

## METRO BRIEFS

### Date set for appeal by watchdog group

The next step in a citizens group's challenge to the cross-endorsement of judicial candidates by Westchester Democrats and Republicans is March 25, the date of arguments for the group's appeal.

The date was picked after final papers were filed this week by the group, called the Ninth Judicial Committee, with the Appellate Division, Third Judicial Department in Albany.

In the papers, the group called "window-dressing" the political parties' claim that their joint backing of judicial candidates in seven races between 1989 and 1991 was done to "depoliticize the judiciary."

"Could anything be more political than replacing a choice between competing candidates with a single, hand-picked slate created by the collusion of two political machines?" the group asked.

A state judge in Albany on Oct. 16, however, said cross-endorsement was not illegal.

Rejecting the practice, he said, would be up to legislators, not judges.