

NEWS



Edward A. Diana
Orange County Executive

May 4, 2011

For Immediate Release

05-04-11 THIS WEEK IN ORANGE COUNTY BY EDWARD A. DIANA

Without a doubt, this has been one of the busiest news weeks we've seen in some time. At last, justice has been served for the victims of September 11, 2001. That tragic day, we lost 44 loved ones from our Orange County community. Since then, many more have been lost in the war on terrorism. Now, their families – and our nation – are able to feel some sense of closure as a significant blow has been struck against terrorism. I'm proud to congratulate our brave service members for their courageous efforts that led to this accomplishment.

Throughout the course of American history, the men and women of our armed forces have dedicated themselves to protecting our nation and preserving our freedom. Along the way, they have made huge personal sacrifices; some have even made the greatest sacrifice. With Memorial Day just around the corner, I've heard a great deal of talk about parades. Some communities have considered not holding parades because, I'm told, the veterans are getting too old. Others have said public participation has dropped off. I fear that for many, the true spirit of Memorial Day has been lost.

Memorial Day is not about school holidays, store sales, or barbecues. Memorial Day is a day of remembrance for those who have died in service to our nation. I don't accept that the veterans are getting too old and their numbers are dwindling. Our nation has been at war for 10 years now. Orange County is home to 27,000 veterans. Young or old, regardless of the war in which they fought, our veterans, as well as those who have been lost in the line of duty, have earned our recognition.

The veterans do not march in parades for our entertainment; they march so that we may pay tribute to them and thank them for their service. They march to honor their fallen brethren who no longer stand beside them. If the veterans are not able to march, then we must show our appreciation for their service and sacrifice by marching for them. I encourage all those who are able – the Boy Scouts, the Girl Scouts, the Little League teams, the marching bands, the volunteer firefighters, the car clubs, and so on -- to pay tribute to our nation's service members by participating in a Memorial Day parade this year.

As a county, we have a very active veteran's community. Under the direction of Tony Zippo, a Vietnam veteran who served in the Navy, Orange County Veterans' Services is a leader in New York State on veterans' issues. The Orange County Veterans Coalition is comprised of 23 different veterans' service groups that meet monthly to discuss the issues and concerns of veterans in Orange County. Meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. at the Veterans' Services office at 111 Craigville Road in Goshen.

As a show of appreciation to Orange County veterans, we're proud to host an annual Veteran's Picnic at Thomas Bull Memorial Park in Montgomery. This year's picnic will be held on Sunday, May 22 starting at noon. The picnic is free and open to all County veterans and their families. In addition to food, fun, and friendship, veterans will have the opportunity to get information about many services available in the community for veterans. To learn more about Veterans' Services in Orange County, visit their Department pages on the County website at www.orangecountygov.com.

This Memorial Day, thank a veteran for the freedom you enjoy as a citizen of the greatest nation in the world.

Until next week, wishing you good health and happiness.

Edward A. Diana
County Executive