

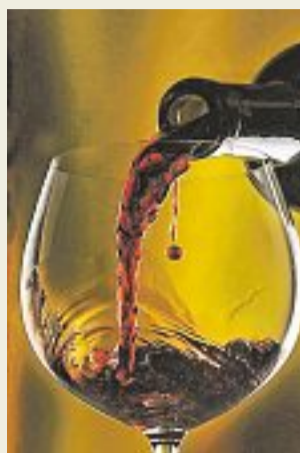
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UP TO  
**\$126**  
IN COUPONS AND SAVINGS INSIDE  
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**MORE POUR**  
IS REGION GETTING TOO MANY WINERIES?  
IN ROCBUSINESS  


**R.I.P. WHITNEY HOUSTON**  
THE RECORDING SUPERSTAR HAS DIED AT AGE 48  
ON PAGE 4A  


**LAW » PRESCRIPTIONS**

# Records of pills focus of growing debate

Is real-time reporting proposal too onerous?

**JON CAMPBELL**  
Albany bureau

ALBANY — Most state decision makers agree that the state's prescription database, which tracks what drugs are prescribed to whom, needs improvement.

Most agree that there is a growing abuse of prescription drugs, especially painkillers.

Yet a proposal to insert real-time database reporting in the equation is revealing rifts in that unanimity.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo's office and lawmakers in both the Senate and Assembly are confident improvements will be made to the database.

How they do it, however, remains a matter for debate.

The proposal from Attorney General Eric Schneiderman would create a real-time database for reporting prescriptions when they're issued and filled. It has support from dozens of lawmakers in both houses of the Legislature, as well as from New York's congressional delegation.

It is facing serious opposition, however, from pharmacy groups, doctors and others. Concerns include that it would be onerous on already overworked care providers and impede patient access.

The Cuomo administration is considering how it could act without legislation to make changes to the database and enforce current laws, possibly through an executive order.

In a report, Schneiderman's office found that prescriptions issued for narcotic painkillers in the state jumped from 16.6 million issued in 2007 to 22.5 million in 2010.

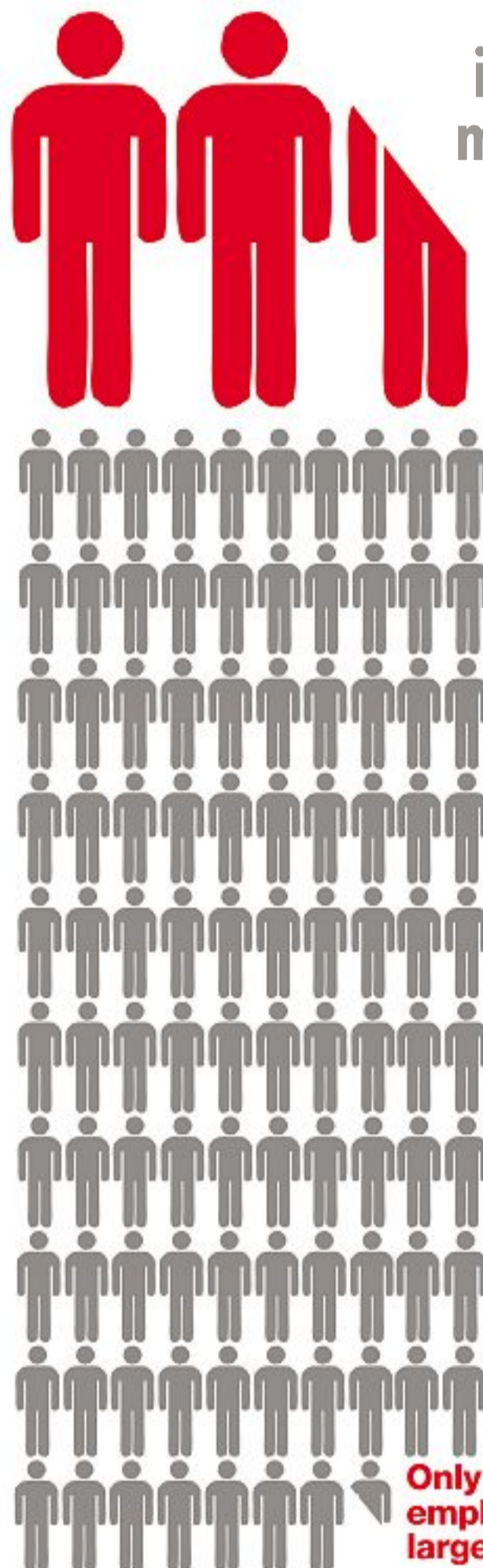
The attorney general's report noted that in Monroe County a drug ring was caught with stolen prescription pads and that

See **DRUGS, Page 12A**

**WATCHDOG REPORT » MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT HIRING**

Despite growing diversity in Monroe County, its towns maintain an overwhelmingly

# WHITE WORKFORCE



**Only 2.6 of every 100 full-time employees in Monroe County's largest towns are minorities.**

ILLUSTRATION BY SARA J. HICKMAN-HIMES/STAFF DESIGNER

**SEAN DOBBIN**  
Staff writer

The 10 most populous towns in Monroe County have a combined 1,349 full-time employees: police officers and librarians, clerks and street sweepers.

All but 35 of them are white. An analysis of town employee data shows that none of Monroe County's largest towns have full-time workforces that reflect their own populations.

Monroe County's suburbs are becoming more diverse every year, with recently released census data showing that minorities make up between 8 percent and 22 percent of the population in the county's 10 largest towns.

But the data collected by the *Democrat and Chronicle* show that all but one town have full-time staffs that consist of fewer than 4 percent minorities, and three of the 10 towns have only a single minority employee on their full-time payrolls.

Town supervisors say that civil service law hamstrings attempts to diversify their workforces.

But advocacy groups say that in most cases, towns just aren't trying hard enough to advertise for the civil service test or their open positions.

"When it comes to the suburbs, it's a little small paragraph where they know the majority of people aren't going to see it," said Edward Goolsby, president of the local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

**FINDINGS**

» The county's 10 most populous towns employ 1,349 people full-time, but only 2.6 percent are minorities.

» Three towns have only a single minority on their full-time staff.

» Efforts to diversify center on getting more minorities to take civil service tests, but results have been slow to emerge.

**INSIDE**

» See a chart showing how other towns rank in full-time minority hiring. **Page 12A**

» Minority municipal employees offer suggestions for improving diversity. **Page 12A**

**EFFORTS TO DIVERSIFY**

For the vast majority of their vacancies, municipalities must hire their new employees from the civil service list — a list of candidates who have passed the civil service exam for that particular occupation.

Municipalities are then required to pick from the three top scorers, and supervisors from several towns said that those candidates are almost always white.

The structure of civil service law doesn't protect a municipality from charges of discrimination, however. Locally, the city of Rochester was sued in the 1970s over the makeup of its

See **DIVERSITY, Page 12A**

**TOP STORIES**

**DADS ASKED TO JOIN IN**

Children benefit when parents get involved in their education, research has shown. But school districts often find it a challenge to make that happen — especially when it comes to dads. But events like School 4's Sweetheart Ball, right, aim to change that. **Page 1B**



**THE MUSE OF LOVE**

Leonard and Myung Urso believe they are better artists because they have each other. The couple met when he had a show in South Korea, and she moved to their Brighton home and they married after the distance became too much. **Page 1C**

**SKATING ON**

Deafness doesn't stop the Gentzke brothers from being a part of the hockey team at Gates Chili. **Page 1D**

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