



Unit 9200 Newsletter

SPRING 2010

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Our Union Represents Over 3800 Employees of Westchester County Government

'Our MISSION with this Newsletter is to reach out to Unit 9200 members to provide union-related information, updates and resources to empower us to make informed decisions that strengthen the membership as a whole.'

Unit 9200 Campaign for Community Outreach

Public Relations Committee

It seems that "Public Employees" (that's us) have become Public Enemy #1 to those who seem to need a scapegoat for the failings of government and industry. How did this happen?

The world economy has been beaten down so severely in the last several years, that it has been described as equal to the Great Depression of the 1930s, or the new term, "The Great Recession", due in large part to reduced sales of just about all consumer goods. Many businesses have responded in the easiest manner, namely firing whole groups of workers and disrupting the lives and expectations of millions of families to save their bottom line. This has resulted in millions of people losing jobs.

Governments, from the state level down to county, city and town levels, are also feeling the effect of the reduced economic activity by our citizens. Revenue to governments, due to reduced fees and sales taxes, is hurting government budgets.



Unit 9200 Officers and Activists brave the rain at the St. Patrick's Day Parade in White Plains on March 13th in our continuing effort to increase community exposure for our union.

On April 5, 2010, the first Unit 9200 Public Relations Committee meeting was held at our Local 860 office in White Plains. Our goal is to change the perception Westchester taxpayers have of public employees. The meeting was led by our Unit President, Karen Pecora, and Kelley Johnson, Political Action Coordinator for the Southern Region Office in Beacon.

This committee is being established, in part, due to the recent negative campaign against our members, as the cause for the state of Westchester's economy. We want to correct this. It is so important that residents know that we pay our taxes, raise our children and spend money in Westchester County. We want residents to know the vital services we provide on a daily basis, so that all of us can enjoy what Westchester has to offer.

The mission of this committee is to brainstorm and establish positive ways in which we can reach out to the community about who we are and how we make Westchester a great community to live in. We would like to plan to participate in local events like parades, charity fundraisers, and volunteer programs in our communities, and we are asking all members to be creative and come up with some ideas for things that we can do as a Unit to show the community that we also live in Westchester, and that we care about the County as much as our neighbors.

This committee will also work on a series of weekly local newspaper ads highlighting CSEA members who provide community services and also volunteer their time in those communities.

We encourage everyone to take action now, and stand up for what we do and who we are.

Member Feedback

"I have been a Westchester County employee for many years. I have been fortunate enough to have been able to work long enough to hopefully collect a pension. Yes, the economy is bad and jobs in the private sector are tough. However, civil servant employees do not get bonuses or raises based on merit. Our union had to fight for three years to achieve a fair and equitable contract for its members. We have a union who fought for us to keep our benefits at this time. I am not complaining; I am lucky to have a job. Even though our new leadership is currently looking at ways to trim the budget, it is important to remember that CSEA is behind us and will continue to ensure that we are heard and not forgotten."

- Lorraine McGovern

CSEA Unit 9200 Member, Department of Information Technology

Changes to Unit 9200 Executive Board

During January 2010, then 1st Vice President James Kelly resigned from the Unit 9200 Executive Board for personal reasons, and then 2nd Vice President Edward Magilton retired from Westchester County. According to the CSEA Unit Constitution, Peter Snyder succeeded from 3rd Vice President to 1st Vice President, and Judith Brome succeeded from 4th Vice President to 2nd Vice President. During the February Executive Board Meeting, Union Representative Kwabena Manu was appointed to the office of 3rd Vice President by a unanimous vote. The position of 4th Vice President remained vacant.

During February 2010, then 1st Vice President Peter Snyder resigned from the Unit 9200 Executive Board due to the fact that he was unable to assume the full-time release responsibilities of the office. According to the CSEA Unit Constitution, Judith Brome has now succeeded to the office of 1st Vice President, and Kwabenu Manu has now succeeded to the office of 2nd Vice President. During the March Executive Board Meeting, James Kelly was appointed to the office of 3rd Vice President by a 3 to 2 vote. During the April Executive Board Meeting, Union Representative Junio I. Alvarado was appointed to the office of 4th Vice President by a 3 to 2 vote.

Unit 9200 Executive Board

Karen Pecora, *President*

Judith Brome, *1st VP* **Kwabena Manu**, *2nd VP* **James Kelly**, *3rd VP* **Junio I. Alvarado**, *4th VP*

Michael Wolf, *Treasurer* **Kimberly Gotzen**, *Secretary*

Health Club Discounts

Check the **Health Clubs** page of www.CSEA9200.com for union discounts on gym memberships

Also, if you are an HMO participant and join a gym, you may be eligible to receive a percentage of the membership cost as a reimbursement.

Contact your HMO directly for requirements

Your Union Working For You

CSEA Wins Class Action Settlement For Retirees

On March 16, 2010, CSEA won a six-year legal dispute on behalf of 1,600 retired Westchester County employees. The class action case, filed by CSEA in 2004, claimed that the County did not honor contracted rights of retirees by increasing their co-pays and deductible fees.

