

Retiree Bulletin

FORT HAMILTON MILITARY COMMUNITY

SPRING 2008

Message from COL Tracey E. Nicholson Garrison Commander

Dear Retirees and Family Members:

This is my last issue of the Retiree Bulletin as commander of USAG Fort Hamilton. It has been an absolute privilege and honor to serve with you and for you. As a Soldier, you always hope that you are making a difference. I sincerely hope I have done that. It is really hard to believe that three years has come and gone. They say “time flies when you are having fun,” but I would submit that not only did we have some fun at Fort Hamilton, but we also worked hard, implemented many new plans, services and programs and most importantly, took care of Soldiers and Families. Over the last three years, we have seen the face and body of Fort Hamilton change. We, with the help of many of our community leaders survived the Base Realignment Commission because the country realized what we always knew—Fort Hamilton is here to stay. Once we tackled that hurdle, we then embarked on change. We built new GMH housing for our military families, transitioned our legacy housing to support the civilian corps, built a new hotel, opened a recreational lodging facility, upgraded our installation access control points and visitor centers, demolished old buildings, constructed new buildings, renovated the USO, bowling alley and fitness centers and our Morale Welfare and Recreation Programs have significantly improved and enhanced the quality of service and support we are able to provide to Soldiers, Families and our children. Probably most importantly, we have worked together with our law enforcement agencies to keep our community safe and secure.

Recruitment and retention remain as a priority and our recruiters are committed to identifying quality, qualified young men and women for the armed services to follow in your/their footsteps. We thank you for the role you play in telling your stories and evoking patriotism. We have developed



many invaluable partnerships with people committed to helping Soldiers, Wounded Warriors and Families. The recent signing of the Family Covenant is just one example of the commitment Army installations around the globe are making to our families. We will be signing a Community Covenant with our community supporters in the near future and I hope you can attend. It will continue to foster their commitment and engrave our gratitude to them as we unite to provide the best we can for generations of heroes.

For 233 years our Army has been the vanguard of freedom around the globe. Your bravery and sacrifice has allowed us to continue to follow in your footsteps. Please continue to pray for our military and

Families as they continue to selflessly answer the call to duty.

Our retired community, families and veterans have played a pivotal role here. Fort Hamilton supports approximately 40 thousand retirees and family members. As a result, we have made many decisions with you and your welfare in mind. As the only active installation in New York City, we look forward to your presence and support of the installation. You continue to help us care for the installation and continuously share your time and talents with us as volunteers in the museum, chapel, ACS, Community Club, PX and commissary on a regular basis. We appreciate you and your selfless service to our country. We remain mindful of all you have done and continue to do for our active duty military and our installation and appreciate seeing you out and around the installation. I sincerely appreciate each and every one of you and the role you play in our history both in the Armed Forces and at Hamilton and the role you are sure to play in our future. My replacement will be announced soon, and I am sure the incoming commander will be as impressed and overwhelmed by you as I have been. God Bless you and thank you for all you have done for me and all you continue to do for our military, our community and our country.

*Tracey E. Nicholson
COL, AG
Commanding*



Fort Hamilton Families look on as Military District of Washington Commander Maj. Gen. Richard J. Rowe Jr. and U.S. Army Garrison Fort Hamilton Commander Col. Tracey E. Nicholson sign the Army Family Covenant. Also present are North Atlantic Division, Army Corps of Engineers Deputy Commander Col. Christopher J. Larsen, right, and former Military District of Washington Command Sgt. Maj. Herbert McCoy.

RAD 2007 Review

The wet and gloomy day was persistent but didn't dampen the spirits of more than 200 retirees of all services and the family members who received an array of appreciative attention. Fort Hamilton opened its doors and arms to hold its annual Retirement Appreciation Day Oct. 27, 2007 at the Post Theater and Sports Fitness Center where the guests of honors received and collected information and advice and enjoyed vocal entertainment. About 40 vendors from Fort Hamilton and the Brooklyn community came to support the effort and show their appreciation, but the appreciation began with the guest speaker, former Sergeant Major of the Army now retired Jack Tilley. "I absolutely love the Army," Tilley said. "After serving more than 36 years, I wouldn't change a thing about my life, however, I often think about the many things that affected my life to include, of course, my parents, wife and my faith." He began to get emotional. "When I think about what my parents have done for me, and now that they are gone, I think about the loss and love they show and the importance of giving back." Tilley's voice continued to crack with emotion as he reminisced on the encounters he had with many young Soldiers, men and women, who have made sacrifices in defense of this country – sacrifices that have left many deaf, blind and disfigured. "That's what it's about," he said. "It's about what they and you gave to pave the way for us and those after us and what you stand for.



