



FRONT ROW: Christina Chan • Grievance Officer • Bob Croghan • Chairperson • Iris Bailey • Delegate-At-Large • **MIDDLE ROW:** Wilfrid St. Surin • Treasurer • Esther Blount • Delegate-At-Large • Viviana Matwichuck • Delegate-At-Large • **BACK ROW:** Stephen Parker • Recording Secretary • John Mazarella • Corresponding Secretary • Adam Orgel • Vice-Chairperson

Vote The Croghan Slate For OSA's Future

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

You have been receiving emails and texts from the opposition.

But this letter is the beginning of our Campaign. We have created a website for you that presents profiles of our candidates, brief video reports on important topics, flyers and a chance for you to ask questions. This is a serious election, and you need to know all you can about OSA, and what we have accomplished. The website is www.croghanslate4osafuture.com

This campaign mailing will focus on some of the reasons why you should vote for our slate. Before that however, I would like to explain what happened.

BACKGROUND... On Friday October 21st, an opposition slate sent their campaign strategy and leaflets to the union office and it was reviewed.

The strategy emphasized sending emails and texts, daily, to you, in order to establish the "Biggs" name. A lawyer's name was prominently mentioned. Those sending the documents to the union realized their error that evening.

On Saturday October 22nd, before noon, Arthur Schwartz, a known labor lawyer sent a letter to me as OSA Chairperson stating that he had been hired by Letitia Biggs. He claimed that there could not be a fair election, and threatened court action.

He suggested I call him. I called the OSA legal counsel instead.

On Monday October 24th, the Biggs slate began to send emails and texts to OSA members' private numbers and email addresses.

Neither the union nor the members in question ever gave the Biggs slate permission to contact members at their personal email or phone accounts.

On Saturday October 29th, the OSA Newslite reported what had gone on during the prior week and clarified that the use of the emails was improper. This led, the next day, to a demand by Arthur Schwartz that we take down the Newslite as it constituted campaigning even if we were only explaining what was going on.

The Biggs slate continued to send out emails and texts.

Mr. Schwartz went into court to delay the election. He sought a temporary restraining order but did not succeed. He filed further papers in court but finally agreed to negotiate a compromise that would end court activity.

This led to the stipulation that set the terms under which this election will be held.

Copies of the stipulation are posted on the November 2022 Weekly Newslite page on the www.osaunion.org website. Go to the Newslite for November 21, 2022 and click on the link to the Settlement Document.

The OSA leadership agreed to the stipulation terms to avoid protracted delays and enormous court costs, but also because it would limit the number of unwanted emails and texts going out non-stop and upsetting the members.

The stipulation says there will be a maximum of only two mailings, three emails, and three texts from each slate. They also had to return their unauthorized email lists, and in addition legally affirm that they kept no copy.

OPINION... There are a pair of labor lawyers giving free time and advice to a few members who have promised, if they are elected, to provide a Legal Services Fund.

OSA has a 52-year prior history of both contested and non-contested elections. Every other time, the two sides sat down before the election, or after nominations, and worked out election rules acceptable to both sides.

Our rules are so democratic that any dues paying

members can run, and the opportunity to run is set for November of each even-numbered year.

Yet, this year, lawyers sent letters threatening court action before a single candidate was nominated, and their client began using unauthorized email addresses to campaign immediately.

This election appears to be a contest against an outside law firm or possibly law firms.

To be sure, the replacement of our Grievance, Disciplinary and Negotiations Department with hired lawyers, and the addition of an expensive Legal Services Fund as well, would provide a lot of new jobs. However, it would serve our members very very poorly and could bankrupt the union.

ORGANIZING... We began by organizing ourselves because no one else would. We kept it up for eight years of slow growth until some unions came to help us. Five years later, the unions gave up, certain that the City would never allow Analysts to be unionized. Two years later, we proved the unions wrong. We went from 12 members in 1970, to 300 in 1978 to 650 in 1985 to over 3000 by 1992 and over 5,000 today.

If you wish to see how we did by the year, check the OSA website for the August 2022 OSA Newsletter. Our OSA Welfare Fund front page summary lists our growth, year by year, from 598 members in 1990 to 8,046 members and retirees by 2021. Our team has organized more than fifty unrepresented titles.

If you want a union willing to help others who want to belong to a union, we are that union.

UNION ADMINISTRATION... You can get through to us. We are live. No telephone tree here.

Okay, we are not perfect. Sometimes, too many of us are out of the office at one time (especially during lunch) and the few of us in the office cannot get to answer all the ringing phones.

However, usually you are answered by the third ring.

We answer the phones from 9am until 5pm and often until late in the evening and on weekends and holidays. There was a significant problem during COVID, but even then, we had phone lines being answered at the office and relayed to those of our staff working remotely.

One staffer or another might be out when you need

them, but you can always get through to me. I like talking to the members, and I listen well in return. I am upset if the members are unhappy.

There are few questions I cannot answer, and even then I often know where to find the answer.

We have specialists you can speak to about the Dental and Vision programs, retiree benefits, issues unique to Health+Hospital and Transit Authority members, and COBRA and long-term disability benefits. They can answer Civil Service questions about upcoming hiring pools, title or agency changes, salaries, or grievances. If you have just become a member, we can share information on your new benefits.