Prior to 1993, contracts between CSEA and the County specifically stated that retirees would be subject to the benefits provided in the contract that was in effect at the time of their retirement, however, this language was removed from subsequent agreements. CSEA argued that the intent of the omission was to create a vested lifetime benefit for workers who retired during that time.

The court supported CSEA's position in a 2008 decision that concluded the retirees' contractual benefits "may not be diminished without their consent." The County appealed this decision, but the prospect of two more years in the appellate court system led to the settlement.

The agreement freezes prescription drug costs for the life of the retirees and their dependents. The County also agreed to pay each affected retiree or surviving dependant \$700, and to reimburse CSEA \$65,000 for attorney fees and litigation expenses. The County also agreed that other CSEA retirees were entitled to at least the insurance level of active employees.

CSEA President Danny Donohue said the ruling shows the need for retiree health-insurance legislation, and CSEA is backing a bill which would prohibit public employers from shifting health-care costs to retirees.

Your Benefits as a Union Member

Civil Service Exam Preparation and Exam Fees

Test Preparation Booklets: CSEA has prepared a collection of study guides for Civil Service Exam Preparation that have proven very useful in enabling our members to achieve higher scores on civil service exams. Current members may download the books for FREE by clicking on the Test Prep Books page of our www.CSEA9200.com website and creating a free User ID and Password with the CSEA Local 1000 headquarters website. >

CSEA members and non-members may also purchase the printed hardcopy books in the Unit 9200 Office for \$5.00 each (cost price). Book #4 is the most popular as the subject matter seems to appear on most exams (Understanding and Interpreting Written Material). Please be advised that some subjects have no CSEA study guides.

CSEA also offers Test Preparation Workshops periodically on evenings and Saturdays for CSEA members; the dates will also appear on our website.

Exam Fees: All CSEA members and current Westchester employees are reminded that the fee for **Open Competitive** exams are \$25.00 each. [Current CSEA members/employees who apply for Promotional Exams should pay only \\$15.00, and for that \\$15.00 fee, current employees may take up to two \(2\) Promotional Exams on the same exam day.](#)

When dropping off or sending in your **Promotional Exam** application, BE SURE to include a note saying you are a CSEA member and are entitled to up to 2 Promotional Exams for each \$15.00 fee. This is especially true if filing your application on the last day.

If any current CSEA member has paid \$25 for a Promotional Exam, contact the Unit Office and action will be taken to address this.

CSEA HQ Website

www.CSEALocal1000.org

Who can sign on?

Only CSEA Union members.

What do I need to sign up?

Your name and CSEA I.D. or SSN (it's a secure web page).

Why is it relevant?

You can sign in and update your name or address easily, for receiving union information.

What else is there to see?

News about issues that affect us as municipal employees, political issues that affect all American working men and women, news about contract settlements, union benefit information, and other items as well as photos, events and links to other web sites.

Your Unit 9200 Officers

MIKE WOLF
Treasurer



I started with the County in July of 1982 as an Accountant I in the Finance Department, and was promoted to an Accountant II after passing the test in June of 1986. I transferred to the Parks Department at the County Center in February of 1989 and became involved as an activist with CSEA. In 2001, I became a Shop Steward at the request of then President Jack McPhillips, and I also became the Chair of the Unit 9200 Audit and Budget Committee. I have also served as the Chair of the Local 860 Audit and Budget Committee since 2006, and the Chair of the Unit 9200 Scholarship Committee from 2007-2009.

With this recession, I feel that we as a Union are targeted by private industry because we have fought for and won good wages and benefits at the negotiating table. Our greatest asset is our ability to stick together and hang tough as we did during our last contract negotiation, when we stuck together for almost three years to win a good and fair contract. Going forward, we need to stick together and to resist both attempts to weaken our contract, and also the divide and conquer tactics of Elected Officials.

I am honored to have been elected Treasurer for Unit 9200 in July of 2009, and I am happy to be part of a strong Union Executive Board.

Get Involved!

Playland Family Day

The 2010 Playland Family Day event will take place on **Saturday, June 12, 2010**, with a rain date of Saturday, June 19, 2010.

The cost will be **\$20.00** per person (children up to 2 years or under 36" are free), with a limit of **5** tickets for each member, and includes a barbeque lunch from 12:00 PM to 3:00 PM and unlimited rides all day from 1:00 PM until the park closes. Please visit www.CSEA9200.com for rules and information.

The deadline to purchase tickets at the Unit office is **Monday, June 7, 2010**.



DID YOU KNOW?

The **Medco Health Store** also offers savings on non-prescription items? It has everything from antacids to vitamins, pain relievers and more.

Prices have been reduced an average of 15% on hundreds of popular non-prescription health products.

And Medco Health Store has **99¢ standard shipping** on all orders with **NO** minimum purchase.