Retired Sergeant Major of the Army, SMA Jack Tilley, gives a moving presentation as guest speaker at last year's Retiree Appreciation Day.

It's about a way of life that so many people take for granted what you, the retiree, did, does and will continue to do." An almost full theater of retirees from throughout the region, from all walks of life was moved as Tilley sincerely expressed his appreciation that echoed the sentiments Brig. Gen. Todd T. Semonite, commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineer, North Atlantic Division, who was also attended to show his gratitude. "Sometimes your kids, friends and neighbors don't understand why you do what you did," he boomed. "But when you were in some muddy place while it's pouring down raining, and you weren't getting paid very much and the food wasn't very good, there was something about being a service member that went above and beyond all the rewards we could ever give you when it was about making this country strong and safe, and for that, we can't thank you enough for your dedicated service." Singers Sgt. 1st Class Gigi Theocharides, Carl Thomas and Sgt. Louis Licalzi (Ret.) also conveyed their thanks crooning gospel, patriotic and hip 50s tunes that either reminded retirees of their spiritual side, love for their country or their tender days. "This is my first time actually attending the event," said retired Master Sgt. Linda Green. "I'm very glad I came because it gave me more insight about what's going on and I intend to continue coming. It was informative and very entertaining. I thoroughly enjoyed myself." "Although there were some slight delays and the weather wasn't good, the program was great," said Keith Harry, Retirement Services Officer. "SMA Tilley truly spoke from the heart, and I don't think there was a dry eye in the theater. It's going to be very hard to find a speaker who will top his moving address to the retirees. I'm looking forward to seeing everyone return next year. Don't forget to bring a friend."



**Robert J. Palisay
1st Lt. USMC (Ret.)
Chairperson, Retiree Council**

Retiree Council Chairman

The Fort Hamilton Retiree Council is currently recruiting new members to join its ranks. If you would like to have a voice the retiree council is a good place to start. The Fort Hamilton Retiree Councilmembers consists of retirees from Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines and Coast Guard. The Council meets in the Fort Hamilton Command Conference Room (Bldg 113) at 3:30 p.m. on the first Tuesday of June, September, and December. For additional information on membership, issues or attending meetings, contact the Fort Hamilton Retiree Council Chairman 1st Lt. Robert Palisay at hamilton.rso@conus.army.mil. Ensure to indicate ATTN: Retiree Council in the Subject block.

Semper Fi
**Robert J. Palisay
1st Lt. USMC (Ret)
Chairman, Retiree Council**



A retiree tries his luck at a spinning wheel to win a door prize during last year's Retiree Appreciation Day.



Keith Harry
Retirement Services Officer
USAG Fort Hamilton

Military Personnel Retirement Services Officer

I proudly offer my services to you as the only Retirement Services Officer in the New York City Metropolitan area.

I would like to start by offering an apology for the late mailing of the 2007 Fort Hamilton Retiree Bulletin. Many of you received your bulletin after the Retirement Appreciation Day. For those that did not attend due to the late mailing of the bulletin, this was truly a missed opportunity for Fort Hamilton to show our appreciation for your service. As a service provider to retirees, their families, and survivors this was not acceptable. We have taken several corrective actions that will give us an opportunity to showcase our commitment to providing excellent services to our military retiree community.

When serving a retiree community as large and dynamic as the New York City Metropolitan area setting and meeting deadlines is very important. Once we have completed the editing of the retiree bulletin it is sent to a contractor. The contractor completes the printing and mails the finish product to an address list supplied by the RSO. In the 2007 bulletin contract there was a miscommunication regarding the mailing deadline. This was a hard lesson learned but we are moving forward.

