

**20th Annual
Labor Day Picnic
A great success!**

A huge thanks goes to all of the people who worked so hard to make sure that our Labor Day picnic was such a tremendous success.

A special thanks goes to the Labor Day Picnic Committee who oversaw every detail and made sure that everything was taken care of. Our wonderful day at Stewart Park would not have been possible without all of their hard work!

**Another 93,000 Jobs Disappeared
In August**

The day after President George W. Bush announced the U.S. economy is "looking up" and proposed making most of his millionaire tax cuts permanent, the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) confirmed that working families are enduring the worst job crisis since the Great Depression. The BLS announced Sept. 5 that the economy shed another 93,000 jobs in August—for a total of approximately 3.3 million private-sector jobs lost since the president took office.

"Instead of soaking America's workers with failed economic policies that do not create jobs, that build mountains of debt for our children and destroys our capacity to meet the nation's needs, the president should rebuild America with investments in what matters most—schools, our health care system and the nation's crumbling infrastructure," said AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney. "That is the only way to create and preserve jobs, restore real economic growth and security for working families and secure the nation."

With 1.9 million unemployed Americans now looking for work for 27 weeks or longer, unemployment dipped slightly to 6.1 percent or 8.9 million workers, according to the BLS report, down from 6.2 percent in July.

Of the 93,000 jobs lost in August, 44,000 were in manufacturing, the BLS said. That made August the 37th straight month of

manufacturing job losses, now totaling nearly 1.9 million manufacturing jobs since the recession began in March 2001.

Among the approximately 49,000 service jobs lost in August, some 16,000 were in the information sector while telecommunications shed about 7,000 positions. And professional and business services edged down 10,000 jobs in August.

Last week, as new unemployment insurance (UI) claims jumped by 50,000 to 409,000, the highest level since mid-July, the newly jobless had growing reasons to fear they will exhaust those UI benefits before they find new employment. The percentage of jobless workers who used up their regular UI benefits without finding new work—and therefore need emergency UI benefits—reached 43.8 percent in July, the highest figure on record since 1950. And a recent Federal Reserve Bank of New York report says most recent job losses will be permanent—thanks to employers' race to the bottom, sending U.S. jobs to countries where workers enjoy far lower wages and few workplace protections. In addition to the steady hemorrhaging of blue-collar industrial jobs to other countries, research operations, such as Forrester Research Inc., have predicted the loss of 3.3 million white-collar jobs to low-wage countries by 2015.

America's working families need jobs, not promises, Sweeney said. The Bush administration has predicted its economic policies, including the tax cut package (called the "Jobs and Growth Plan") that took effect in July, would create 5.5 million jobs by the end of 2004—344,000 jobs each month starting in July 2003. "The president is already in a hole, with an August jobs deficit of 437,000 promised jobs that did not materialize," Sweeney said.

To track the administration's promised job growth, the nonprofit Economic Policy Institute (EPI) launched JobWatch.org. The group said the site will enable the public to better understand if the economy is growing enough to bring down unemployment and raise wages, if job projections are being met and where jobs are growing or going.

**Midstate CLC makes First Round
of Political Endorsements for 2003**

During this past summer, the political committees of the Labor Council interviewed candidates for political office and at the last Labor Council meeting in August they presented their recommendations to the general body.

The General Membership meeting voted and endorsed the following candidates:

- Carolyn Peterson, for mayor in City of Ithaca.
- Bob Lucas, for 3rd ward Cortland City Council
- Larry Knickerbocker, for Cortland County Judge
- Donna Johnson, for Cortland County Clerk

The political committees will continue to interview candidates in the coming weeks and will present more recommendations at the General Meeting of the Labor Council in October.

**UAW Protects Retiree Benefits
in New York and Michigan**

From UAW Press Release August 8, 2003

Nearly 800 retired UAW members in Michigan and New York will have their full life and health insurance benefits restored as a result of a federal court ruling issued on August 7th in Rochester, NY.

The retirees, who worked in auto plants in Detroit and Madison Heights, Michigan and Elmira, NY owned by the former Bendix corporation, went to court last year to preserve their contractually guaranteed benefits, which were unilaterally reduced in September 2002 by Motor Components, LLC, the current owner of the business.

"At a time when companies are cutting insurance benefits left and right, this case shows the value of a strong union contract," said UAW resident Ron Gettelfinger. "Our retired members are going to keep their benefits because they were tough enough to put a solid guarantee in their contract in 1976—and tough enough to enforce it 27 years later," said Gettelfinger.