Check it out at:

www.medcohealthstore.com

Your Rights as a Union Member

Sick Leave Buyout Provision

Unused Sick Leave days are paid upon Retirement as follows:

- Rules:**
- 1 - Must have at least 50 days of unused Sick Leave as a balance ("on the books") to qualify for Sick Leave to be paid
 - 2 - Must be eligible to retire per the NYS Retirement System
 - 3 - Employee will be paid for one-half of the unused Sick Leave Days**

Limits: **No payment for more than 150 Sick Leave Days shall be paid

Payout examples upon filing with the New York State Retirement System:

# Days in Sick Leave Balance	# Days Paid Upon Retirement
82 days	41 days
32 days	Not eligible (minimum 50 days)
220 days	110 days
300 days	150 days
320 days	150 days (maximum 150 days)

[The remaining one-half of your unused Sick Leave days will be applied as a time credit toward your Retirement, up to the maximum of 165 days.]

CSEA Union Benefits

What's the Difference Between a CSEA Member and a CSEA Agency Fee Payer?

All CSEA employees in Westchester County are either members or agency shop fee payers.

Agency shop fee payers have not filled out the membership application and therefore did NOT join the union, even though they still pay a fee that is equal to what CSEA members pay in dues. In return, CSEA represents these fee payers and negotiates a contract on their behalf. Agency fee payers do not, however, enjoy all the privileges of membership. They cannot vote for union officers or vote to accept or reject their contract. They are also not eligible to take part in CSEA-sponsored programs and member only benefits.

It seems that a lot of agency shop fee payers simply don't realize they're not full-fledged union members. Many of these people see money being deducted from each paycheck and assume that they are CSEA members. They are often surprised to learn they're not really members, and sometimes they're even angry when they discover this at contract ratification time or when other important issues are voted upon by the membership.

Not sure if you are a CSEA Member? Look at your pay stub – if you see the words Agency Shop or Agency Fee Payer, then you are NOT a CSEA Member. Contact the Unit Office, or visit www.csea9200.com/AgencyShopFeesExplained.htm for a membership application. And please remember – United We Bargain, Divided We Beg.

WE NEED YOU!

TO ALL MEMBERS:

Please sign up for **EMAIL NOTIFICATIONS** of the latest **CSEA Unit 9200 Information and Events** so we can keep in contact with you!

Visit the 'Contact Us' page at www.CSEA9200.com to be added to the list!

Member Participation

Lunchtime Labor / Meet the People Walk in White Plains

On Friday, April 23, 2010, hundreds of municipal employees spent their lunch hour participating in a rally and walk "around the block" in a grassroots effort to personally introduce ourselves to the community and to support labor in Westchester County. This event was organized by **CSEA Unit 9200 - Westchester County Employees**, and our Members were joined by other CSEA Members from surrounding Units. Information sheets were passed out in an effort to inform the public about our role in making Westchester County a great place to live. **Billy Riccaldo, Region 3 President**, along with **Jack McPhillips, Local 860 President**, and other officers were also in attendance. Other Union Members lending their support included **Unit 9201 - Westchester Medical Center** (Peter Piazza, President; John Staino, Steward and Local 860 1st VP; and Patrizia Perugini, Steward), **Unit 9202 - Westchester Community College** (Gina Pellicio, 1st VP; and Joanne Castaldo, Steward), **Unit 9236 - White Plains School District** (Adele Herzenberg, President and Local 860 Treasurer), **Unit 9169 - Yonkers School District** (Bobbi DiBattista, President), past Local 860 President Carmine DiBattista, and members of the AFL-CIO Westchester Putnam Central Labor Council. Legislator Ken Jenkins also showed solidarity by walking with us.

Karen Pecora, Unit 9200 President, spoke out to all present, and encouraged all to participate in these lunchtime rallies. **Bob Butler, President of the Corrections Officer's Union** also spoke at the Federal Courthouse half-way through the walk on the importance of all of our jobs and daily responsibilities. He indicated that we all are Public Employees as well as taxpayers and should be proud of the important services we provide to the residents of Westchester County, and that we should speak to our neighbors and impress them with those facts.

As this was the first of many walks to come, we urge all CSEA Members and supporters to participate in future activities that will be focused on creating a positive presence in our community. "Lets show residents that we live here and spend our money here. We want our neighbors to know who we are - Proud CSEA Members who get the job done."



Bob Butler, President, COBA; Ken Jenkins, Chairman, BOL; and Karen Pecora, President, CSEA Unit 9200



CSEA Unit 9200 President Karen Pecora and Region 3 President Billy Riccaldo speak to News 12.



GET INVOLVED! UPCOMING EVENTS:

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP OPEN MEETINGS - TUESDAYS
July 6th, August 3rd and September 7th, 2010

Light dinner is served @ 5:30PM / Meeting starts @ 6:00PM

Meeting Location Subject to Change - Check Your E-Mail for Meeting Announcements or go to www.CSEA9200.com

Unit 9200 Playland Family Day
Saturday, June 12, 2010

Rain Date Saturday, June 19, 2010

\$20.00 Per Person for Lunch and Unlimited Rides All Day!

Reservations must be made by **Monday, June 7, 2010**

-- Please call the Unit 9200 Office at (914) 995-2151 to **RSVP** and for more information --

WE MAKE WESTCHESTER WORK!
CSEA Unit 9200 - Employees of Westchester County

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