Another change is the bulletin you are currently reading. Starting in 2008, Fort Hamilton will mail the retiree bulletin twice a year. One bulletin will be sent in April. The

second pre-RAD bulletin will be mailed in early August. Two bulletins a year will allow us to give you timely information and current benefit updates.

In addition we have moved the date of the RAD from the last Saturday in October to the last Saturday in September. The 2008 RAD is scheduled for Saturday, September 27. For the past three years we have encountered bad weather the day before and the day of the RAD. Hopefully a month earlier will give us a shot at better weather conditions. Moving the RAD to September will also eliminate past conflicts with other events scheduled on the last weekend in October (Halloween, the New York City Marathon, and the USMC 10K run).

Don't forget to make a note on your calendars that the Fort Hamilton RAD is scheduled for Saturday September 27, 2008. As always it is our pleasure to recognize you for your dedication, contributions, and continued support.

If you need assistance with submitting retirement documents, Survivor Benefit Plan, Report of Death, or records updates feel free to stop by the Fort Hamilton Retirement Service Office. My office is located on the first floor of building 114N White Ave in room 113. Hours of operations are Monday – Friday 8:30 a.m. – noon and 1 p.m. - 4:30. I am looking forward to assisting you in anyway that I can.

For additional information you can call me at (718) 630-4552 or email hamilton.rso@conus.army.mil or check out the Fort Hamilton web site at www.hamilton.army.mil.

Keith Harry
Retirement Services Officer
U.S.A.G Fort Hamilton

Retiree Assistance, Amityville

There is a Retirement Services Office run by all volunteers under the auspices of the Navy. It is located at the Armed Forces Training Center in Amityville. The address is 600 Albany Ave., Amityville, N.Y. Call (631) 842-6620 ext. 24 for assistance or to volunteer to assist others.

The Amityville volunteer staff is hosting their Retirement Appreciation Day on April 26, 2008. RAD activities are 8:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. Retirees from all military branches are welcome. Some of the scheduled issues to be addressed are Tricare, Tricare For Life, Pharmacy Coverage, U.S. Family Health Ser-

vices Health Plan, Delta Dental, Veterans Services and Social Security.

Army Career, Alumni Program Express

Our nation and our Army owe a debt of gratitude to those Soldiers who volunteer to serve our country. Often that gratitude is best expressed when unit leaders give transitioning Soldiers the time they need and deserve to take advantage of the robust services Army Career and Alumni Program offers. ACAP is one of many programs that are under my purview as the HRC Commander.

In an effort to improve its service to our Soldiers, ACAP is implementing ACAP Express, which will streamline access to ACAP services and give Soldiers more autonomy in setting up and using those services. The most important change to how we will now serve Soldiers is that they will now have the ability to go online at any time, from any location, to <https://www.acapexpress.army.mil> log in using AKO login, then schedule appointments for all services offered at the ACAP Center. ACAP Express became available for use by transitioning Soldiers as of Feb. 28, 2008.

Additionally, some of the tools previously available only within the ACAP Centers during normal business hours will now be available online. One of those features will allow transitioning Soldiers to hone their resumes from any computer with internet access, and then email it to their ACAP counselor for review. A second feature will allow Soldiers in remote locations to use some of the services normally provided by ACAP only at installations.

I want to personally share with you these changes to ACAP, and ask for your help in getting the word out to our leaders and Soldiers alike. I understand that in the eyes of many leaders, ACAP competes directly with real-world mission requirements; however, we are asking Army leaders at all levels to find the balance between the demands of mission requirements and the responsibility for taking care of Soldiers.

All Soldiers deserve the best possible start in the civilian world when the time comes to leave the Army, and ACAP provides the knowledge and skills to smooth the way. There is no better recruiting influence in the community than a retiree or veteran whose Army experience includes being treated with respect and being supported even after making a decision to tran-

sition to civilian life. This exciting new development will be publicized widely through installation Public Affairs Offices and local ACAP Centers. Your support will help make ACAP Express a success. Appreciate your continued support.

Sean J. Byrne
Major General, U.S. Army
Commanding

Society of Military Widows

The Society of Military Widows was founded in 1968 to serve the interests of women whose husbands died on active duty military service or during retirement from the armed forces.

SMW is a nonprofit organization, whose purpose is to educate widows concerning the problems and needs of the military widow in today's society.

