

Press Releases

01-05-11 This Week In Orange County By Edward A. Diana

Happy New Year! I hope 2011 is off to a great start for you. For me, the start of each New Year is so exciting and full of promise. With great anticipation, I look forward to watching the New Year unfold, anxious to see what's in store for each of us. We start making plans and quickly fill-in the blank pages of our new calendars with life's activities. And, we make resolutions. Have you ever wondered how New Year's resolutions got started? One common theory is that the ancient Babylonians, more than 4,000 years ago, celebrated New Year's Day by returning something that was borrowed from a neighbor the previous year. Historians believe this was the first time in history New Year's resolutions were made.

Today, our resolutions tend to be more personal, revolving around improving our health and fitness. For many of us, they're also more challenging to keep. But when it comes to your health and well-being, there's no need to go it alone. Many great resources to help you stay on track, and keep your resolution, are available through Orange County Health Department's Office of Public Health. For a wealth of health information, check out the Health Department's page on the Orange County website www.orangecountygov.com.

Looking to quit smoking? Find out more about the FREE smoking cessation programs available for all Orange County residents. The four-session program, taught by a smoking cessation expert, will give smokers the information and motivation they need to quit and stay quit. To find a session that fits your timeframe, call 568-5226. Free nicotine replacement therapy is also available through the NYS Smoker's Quitline. To find out more, call 1-866-NY-QUITS or visit www.nysmokefree.com.

Want to lose weight? Try walking. Click on the Orange Walks button on the Health Department's page for great walking information and tips. And be sure to check out Orange County's Heritage Trail for a safe, easy place to walk, ride, or rollerblade – or even cross country ski in winter. This 11.5 mile linear park is easily accessible from Goshen, Chester, and Monroe. Visit the Park's website at www.orangecountynyparks.com for more ideas for getting outside and getting active.

When it comes to personal health, don't forget the importance of preventive measures as well. You know the old saying; an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. To that end, OC Commissioner of Health, Dr. Hudson, reminds Orange County residents if you haven't had your flu shot yet, it's not too late. This year the flu shot or mist is recommended for anyone over the age of six months. Dr. Hudson says that flu activity is starting to pick up in the Hudson Valley, and tragically, in a neighboring county, a previously healthy child died from flu-related illness already this season. In Europe, they are seeing a resurgence of the H1N1 strain too. Thankfully, this year's flu vaccination covers H1N1. The vaccination does take two weeks to be effective, so if you haven't yet had yours, don't delay. To schedule it, call your doctor or the Orange County Health Department at 291-4300.

You can also do your part to slow the spread of illness this winter by practicing good hand washing habits and if you're starting to feel rundown, take care of yourself – get plenty of rest and fluids. A little common sense can go a long way in promoting good health.

Until next week, wishing you good health and happiness,

Edward A. Diana
County Executive