempstead workers

In all her years on the job, Building Department Senior Clerk Ys setEmail Camille Simone has never seen it so bad.

“We had three full-time secretaries and now one of them also does records management, so we’re working with just two,” Simone said. “We have deadlines to meet. The bulk of my work is title searches and people are waiting to close on their homes. I can’t just let it sit there. It requires overtime or it doesn’t get out.”

The other thing she just can’t let sit is the trash. “The village has even stopped our cleaning service, so now we have to clean our own bathrooms and empty our own waste paper baskets. It’s a real problem on top of everything else,” she said.

All the work has multiplied, along with the population, which is now estimated at 90,000 residents, even though the official census notes the village’s population to be about 60,000. In the Building Department, one of the top public complaints is overcrowding and it’s getting worse by the minute.

“I see all sorts of situations,” Plumbing Inspector Ralph Fraile said. “I look for plumbing problems of all kinds, make sure that plumbers are licensed. I inspect old buildings for violations that need to be corrected and brought up to code.”

Housing Inspector Dan Giardino is also on the front lines. “You just have an overwhelming number of complaints all over the place. My numbers grow every day, mostly of overcrowding and things like that. It’s just overwhelming,” he said, looking at a fresh stack of complaints.

Even departments that add to the village’s bottom line are not exempt from the crush of increased demands and fewer hands. The CSEA-represented employees in the Tax and Water Department put between $5 million and $6 million a month into the budget.

“This is the bank of the village. We take in the majority of funds in this village except for the court, which handles the tickets and summons. Said Verlene Holster, the department’s superintendent. “We’re interrupted all day with customer service calls, and our understaffing only slows down the process of putting the money in the bank in a timely manner.”

Over in the village court, the lament is the same. “This is one of the busiest courts in New York state, even though we have half the staff we used to have,” said Wade Martin, who was entering data for traffic tickets and parking violations into the computer. “We just don’t have anywhere near what we should have to handle all the cases that come through here.”

The village Police Headquarters is housed in an old, cramped building that is bursting at the seams with piles of wires for all the equipment. The 911 operators who help save lives and protect property are jammed into a corner ill-equipped for the task.

“Their workload is the highest of any police communications unit in the state of New York,” said Hempstead Unit President John Shepherd. “They work 24-7, answering 911 calls, dispatching police officers, requesting fire, rescue and ambulance services, and doing teletype. However, the village ordered the wrong program for them, and the computer screens have type so tiny that they have to squint to read it. Yet, they do an amazing job.”

Everytime from pay loaders to neighborhood ad cars winds up at the village repair garage at some point. That’s where all village vehicles and equipment, including police and fire, inspectors’ vehicles, sanitation, street sweepers and highway vehicles are maintained.

Only one worker was on duty during a recent day. “I started here 21 years ago,” said Village Garage Mechanic Armstead Wynn. “The staff went down to five mechanics, now we just have three men for the 300 pieces of equipment we cover. We just get fewer people, and so many of those automobiles are so old you can’t even get the right equipment to work on them anymore.”

The workload has become so large that the village sometimes sends out fire trucks for repair at $95 or $100 an hour rather than having a staff mechanic do it for $30. It would be cheaper to just hire more help, but the village is intent on cutting back.

Over in sanitation, which takes in 62 million pounds of trash a year, the department is down six employees and two supervisors who haven’t been replaced. Eight out of 10 trucks in the fleet need immediate replacement. The last time the department got a new garbage truck was in 2001.

The Street Department used to have 23 workers, but now the department has 13 workers for all the curbs and gutter cleaning, pothole repair, road resurfacing, clearing of vacant lots, sweeping the streets and plowing in the winter.

In the water plant, which purifies about 2.4 billion gallons of water per year, the staff is down five workers and one of the remaining workers is planning to retire.

“We have old equipment, which requires a lot of maintenance,” said Ralph Fraile, assistant supervisor of the Water Department. “We have to read some 8,750 metered accounts, and 90 percent of those are residential. Some weeks we have to work 20 hours overtime just because we’re so short handed.”

“I understand the village is trying to cut costs, but no matter how much everybody chips in, essential services are being cut back,” Shepherd said. He wants the village to realize that it’s time to bring the municipality up to the proper staffing levels and provide the necessary equipment and support village employees need to get the job done.

“These employees work every day with diligence and dedication to their fellow residents,” said Shepherd. “They should be praised for coming through for people despite all the challenges, and they should not be blamed for the short sightedness exhibited by village officials.”