Membership is open to all widows of deceased military personal of all ranks who possess a valid military ID card.

The SMW Chapter New York meets at the Fort Hamilton Community Club at least once a month. It provides a friendly caring atmosphere in which to develop a social life with other military widows involved in serving the military community.

As a member you will receive the NAUS Uniformed Services Journal that will keep you informed on legislative matters that are of concern. Please call (718) 727-2298 for further information.

Prosthetics Services at VA New York Harbor HCS

In our 2007 RAD Bulletin we posted an article on prosthetics services at the VA New York Harbor HCS. The article stated that the new state-of-the-art artificial limbs would cost from \$25,000 to \$100,000 if purchased in the private sector; VA's Prosthetic Service provides the same computerized artificial limbs with unmatched quality from \$5,000 to \$25,000.

I have received several phone calls and letters expressing the unfairness in making our injured service men and women pay for their artificial limbs. This is not true. Our active duty service men and women are not paying out of pocket for the replacement of lost limbs or the treatment of injuries received during line of duty.

If a military member is injured while in an active duty status the injury is classified as Line of Duty. All medical treatment for LOD injuries or lost of limbs are treated with

zero out of pocket cost to the military member. The cost of prosthetic limbs does not apply to our wounded warriors returning home with injuries and lost limbs. For additional information, please visit the VA's website: <http://www.va.gov> or contact a local VA regional office at (800) 827-1000.

Combat Related Special Compensation

The 2008 National Defense Authorization Act was signed into law on Jan. 29, 2008 to include Chapter 61, a new component for Combat Related Special Compensation. This legislation expands eligibility to medical retirees with less than 20 years of service. Effective Jan. 1, 2008, medically retired veterans must still provide documentation that shows a causal link between a current VA disability and a combat related event. For Questions and Answers, please visit

"Combat-related" criteria include those VA-rated injuries that occurred under the following situations:

- o In the performance of duty under conditions simulating war (e.g. exercises, field training) while engaged in hazardous service (e.g. flight, diving, parachute duty)

- o Through an instrumentality of war (e.g. combat vehicles, weapons, Agent Orange); OR As a direct result of armed conflict (e.g. Purple Heart) For more information or to receive an application, call CRSC toll free at (866) 281-3254 Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. - 7 p.m (EST). Retirees can also go online to download a CRSC application at www.crsc.army.mil.

U.S. Army Wounded Warrior Program

The U.S. Army Wounded Warrior Program – AW2 – embodies the Warrior Ethos "we will never leave a fallen comrade." AW2's personalized recovery services for severely wounded Soldiers are not limited by geographic or physical location and are not constrained by recovery or rehabilitation time lines.

AW2 provides unique services to the most severely wounded, including: Helping wounded Soldiers remain in the Army by educating them on their options and assisting them in the application process.

Soldier Family Management Specialists are located throughout the country at major Military Treatment Facilities and VA Medical Centers providing on the ground support to Soldiers and their Families from

the time they arrive.

To be considered for the Army Wounded Warrior Program, a Soldier must: suffer from injuries or illnesses incurred after 10 September 2001, in support of the Global War on Terror. The soldier must receive or be expected to receive a 30% rating for one or more injuries rated by the Physical Disability Evaluation System.

Find out more about the U.S. Army Wounded Warrior Program today! Visit www.aw2.army.mil OR Call 1-800-237-1336.

Hiring a Wounded Warrior companies have the opportunity to support those who sacrificed for our country by hiring Soldiers severely wounded in the Global War on Terror.

An important element in rebuilding the lives of severely Wounded Soldiers is gained through meaningful employment with companies throughout the world. AW2 links severely wounded, injured or ill Soldiers and companies together by providing personalized employment counseling and services. AW2 is vital in helping them become self-sufficient, contributing members of our communities. AW2 Coordinators work closely with the Army Career and Alumni Program to connect prospective employers with AW2 Soldiers seeking work. EMPLOYERS: Learn more about Hiring a Wounded Warrior, call (800) 237-1336 or email aw2@conus.army.mil

Continuing on active duty or reserve is an option for many AW2 Soldiers. Soldiers who have experienced a severe wound, injury or illness continue to choose to stay on active duty or reserve after injury. To date, most Soldiers who have requested to continue in the Army have been able to do so.

