

NEWS



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04-13-11 THIS WEEK IN ORANGE COUNTY BY EDWARD A. DIANA

This week, in honor of National Volunteer Week (April 10 – 16), we pay tribute to the many volunteers in Orange County who generously give of their time and talent, supporting our efforts to ensure that Orange County is a great place to live, work, and raise a family. Thank you for all that you do to enhance the health, safety, and well-being of your friends and neighbors.

Volunteers give freely of themselves, not for personal gain, but to make a difference for others. Martin Luther King Jr. once said, "Everybody can be great. Because anybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve. You don't have to know the second theory of thermodynamics in physics to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love."

Here in Orange County, we are fortunate to have an extremely active Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) which can be accessed through the County's Office for the Aging. RSVP provides people age 55+ a variety of challenging and rewarding volunteer service opportunities. Volunteers deliver meals to shut-ins, work in hospitals, prepare tax returns for other seniors, serve as tutors, provide office and administrative support, and so much more. Their contributions are significant - last year, 845 RSVP volunteers provided nearly 130,000 hours of service to 47 different community agencies. These hours would have translated to hundreds of thousands of dollars, if they had been paid hours. This is a huge benefit to our community's non-profit organizations during these difficult economic times.

The volunteer members of the Orange County Department of Health's Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) stand ready to meet the needs of County residents should a public health emergency arise. They spend many hours of their own time attending training and educational sessions, they practice techniques, and participate in drills, all to ensure that they are prepared in a time of need.

Throughout Orange County, residents give selflessly serving in a variety of capacities to make a positive impact for others. These volunteers include PTA parents, board members, mentors, fundraising event chairs and their dedicated committee members, animal shelter dog walkers, classroom helpers, library aids, and so, so many others.

To those who find a way to squeeze a little bit more into each and every day as a volunteer, a grateful community says, "thank you!" As we celebrate National Volunteer Week, consider this thought from an unknown author "Volunteers don't get paid, not because they're worthless, but because they're priceless."

Until next week, wishing you good health and happiness.

Edward A. Diana
County Executive