

NEWS



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For Immediate Release

03-23-11 THIS WEEK IN ORANGE COUNTY BY EDWARD A. DIANA

This week we proudly celebrate the official grand opening and dedication ceremony of Kaplan Hall at the Newburgh campus of SUNY Orange. It is my pleasure to extend hearty congratulations to college President Dr. Bill Richards on the completion of one of the most significant achievements in the school's 61-year history. And, on behalf of the people of Orange County, I want to express my sincere appreciation to both Senator William J. Larkin Jr. and Mr. William Kaplan for their commitment and tireless dedication to ensuring that we had the necessary funding to make this project a reality.

It is with this new building that the Newburgh campus is elevated to full branch status and doubles the number of students that can be accommodated at this campus. It also allows new classes and programs, as well as full degree opportunities, to be pursued at the Newburgh location. Students and college personnel moved into the new building in early January for the start of the spring semester and the positive feedback has been overwhelming. Students, faculty, staff, and community members alike are raving about it.

The three-story, 87,000 sq. ft. building includes state-of-the-art classrooms, science labs, and hands-on training facilities, including equipped hospital room mock-ups for nursing classes. Other features include a two-story library, cyber-café, community room, and secure underground parking garage. I encourage you to check it out and take a look at the extensive course offerings available through SUNY Orange.

On March 25, our friends and neighbors of Greek heritage will celebrate Greek Independence Day. On that day in 1821, after nearly 400 years under Ottoman rule, the Greek bishop Germanos of Patras called upon Greeks to rise up against the Ottomans once again. This time, fighting fiercely under the motto "freedom or death," the Greeks won back their independence. This year marks the 190th anniversary of that momentous day. The Greeks have contributed greatly to our culture: great scholars, the Olympics, and many founding principles of our American democracy to name just a few. Eleftheria!

While the calendar says that spring has officially arrived, it's a little hard to believe that today as the snow steadily falls and many area schools have closed for the day or had early dismissal. But, hope springs eternal and warmer weather and sunnier days are just around the corner. The Orange County Parks Department is getting ready for golf season and other warm weather activities. Be sure to check their website, www.orangecountynyparks.com, for the announcement of opening day. Under Upcoming Events you'll find loads of great programs being offered by the Parks Department and the Friends of the Orange County Arboretum this spring. There's an Easter egg hunt for kids, gardening classes, and even a bus trip to the Orchid Show at the Botanical Garden.

For even more great things to do in Orange County, be sure to also check out Orange County Tourism's website at www.orangetourism.org. Happy spring!

Until next week, wishing you good health and happiness.

Edward A. Diana
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