On Thursday, August 7, Judge Michael A. Telesca of the U.S. District Court for the Western District of New York issued a summary judgment in favor of the retirees. Judge Telesca ordered Bendix to fulfill its obligations under an agreement negotiated with the UAW in 1976. The settlement is estimated to be worth \$40 million.

20TH ANNUAL LABOR DAY PICNIC

"Speaking Out for Workers' Freedom To Choose a Union"

Join us at the Main Pavilion in Stewart Park. Bring a dish to pass and enjoy free burgers, hot dogs, ice cream and soda.

The Labor Coalition and Midstate Labor Council are proud to share sponsorship and organization of this year's Labor Day picnic.

Labor Day 2003- Speaking Out for Workers' Freedom to Choose a Union

Each year Midstate Central Labor Council, representing some forty unions and over 8,000 working men and women in Tompkins and Cortland counties, holds a free Labor Day Picnic. This event attracts hundreds of workers and their families for a day of fun and celebration in recognition of the sacrifices and contributions working people make to our communities every day. This year's Labor Day celebration marks our 20th Annual picnic. The picnic is open to the public and admission is a dish to pass. The festivities will take place at Ithaca's Stewart Park from 11am-3pm.

This year, as part of a nationwide effort by America's unions to develop a new level of understanding and support in our communities for workers' basic human right to join a union, we will focus on what many in the community are unaware of, namely the challenges workers face from employers when they try to form a union. Community support for workers who want a voice at work is critical because it can help reduce the effects of routine aggressive and intimidating employer interference. And when workers succeed in forming a union, their standard of living improves, the economic strength of the community improves and our nation becomes stronger.

Along with the annual awards of "Goat"

and "Friend" of Labor, we have some special awards and surprises for this year's program. There will be music and activities for children are planned. There will be raffle drawings with prizes including union memorabilia from our affiliates, gift certificates from local businesses, and cash prizes. Tables will be available for unions who wish to display information about their locals, educational material or other information on worker issues. For more information contact Carol at the Labor Federation at 315 422-3363.

Midstate CLC Begins to Look at Upcoming Local Political Races

Throughout the summer the Political Committees of the Labor Council in both Cortland and Tompkins counties have been hard at work. They have rewritten the candidate questionnaires, done significant outreach to local political leaders and candidates and begun to schedule interviews. As we progress through the political season we will continue to interview candidates for political office and be sure to find out their views on issues that affect our members here in the Midstate Central Labor Council area.

At our next Labor Council meeting on August 19 we will discuss some of the progress that has been made in this effort over the summer as well as vote on some recommendations put forth by the Political committees. For more information on these committees, or to get involved please contact Linda Smith (Cortland County) at 607 756-5582 or Dave Marsh (Tompkins County) at 607 272-3122.

Key Facts on Working Families Issues Good Jobs and a Strong Economy

- Since 2001, America has lost more than 2 million jobs. Our manufacturing sector has been hit hardest.
- U.S. unemployment is now more than 6 percent, and long-term unemployment is at its highest level in a decade.
- Workers' real wages are falling, and family incomes are flat.
- Core job standards—overtime pay, the 40-hour workweek, the Fair Labor Standards Act, the Davis-Bacon Act (which ensures local pre-

vailing wages are paid on federal construction projects) and job safety and health protections—are under attack by Big Business and the Bush administration and its allies in Congress.

Health Care

- As many as 60 million people in the United States were uninsured sometime last year.
- Health care costs are skyrocketing, and employers are cutting coverage and benefits and imposing price hikes on employees.
- Employers that provide decent and affordable health care coverage face tremendous competitive pressures from companies that skimp on workers' pay and benefits.
- The state fiscal crisis has led to cutbacks in public care programs, reducing coverage for low-income families, children and seniors.

Freedom to Form a Union

- Forty-two million private-sector workers would vote for a union today if they had the opportunity.
- When workers try to organize a union, 92 percent of employers force them to attend closed-door anti-union meetings, 80 percent require supervisors to attend training sessions on how to attack unions and 78 percent have supervisors deliver anti-union messages to workers they oversee.
- Seventy-five percent of employers where workers are trying to organize hire outside consultants to run anti-union campaigns, half threaten to shut down if there's a union and 25 percent illegally fire workers.
- Even after workers win a National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) election to form a union, one-third of the time their employer never negotiates a contract with them.
- The penalties for employer misconduct when workers try to form unions are so mild they do not serve as deterrents to future misconduct.
- Only 18 percent of workers who joined unions in 2001 did so through the NLRB process.
- Twenty-five million private-sector and 7 million public-sector workers—or one-quarter of the entire civilian workforce—are not included in the right to form unions.
- Hundreds of thousands of federal workers are losing their civil service and collective bargaining rights under the Bush administration.