AW2 Soldier Family Management Specialists assist wounded Soldiers interested in pursuing the Continuation on Active Duty Continuation on Active Reserve process every step of the way.

To be eligible, a Soldier must meet at least one of the following:

- o Has served 15-20 years of service for COAD or 15-20 qualifying years of service for non-regular retirement for COAR

- o Is qualified in a critical skill or short-age MOS

- o Has a disability as a result of combat or terrorism.

- o Learn more about the COAD/COAR process by contacting your Soldier Family Management Specialist or call AW2 headquarters at (800) 237-1336.

Retiree Recall Program For Aviators

There is a recall to active duty available to retired officers who are qualified Army aviators (CW3 thru LTC). Applications for active duty are restricted to retired aviator qualified officers that have retired from active duty service since Oct. 1, 2001. Exceptions to this date will be considered on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the current needs of the Army. Aviators must report on active duty no later than Dec. 31, 2010. See the message for further information.

Applicants must be serving on an Army retired list and receiving retired pay. Retired reserve aviators receiving, or eligible to receive non-regular retired pay at age 60. Provisions of Title 10 USC, Section 12731 or 12371A, are not eligible to apply. For additional information, concerning this provision please contact Mr. Rowland Heflin at (703) 695-7277.

Candidates may coordinate directly with Aviation Branch regarding location and length of service prior to processing for recall to active duty. Warrant officers may call The Aviation Branch at (703) 325-5224. All other officers may call the Aviation Branch at (703) 325-0961.

Sergeant Major of the Army Recruiting Team

The Sergeant Major of the Army organized the Sergeant Major of the Army Recruiting Team Program. This program encourages Soldiers, military retirees and civilians to provide referrals interested in enlisting into the Army and/or Army Reserve. All referring sponsors participating in the SMART Program are eligible for the Sergeant Major of the Army Coin and Certificate provided the referral submitted through the website enlists into the Army or Army Reserve.

Upon receiving the referral at HQ USAREC, the referral information will be submitted for contact and pre-qualification screening. Once contact and pre-qualification screening is completed, the referral information will be sent to the nearest Recruiting Station. The Recruiting Station will contact the referral and set up an appointment to discuss the enlistment opportunities and continue processing the individual for enlistment into the Army or Army Reserve.

The \$2,000.00 Referral Bonus will be payable in two lump sums as follows:

\$1,000.00 will be paid to the eligible sponsor once the Soldier (referral) has

commenced Basic Training. Payment requests will be sent to DFAS upon verification that the Soldier is in fact in Basic Training. Payment should be received within 45 days of request submission.

\$1,000.00 will be paid to the eligible sponsor once the Soldier (referral) has completed and graduated from One Station Unit Training or Advanced Individual Training. Payment requests will be sent to DFAS upon verification that the Soldier has completed and graduated from OSUT or AIT. Payment should be received within 45 days of submission.

Effective March 15, 2007, Department of the Army civilians to include non-appropriated funds civilians are eligible for the referral bonus of \$2,000. DAC and NAF sponsors are required to update their user profile before submitting a referral. Help The Army and reward yourself with ARS SMART referrals!

Retirees and civilians can provide referrals online through <https://smart.goarmy.com>. As an alternative, referring sponsors may call the USAREC at (800) 223-3735 extension 6-0473. This number dedicated to make referrals if you do not have access to a computer or would like to receive additional program information.



Financial Counselor Training for Spouses

The National Military Family Association is offering The Military Spouse Fellowship for the Accredited Financial Counselor Program. This program is open to most spouses of active duty service members, reservists or retirees and will enable them to earn the accredited financial counselor credential. The credential gives spouses the ability to work in financial counseling nationwide. The National Military Family Association began accepting applications for the 2008 Military Spouse Fellowship Program in late March 2008 with a deadline of late April 2008. Recipients will be announced in late June or early July 2008. Additional information is available on the National Military Family Association website or call (800) 260-0218 and fax (703) 931-4600.

DEERS ID Office

The Fort Hamilton's DEERS ID Card Section is located in Building 114 on White Ave. Hours by appointment are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 8 a.m. – noon and 1-4 p.m. On Thursday, 8 a.m. – noon and 1-6 p.m. The first Saturday of the month, the hours are 9 a.m. – noon and 1-4 p.m. If that Saturday is a holiday weekend, we open on the second Saturday. The section is closed on federal holidays. For appointments, call (718) 630-4557.