“This is more like a small city than a large village. In fact, it’s one of the largest villages in the state. You can only cut so much before you start bleeding, and we’re bleeding,” Shepherd said.

— Rachel Langert
Willy Gwynn and Brenda, his wife, arrive at the recent retirement party to honor his long years of service at the Long Island Region's Veterans, State Employees Federated Appeal (SEFA) and Political Action committees. "I'm fixing up the house, doing some fishing and getting ready to do some traveling," Gwynn said. "After 36 years, being retired is one of the greatest feelings in the world. You can do what you want to do. And there's no time limits on that." The Gwynns are the parents of four and grandparents of three.

President LaMorte responds to candidate's attack on public employee pensions

COMMACK — In a recent letter to Newsday, Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte responded to an attack by John Faso, the Republican state gubernatorial candidate, on public employee pensions.

Here is LaMorte's letter before it was edited and run in the Long Island newspaper.

To the Editor:

It's amazing how out of touch some public officials can be. John Faso claims "generous" public employee pensions should be replaced by 401(k) plans.

Public employee pensions average only $13,000 annually, hardly a princely sum! What does security mean to the people who invested their life savings in Enron?

Public employees contribute part of their salary for the first decade. Every penny of a public employee's pension is earned over the course of 30 years of work. Public employees earn their pensions by issuing licenses and permits, handling complaints and inspecting homes; paving and plowing your roads to ensure safe passage for your families and making sure your public school facilities, parks, and playgrounds are safe and in good repair.

Public employees are bay constables, parole officers, EMTs, police and fire dispatchers who save lives every day. Public employees taught John Faso when he attended college at the State University of New York at Brockport. Public employees help make New York the Empire State.

Faso claims he values family and hard work. Yet, he seeks to dismantle a system that rewards work, provides stability and a decent life for middle-class families. Stable workers buy homes, contribute to the tax base and support the very businesses Faso champions. He also neglects to mention that he earned a pension as an elected official.

Public employees are the bedrock of strong and stable communities.

We did not create the state's budget challenges and should not be scapegoats for the self-centered ambitions of public officials.

Nicholas J. LaMorte
President, CSEA Long Island Region

Message from Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte

It's hard to believe that the summer is coming to a close already! The children are heading back to school and the weather will be getting cooler.

As you fire burgers or other barbecue fare, please remember that while Labor Day marks summer's unofficial close, it also means so much more. Yes, it's a day to pause from your work. But the fact that you are getting paid to have a day to yourself is the result of many years of union activism, as are many other rights we now take for granted.

There was a time when employers had the right to force people to work seven days a week, without the luxuries of sick leave, vacation time, and there was no such thing as overtime. The notion of an eight-hour day was foreign in many parts of this country, even into the early 20th century.

In 1872, 190,000 workers went on strike in New York City and won an eight-hour day for some building tradesmen. Thousands of workers picketed and marched in American cities demanding an eight-hour day as the year 1900 approached.

The United Mine Workers won an eight-hour workday in 1886. Many printing trade workers won the same by 1905. In 1914, the Ford Motor Co. doubled pay to $5 a day and cut shifts from nine hours to eight.

In 1916, the United States passed a law that established the eight-hour workday as well as overtime pay for railroad workers. That federal law, the Adamson Act, regulated the hours of workers in private companies for the first time. For most American workers the eight-hour day only came into being in 1938 when the Fair Labor Standards Act was passed.

Even though countless workers fought for years for rights like the eight-hour day and overtime, they can be taken away swiftly. In 2001, the Bush administration took union rights away from Homeland Security workers and later cut thousands of people off from overtime by just rewriting the rules.
International Freeport said share information around Employees coming Local services."

New CSEA committees. Region The CSEA get "CSEA Lillie "I've long Island Cagmone members together for the regional's Long Island Chisholm, the leading union's important events. my coworkers, It's wonderful that they do this for the members every year," said Edna Chisholm, a kitchen assistant in the Freeport School District.

From to bottom: Women's Committee Chair Robbi Elginau, Oyster Bay local member Loretta Zuch, and Women's Committee Vice Chair Catherine Custance sign members in and distribute union literature.

There were plenty of opportunities for members to get information about CSEA's myriad programs and services. LIDDSO member Vincent Cagnone speaks to Zoranda Wilson of the CSEA/YS Partnership about continuing education benefits.

Members came from all over CSEA to attend the fair, including State Courts Local member Barbara Maniscalco, SUNY Old Westbury President Mary D'Antonio and Women's Committee member Sandie Horovitz of the Nassau County Local.

