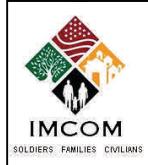


The Hamilton Connection

Serving the Fort Hamilton Community Vol. 7 No. 16 May 11, 2012



Stakeholders review installation plans

By Alison Kohler
Fort Hamilton Public Affairs

Installations have planning boards to prioritize needs and prepare the next steps to achieve them, but Fort Hamilton conducts its IPB differently.

"Us being here is a testimony to how much (Col. Michael Gould, garrison commander) has involved us. We embrace this opportunity and do our best to increase Fort Hamilton's relevance," said Mary Anne Cino, president of the Neighborhood Improvement Association.

Fort Hamilton opens its semi-annual installation planning board to local community partners and tenant organizations that operate on Fort Hamilton to identify, assess and understand where the installation is with planning.

"This is an excellent IPB," said Maj. Gen. Michael Linnington, Fort Hamilton's senior commander who visited from the Military District of Washington May 10 to hear the update.

While installations routinely maintain an integrated priority list of construction and improvements that are needed and wanted if funding becomes available, Fort Hamilton opts to bring stakeholders to the table to provide their input.

Among the installation's 24 initiatives, building a Soldier and Family Support Center to house all of the garrison operations and provide a new location for the activities that operate out of Building 137C in the Hamilton Manor low-rise building ranked number one.

The growth of the information technology environment has resulted in the Network Enterprise Center's workforce tripling in size since 2009. Two of the projects centered on providing functional space for the staff and protecting critical circuitry and equipment to keep the installation operating.

Buildings that are more than 50 years old are prioritized for renovation or replacement to meet today's needs, including the Military Entrance Processing Station, which turns 50 this year.

Given the current fiscal environment, Linnington stressed the importance of putting in perspective the reality of achieving the improvements.

Fort Hamilton stands the best chance at receiving funding for "anything that will pay for itself over time," he said.

Solar panels and heating, ventilation and air conditioning upgrades that will reduce energy consumption would be considered more favorably, Linnington said.

Linnington encouraged Fort Hamilton to keep asking for funding, but he said to also realize that when the current structures are adequate, "we will do the best we can with what we've got," he said.

Linnington said he was surprised that the Military Entrance Processing Station wasn't already funded, since New York MEPS processes 16,000 applicants into the military and has two or three times as many visitors accompany their recruits to watch them ship to basic.

"Their first look at the military is your building there," Linnington said.

Gould indicated Fort Hamilton's board would consider the input and adjust the priority list accordingly.

"I think you've got a real good list frankly," Linnington said.

With representation from elected officials, the Neighborhood Improvement Association, the Army Reserve, New York National Guard, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and other Fort Hamilton tenants, those with a stake in the future of Fort Hamilton came together to plan and strategize the installation's future improvements and priorities.

"It's about information sharing—there's no hidden agenda. The enthusiasm for this community to be a part is like no other place I've been," Linnington said.



Maj. Gen. Michael Linnington, (standing) commanding general of Joint Force Headquarters-National Capital Region and the Military District of Washington joined other stakeholders to hear an update on Fort Hamilton's installation planning for improvements. Linnington serves as Fort Hamilton's senior commander.

Families List Retirement, Pay as Top Issues

By Lisa Daniel
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – Military families regard the possible change of military retirement benefits as their top concern, according to the results of a major survey released recently.

The 2012 Military Family Lifestyle Survey also shows that pay and benefits, the impact of deployments on children, operational tempo, spouse employment and education and combat stress and brain injuries are most on the minds of military family members.

Blue Star Families, a nonprofit military family support organization, released the findings of its third annual survey before a Capitol Hill audience of Congress members, military family members and support organizations, and media.

"That data in this survey is the story of our lives," said Kathy Roth-Douquet, the chief executive officer of Blue Star Families. The survey, she said, is conducted by professional researchers who also are military family members.

More than 4,000 family members responded to the survey, representing each of the services -- active, National Guard and reserve, and Coast Guard -- and all areas of the country. Nearly half of the survey respondents have a service member in the senior enlisted ranks, and 64

percent of respondents are between the ages of 25 and 44.

