

# NEWS



Edward A. Diana  
Orange County Executive

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For Immediate Release

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

This Thanksgiving we have much for which to be thankful – especially a strong, resilient community of residents willing to lend a helping hand and give back to others. Over the last few months, Mother Nature hit Orange County with back-to-back storms, flooding, and unseasonable snow; and we are thankful for the many, many people who stepped up to help others through these challenges. From the emergency responders and emergency services staff, and law enforcement personnel to the public works staff, utility crews and clean-up teams to the social service workers, scores of volunteers, and so many more, we pulled together as a community to help our friends and neighbors through these difficult times. This Thanksgiving I am thankful for each of you and all that you do to make Orange County a great place to live, work, and raise a family.

As we head into the hectic days of the holiday season, I encourage you to keep that can-do spirit of giving strong to help those who may still find themselves recovering from the storms or facing financial challenges. If you're not sure what you can do, we're happy to offer some suggestions.

If you'd like to make the season brighter for a child, young person, or family, please call the Orange County Youth Bureau at 615-3620 for information about the holiday Adopt-a-Family program. You can also get more information by visiting the Youth Bureau online at [www.orangecountygov.com/youthbureau](http://www.orangecountygov.com/youthbureau). Let them know how you'd like to help and they'll match you with a child or family that needs assistance.

The County Parks Department will also be collecting new toys and games for disadvantaged youth through their Santa's Toy Box toy drive. Collection boxes for new, unwrapped toys will be located at 22 different locations throughout the County. For a complete listing of sites, visit [www.orangecountynyparks.com](http://www.orangecountynyparks.com) or call 457-4910. Donated toys will be distributed to Orange County families through a number of area non-profit organizations.

If you'd like to help the seniors in our community, consider volunteering for the Orange County Office for the Aging's home-delivered meals program. They're frequently in need of volunteers to bring hot, nutritious meals to seniors who have difficulty getting out. The need is even greater during the holidays when volunteers have additional demands on their schedules. Not only do volunteers ensure seniors receive a healthy meal, they provide a daily smile and a regular check-in to make sure everything is okay. To volunteer for the meals program, call 615-3728.

Food drives are also a great way to give back during the holiday season. If you're interested in organizing a food drive, consider supporting the Orange County Veterans Food Pantry. They currently provide non-perishable food and household items to 160 individual and veteran families in Orange County. The Food Pantry is also in need of volunteers to assist with deliveries. If you'd like to help, contact Director Tony Zippo at 291-2464.

This holiday season remember the old adage – it is better to give than to receive. Thanks for giving!

Until next week, wishing you a happy Thanksgiving,

Edward A. Diana  
County Executive