Clockwise from top left: Praise dancers from the First Church of Wyandanch helped entertain the crowd; Long Island Region President Nick Laflomme addresses the crowd; DOT member Melissa Terry spent the afternoon doing face painting for the children. Here she is with Elijah Bush, the grandson of CSEA PEOPLE Committee Chair Rutha Bush, CSEA member Steve Abraham of the City of Long Beach was one of those who did a fine job manning the grill and feeding the hundreds of CSEA members and their families who turned out for the occasion; Nassau Municipal Local President John Shephard, left, is shown with four local members who brought their Reliance Engine Company fire truck to the event; From left to right: Gary Gearhardt, Bill Eagan, Herb Finnor and Edwin McDowell, Suffolk County Police Officer Robert Viggers wipes the finger of 4-year-old Robert Shephard, as part of the Kid's A-Kit program. In the event that a participating child goes missing, the photo, emergency contact numbers and identifying information in the kit will provide police with the tools to find children faster; DOT Local Executive Vice President, all Makis gets information about CSEA's Legal Services programs from Dick McChesney.
DMV Labor-Management Committee meetings

GARDEN CITY — When the Department of Motor Vehicles closed its Hempstead office a year ago, it moved most of the staff to the DMV office here. That meant different ways of doing things, and it was important to get the differences straightened out.

“A labor-management team was formed to sort them out,” said Judy Ballas, DMV’s Garden City office manager.

The eight-member committee is composed of George Erker, DMV’s district director, Ballas and two other supervisors, three members of the Long Island State Employees Local 016 unit which represents 50 workers here and Local President Andre Sigmone. It meets every other month.

Some of the concerns arise from the large number of people who use the busy Garden City office. “The daily average is now 1,600 customers,” said Ballas.

“That’s just customers who come to the counter, not including people who come for forms.”

There is free parking at the building and good shopping nearby on Old Country Road and at Roosevelt Field. “By lunchtime, employees are circling for parking,” said Ballas.

Lots of people make some noise when they visit the department.

“The barrage never ends till 4:15 or 4:20 p.m. and we close at 4 p.m.,” said Tanya Thomas, a motor vehicle representative who is one of the three CSEA members on the committee.

That brought up one of the committee’s first issues: how long would a motor vehicle representative work at the desk or the ticket counter, particularly hectic spots. After surveying the workers, the committee decided motor vehicle representatives on desk and counter work would rotate on a one-week on, one-week off schedule.

As a result of the committee’s efforts, CSEA members are realizing the committee can improve aspects of what is often a difficult, demanding job. “If you have some concerns and tell someone, I’ll be brought up at a meeting,” said Thomas. “Now, people are coming more often to the committee members and asking questions.”

“Tanya speaks her mind,” said Ballas. “They know she’ll present their concerns.”

Judy Ballas, left, and Tanya Thomas in the Garden City DMV office. “We asked employees, don’t just come to us with a problem, come with a solution. It may not be the right solution, but come with a solution,” Ballas said.

Oyster Bay Local blood drive

OYSTER BAY— The Town of Oyster Bay’s community blood drive collected 160 pints during its semi-annual collection Aug. 17, with most of the donors of the CSEA local representing town employees.

Since the blood drive began at town work sites about 15 years ago, many of the donors have been members of Oyster Bay Local 881. Local officers and activists are proud of CSEA members’ long-standing support for the drive.

“The local is happy to see the members’ solidarity for a worthy cause that benefits young and old alike,” said Terry Boryk, the local’s office secretary. Donna Antetomasso and Danny Hess head the union’s effort for the blood drive.

The collection took place at four places — the Sanitation Department, the “war room” at the Department of Public Works headquarters in Syosset, Town Hall North in the village of Oyster Bay and Town Hall South in Massapequa.

CSEA mourns death of Melvin T. Baker Sr., son of Region Human Rights Committee chair

COMMACK — CSEA members have joined Shirley Baker, chair of the Long Island Region Human Rights Committee, in mourning the death of her son, Melvin T. Baker Sr., who died in a motorcycle accident Aug. 12.

A psychiatric aide at South Oaks Hospital in Amityville, he is also survived by LaCheryl, his wife; a son and a daughter; three grandchildren; a sister and a brother and a long extended family.

“He was a good person, a godly person,” said Ruth Bush of Local 430, a longtime friend of the family.

Condolesences may be sent to the Baker family at 157 Parkway Blvd., Wyandanch, N.Y. 11798.

