

increase diversity, the Schenectady County Department is reaching out to community and religious groups.

The department, which has 155 members, is looking to hire 12 new police officers over the next year. The recruitment effort is taking place ahead of a civil service exam in December that begins the actual hiring process.

"The (Schenectady) Police Department

"There was a lot of interest when I visited the Islamic Center of the Capital District," Frisoni said, adding that about a dozen people picked up information packets.

Why go to a place of worship to recruit? Character is the biggest asset when the Police Department recruits at religious places, said Mark R. Chaires, assistant

area mosques, spoken with the congregants and passed out information packets. Chaires said he has had some calls back from Muslims expressing interest.

Since Chaires started with the department in 1988, he said he has observed guys in the city playing soccer and volleyball, many of whom were Muslims, possibly

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must be state residents between 19 and 35 years old, have at least a high school diploma and 30 college credits within 45 days after the exam. Candidates selected will undergo 26 weeks of academy training and 12 weeks of department field training. Starting pay is \$29,717.

Clowns deliver laughter as part of patients' therapy

Staff reports

NISKAYUNA — Since 1994, the Electric City Clowns, a nonprofit organization, has been performing comical and audience-driven activities at nursing homes, hospitals and other health care centers.

The clowns, who recently brought their program to Northwoods Health System's Niskayuna center, make the continuing effort to help improve the well-being and cognitive capacity of those with various medical conditions.

The clowns perform for pediatric and

adult rehabilitation patients as part of the therapy programs. Overall, patients receive several hours of therapy per week at the 24-hour-care facility.

In Niskayuna, which is part of Northwoods system that also has facilities in Troy, Rensselaer and Guilderland, the clowns performed for pediatric, traumatic brain injury and adult rehabilitation patients. The clowns, in visiting the Providence Avenue facility, encouraged audience members to participate as they sang songs and performed several comic skits.



NORTHWOODS HEALTH SYSTEM

CUPCAKE, also known as Pam VanAlstine, with Electric City Clowns' Caring Clowns program, entertains Albert Agnitzer, a rehabilitation patient at Northwoods Health System's Niskayuna center. The troupe brightens the patients' day as the interaction increases their cognitive capacity.