Among the findings:

-- Thirty-one percent of respondents listed possible changes to retirement benefits as their biggest concern, followed by 20 percent who cited pay and benefits as their top concern;

-- Veterans said their biggest concerns related to separating from the military were employment opportunities, followed by access to health care;

-- Seven percent of respondents listed operational tempo as their top concern, and support for staying in the military dropped from 52 percent for families who were separated 13 to 24 months, to 15 percent for those who spent more than 37 months apart;

-- Sixty percent of spouse respondents are not currently employed, and of those, 53 percent wanted to be; 57 percent said being a military spouse has a negative impact on their ability to work; 27 percent had problems getting professional licenses to transfer to different states;

-- Six percent of respondents listed post-traumatic stress, combat stress and traumatic brain injuries as their top issue; 26 percent said their service member had signs of post-traumatic stress and 3 percent said they had a diagnosis.

Robert L. Gordon III, deputy assistant

secretary of defense for military community and family policy, said the department and the nation are challenged by economic problems today, but that both must take care of military families.

Things changed after the Vietnam War, Gordon said.

"We got out of Vietnam and into the all-volunteer force," he said. "Because of that, our force became a married force."

Also, Gordon said, the military now is structured so that "the entire military goes to war." Indeed, the survey found that National Guard and Reserve members have spent as much time away from home in the past decade as active duty members.

"We're challenged today, and I would say we are up to that challenge," Gordon said. "We have a supportive Congress and a supportive administration, where the first lady and Dr. [Jill] Biden are out pitching for the military" through their "Joining Forces" campaign.

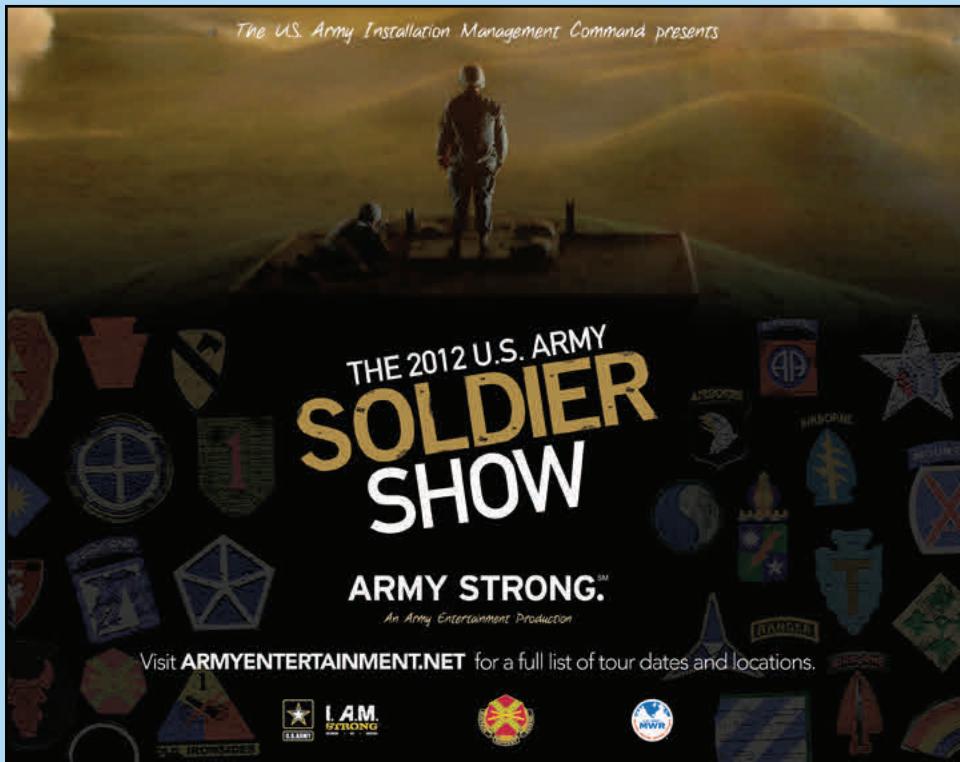
"That's why this survey is so important," he said. "We need to know how these families feel. We have to have a better integration of [combat veterans] when they come home -- and they are coming home."

Other findings of the survey show:

-- Ninety-two percent of respondents said they could help their children make

See Survey Page 3

Soldier Show coming to Hamilton May 25



The U.S. Army Soldier Show will entertain New York City on May 25, supporting Fleet Week activities in the Big Apple.