Top to bottom: Bill Dembinski, who’s in charge of the town’s highway concrete crew, has his blood pressure checked by Maria Schaefer of the New York Blood Center. Dembinski, a 34-year town employee, has given more than a gallon of blood to the community drive.

After donating blood, Ed Gioeli gets a cup of juice from Rhoda Barten, a blood center volunteer. Gioeli is a member of the Department of Public Works staff and has worked for the town for 11 years.

Liz Carroll, a first-time donor, plans to give blood again. Local 1st Vice President Alex Bard stands next to Carroll, who is secretary to Department of Public Works Commissioner Jim Byrne.
Calendar of Upcoming Events: September 2006

4 – Office Closed for Labor Day
5 – Health & Safety Committee Meeting — 5 p.m.
6 – Education & Training Committee Meeting — 6 p.m.
7 – Local 430 General Membership Meeting — 2-4 p.m.
11 – Women’s Committee Meeting — 5:30 p.m.
13 – PEOPLE Committee Meeting — 3 p.m.
13 – Defensive Driving — 5-30-8:30 p.m.
14 – Staff Meeting — 10 a.m.
14 – Defensive Driving — 5:30-8:30 p.m.
16 – Region Executive Board Pre-Convention Delegats Meeting — 9 a.m.
16 – Women’s Committee yard sale — 9 a.m.-2 p.m.
18 – Women’s Committee Meeting — 5:30 p.m.
19 – Political Action Committee Meeting — 5:30 p.m.
20 – MAT Committee Meeting — 5:30 p.m.
21 – Health & Hospital Committee Meeting — 5 p.m.
27 – Courts Local 330 General Membership Meeting — 5 p.m.
28 – Local 430 Shop Steward Training — 4-7 p.m.
30 – Defensive Driving — 9 a.m. 3 p.m.

Babylon Unit holds 4th annual picnic and info fair

BABYLON — Members of the Babylon Unit of Suffolk Local 852 had a sunshine-filled summer afternoon for their 4th annual picnic/social Aug. 17.

It was held on the lakeside lawn at the Town Hall on Sunrise Highway in Lindenhurst.

In addition to lots of food the event included an information fair featuring door prizes donated by vendors and a $50/50 raffle.

“I think the picnic was a wonderful success,” said Joanne Salvia, president of the unit, which represents 130 town employees. “We had wonderful weather and a great turnout. I’ve gotten nothing but thank yous from the members for a great time.”

“We have the best picnic committee,” Salvia said. “It is unbelievable how much work and effort goes into making this a success, and they are certainly a devoted crew. My special thanks to them.”

Judiciary Local membership meeting

Amy Baglivi, a Long Island Judiciary Local 330 member who works for the court system in Riverhead, asks Local President Kevin Ray Sr., second from left, a question before the union’s July 26 membership meeting. Listening are Bob Schneider, left, a grievance representative who works at the Nassau County Court in Hempstead, and Brian Young, a court officer at the Glen Cove City Court. At the meeting, held at the Long Island Region office in Commack, Ray discussed the local’s participation in upcoming statewide negotiations for 75,000 CSEA-represented New York state employees. The talks will begin in January, with the current agreement expiring March 31, 2007. Other officers of the local are Pat Annunziate, vice president, Linda Luhrs, secretary, and Dennis Downer, treasurer, Ray Downer and Barbara Maniscalco are the local’s other grievance representatives.

Sept. 13
Oyster Bay Women’s Committee Meeting

OSTER BAY — The Oyster Bay Local 881 women’s committee will hold its next meeting at 5:30 p.m. Sept. 13 at Town Hall South in Mastic. Committee members will teach a class on computer basics, and a light supper will be served.

Bette James, the local’s 4th vice president, chairs the committee.

Top left, wearing new union caps are, from left, Unit President Joanne Salvia, Christine Korkidis, a member of the picnic committee; Danielle Brunjes, the unit’s 1st vice president, and Lynn Hansen, picnic committee chair.

Middle, Babylon Unit members have lots of food to choose from at the picnic.

Bottom, after signing in at the picnic, members buy raffle tickets from Debbie Trapp, right.
CSEA activists from all over the Long Island Region are gearing up for Sept. 9, 2006! That's when activists from Greenport to Glen Cove will be getting on the “CSEA EXPRESS” to march in the New York City Labor Parade! There will be T-shirts, food and fun!

