

NEWS



Edward A. Diana
Orange County Executive

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For Immediate Release

2-2-12 THIS WEEK IN ORANGE COUNTY BY EDWARD A. DIANA

Around the world, brave American men and women in uniform are fighting and sacrificing for our freedom and protecting the way of life we hold so dear. When they return home upon completion of their service, many of these veterans find themselves dealing with special needs and challenges. They may require assistance with such things as health care, employment, education, managing veterans' benefits, or even basic necessities of life like putting food on the table or a roof over their head.

Orange County is home to more than 24,000 veterans, including some 2,000 who have served in the War on Terror. We owe a debt of gratitude to these patriots and are proud to have an outstanding Veterans' Service Agency here in Orange County, under the direction of Navy veteran Tony Zippo, to meet their unique needs. To help those returning to civilian life find employment, our Veterans' Service Agency is teaming up with the County's One Stop Employment offices to help them translate their military skills profile to potential civilian occupations. Any businesses interested in hiring veterans, or veterans looking for employment assistance, should contact the Orange Works One Stop Career Center in Middletown at 346-1100, in Newburgh at 568-5090, or Donato Grella at the Veterans' Service office at 291-2415 or by email to dgrella@orangecountygov.com.

Veterans of all ages sometimes find themselves in need of care at a veteran hospital. In honor of those veterans, February 12 – 18 has been named National Salute to Veteran Patients. During that week, members of the public are encouraged to visit hospitalized veterans and remind them that their sacrifices have not been forgotten. The two veterans' hospitals closest to us are Castle Point and Montrose. Your visit can make a huge difference in the life of a hospitalized veteran – not just during this one week, but anytime throughout the year.

It's also my privilege to share with you information about another program in our community that will aid our nation's veterans – a benefit performance for the Wounded Warrior Project. On Sunday, February 12, 7 p.m., at the Paramount Theatre in Middletown, the Greater New York Wind Symphony, under the direction of conductor Richard Regan, will perform an All American Patriotic Salute to our Veterans. The performance will feature Aaron Copland's "A Lincoln Portrait." All proceeds will benefit the Wounded Warrior Project. For tickets or more information, visit The Hudson Valley Performing Arts Foundation's website at www.hvpaf.org. It's sure to be an inspiring show for what we know is a great cause.

For more information about the many programs and services available for Orange County veterans, visit the Veterans' Service pages on the County website at www.orangecountygov.com or call 291-2470. If you've got time to give as a volunteer, please reach out to Tony Zippo at azippo@orangecountygov.com.

Until next week, wishing you good health and happiness,

Edward A. Diana
County Executive