There will be two shows at historic Fort Hamilton in the shadow of Brooklyn's Verrazano Bridge. The show is free and opens at 2 and 6 p.m.

These active-duty soldiers, including Bronx native Spc. Genesis Rodriguez, bring the emotional, mental, physical and spiritual pillars of military life to the stage in a 90-minute song-and-dance "Army Strong" production. The show is designed to showcase the resiliency of soldiers and military families through current hits, vibrant costuming, exciting choreography and spectacular visuals.

"It feels great to go home to the Bronx because it gives me an opportunity to show my family and friends what I enjoy doing—performing and singing," Rodriguez said.

Fort Hamilton Announcements

Future Soldier Mega-Jam

The New York City Recruiting Battalion has scheduled a future Soldier event from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. May 12 on Taylor Field and the sports and fitness center in Bldg. 402. The event will feature static displays of medical equipment and helicopters and a military resource fair in the fitness center. Fort Hamilton residents and employees are invited to observe the event and attend the resource fair. For more information, call 718-630-4707.

Salute to Ships

Fort Hamilton will present its annual kick-off to Fleet Week with Salute to Ships from 8 to 11 a.m. May 23 on the Bluff. More than 1,000 school children are expected to watch from Fort Hamilton, and residents and employees are welcome to attend.

Soldier Show Returns

The U.S. Army Soldier Show returns May 25 at the post theater. Show times are 2 and 6 p.m. and admission is free.

Farewell picnic for CSM Laughlin

A farewell picnic in honor of Command Sergeant Major Sylvia P. Laughlin will be from noon to 5 p.m. June 1 at the Fort Hamilton Community Club Grounds. Cost is \$12 to be paid at the door. RSVP to Mary Poirier at 718-630-4705 or e-mail mary.o.poirier.civ@mail.mil.

Change of Responsibility slated

A change of responsibility to welcome Command Sgt. Maj. Hector Prince and say goodbye to Command Sgt. Maj. Sylvia Laughlin is scheduled for 10 a.m. June 8 at the Bluff with the Post Theater as an inclement weather site.

Army's birthday bigger than ever

The U.S. Army will celebrate its 237th birthday June 14, and we want to share our birthday celebration with the communities we serve.

For the last 10 years we have been an Army at war, and as we conclude operations in Iraq and scale back forces in Afghanistan, we are turning our focus

to reconnecting and reintegrating our Soldiers with our nation's communities. The strength of our nation is our Army, the strength of our Army is our Soldiers, the strength of our Soldiers is our Families and that's what makes our Army strong.

This year is very special as the focus of the Army birthday celebration is New York City, and we have the privilege of hosting Soldiers from Fort Drum's 10th Mountain Division who just returned in recent weeks from a very difficult deployment in Afghanistan. These Soldiers are pairing with school-age children, citizens and community leaders to celebrate the Army's birthday together provide an opportunity for New Yorkers to meet and greet Soldiers with vast experience and compelling stories to share.

The annual Twilight Tattoo will be performed at 1:30 p.m. June 14 in Bryant Park at 42nd Street and 6th Avenue as well as at 5 p.m. in Times Square in Manhattan.

Tell Us How We Are Doing!

The Interactive Customer Evaluation system is the place where you can provide your comments and suggestions. Help Fort Hamilton improve its community's programs and services. Log onto <http://ice.disa.mil>. Go to "CONUS" and then to "Fort Hamilton." Click on the service you wish to rate, then submit the comment.

Comments can now be submitted using the QR below on your Smartphone. First, go to an app store on your Smartphone, then download a barcode scanning application. Scan the barcode and it will take you to the Fort Hamilton ICE website where you can enter your comment.



Survey cont. from page 2

positive school decisions during a spouse's deployment, but 64 percent said deployment hampered their children's abilities to participate in extracurricular activities;

-- Ten percent of family members responded that they had considered suicide, compared to 9 percent for service members.

-- Fifty-seven percent said prevention should be aimed at training frontline supervisors and commanders;

-- Eighty-one percent volunteered in the past year;

-- Eighty-nine percent are registered to vote;

-- Eighty-two percent believe the all-volunteer force works well;

-- Seventy percent were satisfied with the military lifestyle, and 60 percent would recommend the military for young people; and

-- Seventy-two percent said changing the law to allow gays to serve openly has had no impact on their service members' ability to serve.

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