CSEA-sponsored buses will be leaving from:
• Long Island Expressway Exit 63 Park & Ride in Farmingville at 10:30 am
• Region office in Commack at 10:45 a.m.
• Sears parking lot in Hicksville at 11 a.m.

Call the region office to sign up!
(631) 462-0030

Don’t miss the bus!
Nick LaMorte, president
CSEA Long Island Region
New York’s Leading Union

Village of Lynbrook member dies after falling ill on the job

LYNBROOK — CSEA member Marilyn Scordato, 65, recently died after she suddenly fell ill while doing her job.

Scordato, who worked for Village of Lynbrook for 23 years, was a police communications operator. She reported having chest pains before she died. “She was not feeling well when she was behind the desk,” said Lynbrook Unit President Carol Rook. “She suddenly said she was having very bad chest pains, and she just went down. Like one of the officers said, with all the training that they have … they really tried. They were all around her trying to help.”

Rook said the whole situation was very difficult for everyone. The unit consists of six members.

Rook said Scordato loved her family and job, as well as life. “She was very outgoing, very kind, she had the greatest sense of humor and she was very involved in the village,” Rook said. “Marilyn was on the beautification committee and (served on) so many other (groups) in the village. She was active in church and Scordato had three grown children and four grandchildren.”

CSEA member Marilyn Scordato on the job.

CSEA member Marilyn Scordato on the job.
Message from CSEA Local 830 President Jerry Laricchiuta

Health Insurance Benefits Continue to be a Hot Topic

Recently there has been a lot of chatter from government officials regarding county workers and health insurance. The Nassau County comptroller proposed legislation that would end duplicate health insurance benefits for non-union ordinance workers and retirees who are married to other covered county employees.

I am not sure if this piece of legislation includes the $2,000 buy-back money that married CSEA couples now get. However, the fact that some of our members have to give up their health benefits is a concession that was bargained at the contract table.

Contractual concessions are negotiated, not legislated or played out in the media. As for the comptroller’s statement that this would not have a negative affect on any county worker, he should ask those employees who already went from two plans to one.

I have spoken to them and they have all told me their co-pays have increased a great deal, and in some cases their limits on certain parts of the plan get exhausted earlier. There may be nothing more insulting in life than when someone conceives something, or in effect gives somebody something, and that act goes unnoticed and without appreciation by the recipient.

As you all know, health insurance has become a hot topic across much of the United States in recent years. Yes, we county workers are fortunate to have decent health insurance. We have sacrificed a great deal over the years to earn and retain that most important benefit. How many of you have gone years and years without a promotion, or started out making less than half of what people in comparable titles made in the private sector?

Talk about doing more with less, how many of you are working in harsh conditions and with much fewer staff than you did a decade ago? CSEA has always prided itself in securing a sound benefit package for its members. Our benefits were not handed out overnight, but were fought for and negotiated for many years, even decades.

I plan on doing everything I can to make sure that you (my CSEA members) retain those benefits.

**Probation repairs await**

I want to touch on a subject that needs quick attention from both the union and the county. Many county workers still work in deplorable conditions. Recently, I received a copy of a petition sent to Newsday by Probation Department employees who still work at the old Social Services Building on County Seat Drive. As some of you may know, I spent a good deal of time when I first got into office on the poor working conditions at this building. At that time, the real estate consolidation move was just about to get under way, and eventually all of Social Services moved to a newer building at 60 Charles Lindberg.

For the most part, that move equated to an improvement for those who moved. Probation remained in the old building and we were promised substantial changes and repairs. If the repairs could not be realized, then the probation employees would be moved to another location.

Neither happened as of this writing and we are planning to demonstrate our displeasure if the county refuses to accommodate us. I understand the exorbitant cost of relocating an entire department, or refurbishing such a large and very old building. When I see, however, the huge construction project being worked on in the old executive building, I find it hard to sympathize with the county.

After all, that building will house the core of county government officials and is costing millions of dollars. I do not begrudge our county officials for having a clean, dignified and respectable place to conduct business. I just want them to recognize that our county work force deserves the same. Stay tuned for more on this issue as we proceed to organize our push for a safer and cleaner work environment.

**New website**

Our new website should be fully operational by the time you read this. It has been a long work in progress and once we get out all the glitches, you should use it regularly. All sorts of important information will be included within the “Members Only” area, and you will be able to reach out to me and my staff much easier. Thanks for reading my message and any problems, you all can call me anytime. You can visit the site at www.csea830.org.