SALARIES AND LONGEVITIES... OSA longevity is based on your total City service, not how long you are in an OSA title. If you serve for fifteen years as a Caseworker, your new Staff Analyst title comes with that much longevity due to you.

Our earliest group of unionized Analysts back in 1989 got \$700 for longevity after fifteen years of City service. Today, anyone serving in that job title gets over \$2,300 after ten years, twice as much after fifteen years, and just a bit less than \$7000 after twenty years of service.

Longevity is given for titles as they join OSA. Titles that joined us later do not get as much but, if we continue our success, they will get that much in the years to come.

Our members also benefit in other ways. We win many out-of-title grievances, assist members in getting raises by way of promotion and, just recently, we also negotiated raises in the minimum salaries of twenty-two of the job titles we represent.

CIVIL SERVICE... One of our primary goals as a union is to help our members achieve permanent job status.

We do this in three ways.

First, by obtaining union status for “managerial” workers. Many of them immediately become a “non-competitive” (probable permanent) “civil servant.” They become permanent after a one-year probation.

Next, we seek to improve upon the non-competitive status to upgrade them to competitive status at no risk to our members. Two contracts back, we won the clause that allows agencies employing OSA members in

non-competitive titles to allow the members to take appropriate promotional competitive exams and, if appointed, to pick up their new status while working in their existing job.

Finally, we prepare our members for competitive exams through classes, books, the internet, and personal guidance.

There was, for example, an exam that saw 2,800 of our members seek such help. It was an Education and Experience exam, and a tough one. We helped all 2,800, and then the City threw out the exam and ordered it redone.

We again provided training and one-on-one counseling. Of the 2,800, a few more than 1900 scored at 100%.

We urged the 900 who had passed with a score below 100% to appeal and we provided help to the 800 who heeded our advice. Again, the appeals were one-on-one sessions; a trainer working on each submission.

The result of the 800 appeals was that 500 more candidates now were granted a final score of 100%, but 300 were denied.

Many of those who had appealed saw increases in score, but unless a 100% was achieved, the union urged one final appeal to the Civil Service Commission.

Two hundred of our members took our advice and half of them were able to get a final score of 100%.

All of those who scored 100% were appointed, permanently, and therefore allowed to take the promotional exam that followed shortly.

Our OSA Education Department has been gaining permanent status and promotions for our members and we are most proud of their accomplishments.

WELFARE FUND... In 1989, the members of OSA, after months of discussion, asked our leaders, to set up our Welfare Fund to be modeled on the Management Benefits Fund.

Our Trustees did the best they could, and by the close of 1990, our benefits closely matched the management benefits plus one especially good thing. They had done it without taking money from our members’ dues payments or our union treasury. They even had \$33 per member left over so we could start to build a reserve.

Thirty-two years later, our Welfare Fund has never missed a payment nor cut a benefit and has attracted the

admiration of other unions.

Three unions, representing high ranking and well-respected memberships, have chosen to join our Welfare Fund: The Emergency Medical Service Superior Officers Association, the Uniformed Sanitation Chiefs Association, and the Marine Engineers Beneficial Association.

Even the Management Benefits Plan recently paid our Welfare Fund a nice sort of compliment. For years, they have used a different dental provider than we have. We thought ours was better. Soon, they will be using the Self-Insured Dental Services of Valley Stream, Long Island. We rejoice that the excellent service we found many years ago will now be offered to our managerial brothers and sisters. We think Mayor Adams will like it as much as we do.

RESPECT... Both the City and other City unions respect OSA. We may have started from nothing and taken a very long time to become recognized, but from the start we were respected.

The unions first showed their respect after we defeated CWA Local 1180 by a vote of 20 to 0 in our first, tiny election. They did not even seek to contend with us in the years thereafter.

The City first showed its respect when we were the only local union allowed to reverse the Dinkins layoffs of that era.

Both the City and the unions have taken us seriously ever since.

A most recent sign of the City's respect is our latest contract. We have the only provisions relating to alternate work schedules and we are the first union to set the pattern for upgrading the minimum salaries of twenty-two formerly managerial job titles.

DC 37 and the other unions were very anxious to see our latest contract since the victory we just won, in the area of increased salaries for formerly managerial titles, can be considered the "pattern" for similar titles that each of the other unions represent.

Does respect for OSA matter when it comes to our dealing with the city or other unions? Of course. It does.

THE ELECTION... I've tried to summarize just a few of the areas where the union, under our administration, has provided consistent and effective service to you and all OSA members. We have organized the unorganized, negotiated innovative contracts, built an effective and responsible Welfare Fund with excellent benefits, protected members through skilled grievance and disciplinary representation, provided Civil Service and career advancement assistance and gained the respect of the City and our fellow unions.

Our opponents do not have this history.

You have the opportunity to chart the course of our union for the next two years with your vote in the current election for union leadership.

Take the time to review the profiles of all of the candidates running on our slate, along with video reports, candidate profiles and flyers, on our campaign website at www.croghanslate4osafuture.com.

Ask us questions on the webform on that site.

I believe, after you read all of the materials and get to know our candidates and the extensive experience they bring to representing you that you will agree that there is one clear choice in this election.

When you receive your ballot in the mail, please mark the slate box for our entire slate. We appreciate the trust you have placed in us in the past and look forward to continuing to serve you well over the next two years.

Fraternally,

Bob

Robert J. Croghan
Croghan's Slate For OSA's Future