Replacing Lost DD Form 214

A replacement DD Form 214 can be requested online. The website is www.retrecs.archives.gov. You can also fax a request to (314) 801-9195 or mail a request to National Personnel Records Center Military Personnel Records, 9700 Page Avenue St. Louis, Mo., 63132-5100. All requests must be signed and dated by the veteran or next-of-kin. For more information, visit the Archives site at www.retrecs.archives.gov or call (314) 801-0800.

Home Grants For Disabled Veterans

A change in federal law allows certain seriously injured veterans and service members to receive multiple grants for constructing or modifying their homes. Before the change, eligible veterans and service members could receive special adaptive housing grants of \$10,000 or \$50,000 from Veterans Administration only once. Now they may use the benefit up to three times, so long as the total grants stay within specified limits outlined in the law. For more information about the adaptive housing grants available to veterans, visit the VA's website: <http://www.homeloans.va.gov/sah.htm> or contact a local VA regional office at (800) 827-1000.

Survivor Benefit Premiums

Effective Oct. 1, 2008, retirees who are age 70 and older and have paid Survivor Benefits Plan premiums for at least 360 months will no longer be required to pay SBP premiums. The first retired pay payment affected will be the payment dated 1 November, 2008. For more information visit the DFAS Web site at <http://www.dfas.mil/retiredpay.html> or call (800) 321-1080.

TRICARE Goes Digital

TRICARE for Life beneficiaries are now able to print copies of their Explanation of Benefits from the convenience of their own homes. As of January 2008, the only paper EOBs that TFL beneficiaries living in the United States and U.S. territories will receive are monthly summaries. The exception to this is if a claim includes services that are rejected, and those services have appeal rights; or if the EOB is mailed with a payment to the beneficiary. TRICARE overseas beneficiaries will continue to get their EOBs as usual. Beneficiaries now have the option to receive an electronic notification every time a claim processes. Beneficiaries can also log on to the secure web site at <http://www.TRICARE4U.com>, to view and print their EOB.

U.S. Family Health Plan

The hallmark of US Family Health Plan is assuring access for eligible beneficiaries to our outstanding health care and maintaining high levels of patient satisfaction. US Family Health Plan has features that differentiate it within the Military Health System: strong, continuous patient-physician relationships, especially with primary care physicians; emphasis on medical care delivery and not insurance as our principal mission; and integrating effective and supportive care management into care delivery.

Eligibility

To enroll in the plan, you must:

- o Be an eligible beneficiary of the Military Health System
- o Live in the zip code-defined area served by one of the six US Family Health Plans
- o Be eligible for military health care benefits in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS).



Retirees pay homage to fallen comrades during the Veterans Day Retreat last year.

Eligible beneficiaries include:

- o Husbands, wives, unmarried dependent children (until their 21st birthday, or their 23rd birthday if full-time students), or other enrolled and eligible dependents of active duty service members
- o Retirees, their eligible spouses or survivors, eligible unmarried dependent children, and enrolled and eligible dependent parents
- o Eligible former spouses of active duty or retired service members
- o Unremarried widows or widowers, or children of deceased active duty or retired service members

o National Oceanic Service members who retired prior to July 19, 1963, or have had continuous service since prior to that date

o Dependents of NOS members listed above

o Retired lighthouse keepers and their dependents

o Medal of Honor recipients U.S. Family Health Plan members may transfer their health care coverage to a U.S. Family Health Plan provider in another area of the country or to one of the regional TRICARE Prime programs. When making a permanent move to a region that offers U.S. Family Health Plan or TRICARE Prime, you should contact the plan you are enrolled in first to see what options are available to you. Retirees and their family members may transfer enrollment twice during an enrollment year, as long as the second transfer is back to the original region or enrollment.

Enrollment Transfers

Eligible beneficiaries living in an area serviced by both a U.S. Family Health Plan and a regional TRICARE Prime program may transfer enrollment from one plan to the other once in a 12-month period. No change in residence is necessary for the transfer to take place.