Yours in unionism,

Jerry Laricchiuta
CSEA Local 830 president

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LEGAL UPDATE

By: Louis D. Stober, Jr., Esq.
CSEA REGION ATTORNEY
www.Stoberlaw.com

Working While on Workers’ Compensation

An interesting issue was recently arbitrated at the Nassau Health Care Corp. (NHCC) involving an employee’s rights while out on Workers’ Compensation. I represented a nurse who had been terminated by NHCC because she had continued to work her second job as a school nurse at a local elementary school while she was on Workers’ Compensation for injuries she received when she was attacked by a patient at NUMC.

The nurse was a long-term employee with no prior history of any disciplinary actions and by all accounts, was described as a good employee. NHCC also conceded at the arbitration that there were no “light duty” positions for the nurse and that she expected to be able to perform the full and strenuous duty of a nurse at NUMC.

Despite this, NHCC contended that if the nurse was well enough to work as a school nurse she should have been well enough to work as a nurse at NUMC. The medical evidence demonstrated that the nurse could not perform the full duty required of a nurse at NUMC but could perform the light duty jobs of filling out medical forms for students, perform vision screening and take temperatures and apply Band-Aids to the young children at the elementary school.

In a decision that should be heeded, the arbitrator found the nurse not guilty of misconduct for continuing to work in the second job because the duties were different and not as strenuous as her NUMC job and that the duties she performed at the school were within the restrictions placed by the doctors. She was thus ordered reinstated with full back pay minus a one week suspension for not advising NHCC that she was still working as a school nurse while on Workers’ Compensation at NHCC.

In finding for the employee, the arbitrator emphasized the material differences in the duties of the two positions and held: “The employer failed to provide sufficient evidence that the work performed by grievant at the … school … was substantially similar to the duties grievant regularly performed as a RN … at NUMC.”

In other words, in the absence of language in the collective bargaining agreement preventing an employee from working at all while on Workers’ Compensation, the key to determining whether an employee has engaged in misconduct for working while on Workers’ Compensation is whether the employee is engaging in substantially similar duties at the second job as was performed at the first job.

So, if you are on Workers’ Compensation and you are contemplating either obtaining another job or continuing to work at a preexisting second job, remember to examine whether the duties you will be performing are similar to those at the first job. Also, determine whether there is light duty available at the first job. Finally, remember to inform your employer of the second job because failure to do so might lead to disciplinary action.
CSEA830.org Officially Up and Running

The CSEA Local 830 website is up, running and accessible to all 10,000 Local 830 members.

The website, which can be reached at www.csea830.org, includes many new, innovative concepts designed to increase members’ knowledge of what is going on in the CSEA community.

Features include access to our monthly newsletter, union forms, recordings of the local’s radio show, links, contact information and much more.

“This is extremely important,” Local 830 President Jerry Laricchiuta said of the website. “Since I took office, communications has been a top priority and with the addition of our new, interactive website, we have taken that concept to the next level.”

The process of getting this website up and running has been a long one due to the many features it contains, so bear with us in the beginning if there are any glitches or discrepancies.

This month from “Talkin’ Labor With Local 830”

Recent guests on “Talkin’ Labor with Local 830” have included Kris LaGrange from the Long Island Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO; Nassau County Legislator Kevan Abrahams and Nassau Legislature Minority Leader Peter Schmitt.

Please join CSEA Local 830 President Jerry Laricchiuta each Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. on WGBB AM 1240 to listen to even more great guests, along with all the latest in CSEA news.

Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. on WGBB AM 1240

ATTENTION ALL CSEA MEMBERS

Two Important Notes:

1. Cost of Living Increase (COLI) on tap for 2007
   We are happy to announce the COLI will be 3.5 percent as of Jan. 1, 2007.

2. You may be eligible for Prior Service Credit for Longevity AND Additional Leave Time.

PLEASE FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS:

If you have already submitted your paperwork for prior service credit for longevity, contact the human resources representative in your department to confirm you will be receiving additional leave time.

If you have not already done so, contact your human resources representative immediately to have him or her process the paperwork for both longevity and leave time.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT THE LOCAL 830 OFFICE AT 571-2919.
CSEA Local 830 Scholarship Classic a Great Success

EAST MEADOW—The CSEA Local 830 held its first Scholarship Classic Golf Outing July 24 at the Eisenhower Park Red Course in East Meadow.

Hundreds of CSEA staff, members and supporters were on hand for the sold-out event that will help provide scholarships for children of our members. Scholarships will be awarded at the Local 830 holiday party in December.

Attendees were treated to breakfast, lunch and dinner. The dinner took place at the Carltun on the Park at Eisenhower. There were more than 40 raffles during the night that included prizes such as Plasma televisions and top-of-the-line golf clubs.

The course was in remarkable condition as the PGA Champions Tour Commerce Bank Championship held its tournament on the course just four weeks earlier. All the hard work to keep the course in great shape came from CSEA members who maintain the course year round and work especially hard during the summer months.

“I was thrilled with the results of the event and I believe all of the attendees were as well.” CSEA Local 830 President Jerry Laricchiuta said. “The only problem was a miscommunication on the nature of the dinner. We wanted more of a barbecue atmosphere which it was not. We will improve on that for the future.”

A special thanks goes not just to our CSEA members who maintained the course, but all staff who worked the event that day, the Local 830 Golf Committee, Parks Commissioner Jose Lopez, Deputy Commissioner Richard Murphy, Deputy Commissioner Dan Harwick and all other workers that made this event possible.

The local is planning to hold the golf outing each summer. Golf Outing Committee Chair Kelvin Lewis, who was so instrumental to organizing this year’s event, is already working on the 2007 outing.

“I already have people signing up for next year’s event,” Lewis said. “I am working towards improving and giving our members a great time just as we did this year.”
CSEA Strongly Opposes KeySpan’s Acquisition by National Grid

MINEOLA — CSEA Local 830 has been very critical of the potential purchase of KeySpan by the British firm National Grid.

Despite the fact that no CSEA members are employed by KeySpan, Local 830 President Jerry Laricchiuta believes this to be a very serious quality of life issue. The two unions representing KeySpan’s 9,700 workers also oppose the sale.

“Our members are hardworking, taxpaying people who deserve affordable quality service without having to deal with a possibility of poor service and an increase in rates,” he said.

“What if two years from now we’re stuck with another LILCO?” asked Laricchiuta in the Aug. 8 Newsday, referring to the defunct Long Island Lighting Co., which was penalized due to poor service just as National Grid has been in other northeast regions.

CSEA Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte also opposes the acquisition.

“The recent blackout in Queens should serve as a wake-up call about how critical our energy resources are and how important it is to have reliable service,” LaMorte said. “How is that kind of service going to be in the public interest here?”

Staff cuts are expected to total about 10 percent and could affect as many as 1,800 workers, which would thus provide more unreliable service. Long Island Federation of Labor spokesman Kris LaGrange said in Newsday, “An unskilled, untrained work force [leads to] problems that increase costs.”

Hearings before the state Public Service Commission are scheduled for late August, but union leaders are urging the hearings to be held on Long Island. State and federal regulators still need to approve the $11.8 billion deal before anything can become official. Laricchiuta is urging the Long Island Power Authority to hold public hearings.

CSEA Local 830 will continue to fight this, and, if necessary, the union will hold a press conference to make the public more aware of the potential disaster that this acquisition could present.

County Looks to Cut Duplicate Health Benefits

With health insurance expenditures for Nassau County employees rising from $133 million in 2001 to $220 million this year, Nassau County Comptroller Howard Weitzman is proposing to cut out a second family benefits package for married couples employed by the county.

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Sept. 2-3, 2006, Syracuse, N.Y.

CSEA members save $4 off the $10 admission on Sept. 2-3, 2006!

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Veteran’s Corner

By Debbie O’Connell

On July 27, U.S. Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs Chairman Larry Craig (R-Idaho) announced his strong support for a new program that is providing paid training and, so far, 100 percent job placement for combat wounded and disabled veterans.

“These men and women come home, maybe not whole physically, but mentally and physically they can become phenomenally capable and productive citizens, and what you’re offering does just that,” said Craig. “The Purple Heart Service Foundation does something for America’s veterans that is important, necessary and unique.”

Veterans who qualify for the training receive $11 per hour during the 600-hour training program, being paid a total of $6,600. To qualify, veterans must produce a VA assigned disability rating and a copy of his or her DD-214. A Purple Heart award is NOT required.

Interested individuals should call the Purple Heart Service Foundation at (800) 720-8596.

Local veterans counseling center to stay open

Hempstead Supervisor Kate Murray, along with state senators from Nassau County and hundreds of veterans celebrated victory in a battle with New York state’s Division of Veterans Affairs. The division had planned to close the only state Veterans Affairs counseling center in Nassau County until local veterans stepped up and voiced their opinion to keep the center open.