Enrollment Fee

There is no enrollment fee for active duty families. There is no enrollment fee for any individual who is Medicare-eligible and paying for Medicare Part B coverage. Members will be asked to provide proof of coverage in Medicare Part B in lieu of enrollment fee payment. All other must pay the standard TRICARE enrollment fee for the program they choose to join.

For additional information call US Family Plan at (800) 748-7347 or visit our web site www.usfamilyhealthplan.org.



HNFS 20th Anniversary

Health Net Federal Services (Health Net) is proud to announce its 20th anniversary of providing quality health care services to the military community. It is with pride that we have partnered with the Department of Defense since 1988 when Health Net was awarded the first demonstration contract in California and Hawaii under the CHAMPUS Reform Initiative (CRI). Today, it is our honor to continue to serve nearly 2.9 million beneficiaries in the TRICARE North Region.

As a way to give back to those we have been honored to serve, Health Net Federal Services has established a scholarship program administered through National Military Families Association (NMFA) designating \$150,000 to be awarded to military spouses in the TRICARE North Region. In 2008, \$100,000 of the contribution will be awarded to deserving TRICARE North spouses that apply for the grant. The remainder of the donation will be endowed by NMFA for future scholarship opportunities. For more information about Health Net Federal Services, visit www.healthnetfederalservices.com.

Delta Dental

Delta Dental of California has announced that the TRICARE Management Activity (TMA) of the Department of Defense awarded the company a new five-year contract to continue to administer the TRICARE Retiree Dental Program (TRDP).

The TRDP, authorized by Congress as part of the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 1997, offers comprehensive dental benefits as a voluntary option to the nation's five million-plus uniformed ser-

vices retirees and their family members. The new contract becomes effective on Oct. 1, 2008. With a current enrollment of nearly 1,050,000 covered lives, the TRDP is already the nation's largest voluntary, all-enrollee-paid dental program available to this group.

The enhanced TRDP will feature some additional benefits beginning Oct. 1, including certain implant services at 50 percent of allowable charges, an increase in the orthodontic lifetime maximum from \$1,200 to \$1,500, and 80 percent coverage for certain posterior composite restorations. Additionally, the enhanced TRDP will be extended to new overseas locations once the new contract is effective.

The TRDP will continue as a national, combined fee-for-service/preferred provider program that offers enrollees access to any licensed dentist in all 50 states, plus the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and Canada. While enrollees may seek care from any licensed dentist in the service area, optimal benefits will be available to those enrolled retirees and their family members who choose a participating network dentist. Different options for locating a dentist and obtaining covered services will be available to those enrolled in the enhanced TRDP overseas.

The program still carries a \$50-per-person, per-year deductible, with a family cap of \$150, and an annual maximum of \$1,200 per person against which preventive and diagnostic services are not counted. Coverage for these services, as well as for basic restorative services, periodontic services, endodontic services, oral surgery and dental emergencies, is available on the effective date of coverage.

Coverage for crowns, bridges, full and

partial dentures, certain implant services, and orthodontics, payable at 50 percent, will be available after only 12 months of continuous enrollment.

Eligible retirees and their family members can find answers to their questions about the current program as well as enroll using Delta's dedicated TRDP web site at www.trdp.org or by calling the toll-free number at (888) 838-8737. Details about the new TRDP contract will be forthcoming as the effective date draws nearer.

MTF Pharmacy

Prescriptions may be filled (up to a 90-day supply for most medications) at an MTF pharmacy at no cost to the beneficiary, if the medication is on the MTF formulary. Beneficiaries should contact their local MTF to find out what is on the formulary and for specific details about filling and refilling prescriptions at the MTF pharmacy. They can use the TRICARE Formulary Search Tool to find out what medications must be made available at all full service military pharmacies (called the Basic Core Formulary), and they may visit the MTF locator to find the closest MTF. With no co-payment or cost share, the MTF pharmacy is the best value to the beneficiary.

Filing Claims

If a beneficiary has other health insurance, and is filing a pharmacy claim with TRICARE, the claim should be mailed to: Express Scripts Inc., P.O. Box 66518, St. Louis, MO, 63166-6518. Claims must be filed within one year of the date of service.