Local 830 Leaders Attend AFSCME Convention

CHICAGO — CSEA Local 830 President Jerry Laricchiuta, along with executive staff members Ron Gurrieri, Diane Russ, Scott Mulholland, Rob McLaughlin and Debbie O’Connell, attended the 37th AFSCME International Convention held Aug. 7 to 11.

The event consisted of daily conferences and afternoon workshops addressing many labor issues. CSEA leaders from across the state, AFSCME leaders from across the country, government officials and other dignitaries also attended the convention.

“I believe this convention helps us learn to do our job better, and in turn help serve our members more effectively,” Laricchiuta said. See Pages 3, 4 in The Work Force for more coverage.

Laricchiuta Addresses Members at A. Holly Patterson

UNIONDALE — CSEA Local 830 President Jerry Laricchiuta addressed a large crowd of CSEA members Aug. 1 at the A. Holly Patterson Extended Care Facility auditorium.

Laricchiuta discussed his care and concern for the facility and the CSEA members employed there. He said there is a clear lack of staffing at the facility and, despite the new administration of Nassau Health Care Corp. under CEO Art Gianelli, there are still problems with the current CEO A. Holly Patterson Larry Stalik.

CSEA believes constant visits to the facility along with increased attention to members’ needs will improve conditions so workers can do their jobs as effectively and efficiently as possible.

Left, Jerry Laricchiuta speaks with a member employed at A. Holly Patterson as Administrative Assistant Felicia Staub looks on.

Another CSEA member benefit

Pinnacle Motor Club

If you’re a member of CSEA you know the benefits of your membership. And, if you haven’t heard of the Pinnacle Motor Club, you are missing out on a valuable benefit. The Pinnacle Motor Club is a benefit that can help CSEA members.

Pinnacle’s services include:

- Free roadside assistance
- 20% discount on new and used car purchases
- 20% discount on extended warranty programs

For more information about membership benefits and services, how we compare with other motor clubs, and exactly what Pinnacle Motor Club is, simply call toll-free 877.948.7333, and ask for Dave or Ken.
A Message From Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte

Labor’s Century-Old Fight Just Beginning

It’s hard to believe that the summer is coming to a close already! The children are heading back to school and the weather will be getting cooler.

As you flip burgers or other barbecue fare, please remember that while Labor Day marks summer’s unofficial close, it also means so much more. Yes, it’s a day to pause from your work. But the fact that you are getting paid to have a day to yourself is the result of many years of union activism, as are many other rights we now take for granted.

There was a time when employers had the right to force people to work seven days a week, without the luxuries of sick leave, vacation time, and there was no such thing as overtime. The notion of an eight-hour day was foreign in many parts of this country, even into the early 20th century.

In 1872, 100,000 workers went on strike in New York City and won an eight-hour day for some building tradesmen. Thousands of workers picketed and marched in American cities demanding an eight-hour day as the year 1900 approached.

The United Mine Workers won an eight-hour workday in 1898. Many printing trade workers won the same by 1905. In 1914, the Ford Motor Co. doubled pay to $5 a day and cut shifts from nine hours to eight.

In 1916, the United States passed a law that established the eight-hour workday as well as overtime pay for railroad workers. That federal law, the Adamson Act, regulated the hours of workers in private companies for the first time. For most American workers the eight-hour day only came into being in 1938 when the Fair Labor Standards Act was passed.

Even though countless workers fought for years for rights like the eight-hour day and overtime, they can be taken away swiftly. In 2001, the Bush administration took union rights away from Homeland Security workers, and later cut thousands of people off from overtime by just rewriting the rules.

Now the AFL-CIO is fighting the administration’s Kentucky River Decisions which would essentially strip union rights from thousands more federal workers by reclassifying them as “supervisors.” To contact Congress to fight these changes, you can log onto http://www.unionvoice.org/campaign/Kentucky_River.

Labor’s opponents are getting increasingly crafty and brazen. We must remain vigilant, stay united and use our political muscle to defend our rights! We must never forget the rights we enjoy were bought and paid for by our forefathers in the union movement, sometimes with their lives.

So, have that extra burger this holiday. You’re going to need the protein because we have so much more fighting ahead of us!

In solidarity,

Nick LaMorte, president
Long Island Region

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Oaths Given to New CB Operators

Congratulations to the new communications bureau operators, who were given their oath of office this past month at Local 830 offices. Those given their oaths include Robert Conte, and Chaua Lennon.

Good luck!

From left, Chaua Lennon, Local 830, Executive Vice President Diane Russ and Robert Conte.