A downloadable TRICARE claim form

(DD 2642) is available on the TRICARE Pharmacy Web site: <http://www.tricare.osd.mil/pharmacy/claims.cfm>. Beneficiaries may call ESI at (866) DoD-TRRX, (866) 363-8779 for questions on how to file a pharmacy claim.

10 medications removed

TRICARE has reviewed 84 medications in four categories and designated 10 as nonformulary (or third tier), no longer part of the TRICARE Uniform Formulary, effective Aug. 1, 2007. That means that these medications are no longer available at military treatment facility (MTF) pharmacies, unless an MTF provider establishes medical necessity and writes the prescription. They will be available through TMOP and TRRX for \$22. Beneficiaries taking these medications may ask their health care providers if they would be able to switch to a first or second tier alternative medication which costs less and is available at MTFs.

The drugs affected are Sonata, Rozerem, Ambien CR, Ultram ER, Travatan and Travatan Z, Istalol, Betamol, Azopt and Emsam. A complete list of medications, their formulary status and where they are available is at <http://www.tricareformularysearch.org/dod/medicationcenter/default.aspx>.

Military Funeral Honors

In an effort to improve outreach services for Military Funerals the Department of Defense has developed a web site. The Department of Defense web site, located at Department of Defense Funeral Honors Website, contains pertinent information

for the general public and funeral directors about military funeral honors, including a step-by-step procedure on the process to request honors. The web site will have links to other relevant web sites such as the Department of Veterans Affairs and links to current legislation on military funeral honors

This effort focuses on making it easier to request military funeral honors. The Department of Defense has also established a toll free line for use by funeral directors to request honors. This system has been in operation since Jan. 1, 2000. By using this number, funeral directors can reach the regional military offices to arrange for military funeral honors ceremonies. The toll free line will provide funeral directors with a single point of contact to obtain the necessary information rather than calling various places. This will reduce the time spent by funeral directors to obtain the information they need to honor families' requests for military funeral honors. At the recommendation of members of Veterans Service Organizations, the department has designed the toll free number for funeral directors only. Family members should work with their funeral directors if they desire military funeral honors. Funeral directors, to obtain a Funeral Director Information Kit, please call Air Force Mortuary Affairs (800) 531-5803.

Deployed and Disabled Veterans

Rebuilding Together Long Island, Inc. a non profit, non sectarian organization of volunteers has been helping low income homeowners with electrical, plumbing, wall repair, weather stripping, locksmith, carpentry, painting, glazing and construction of wheelchair access ramps. Families who have a bread winner deployed in the War on Terror and are having problems keeping up with household repairs and returned disabled veterans unable do the work themselves should contact Marine veteran Sol Goldstein at (516) 541-7322 for an application.

Travel Rates Increase

As of Feb. 1, 2008, more than a million eligible veterans will see their mileage reimbursement more than double, for travel to Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facilities. The 2008 appropriations act provided funding for VA to increase the benefi-



Family and friends make up an inter-service funeral detail as they carry a fallen Soldier's coffin.

ciary travel mileage reimbursement rate from 11 cents per mile to 28.5 cents per mile. This is the first increase in the mileage reimbursement in 30 years. While increasing the payment, VA, as mandated by law, equally increased the deductible amounts applied to certain mileage reimbursements. The new deductibles are \$7.77 for a one-way trip and \$15.54 for a round trip, with a maximum of \$46.62 per calendar month. However, these deductibles can be waived if they cause a financial hardship to the veteran. For additional information, please visit the VA's website: <http://www.va.gov> or contact a local VA regional office at (800) 827-1000.

Army Knowledge on Line

All Active Army, Reserve, National Guard, DA Civilians and retired Army can get a free email account through Army Knowledge On-Line. All you'll need to do is go on line to www.us.army.mil and click on "new user" to register. You must enter your social security number, date of birth and initial pay entry date.

Job Opportunities

The Jacob Group is an executive search firm serving clients all over the United States, including New York City and Long Island. They specialize in the defense industry and would welcome resumes from qualified people in New York City and Long Island. They are specifically seeking individuals who have secret or top secret security clearances and are qualified for security, engineering, design, production, and managerial positions. Qualified applicants should submit, via email, a resume as a Word document attachment to careers@jacobgroup.com.

What do I do when?

All too often, retirees who lose a spouse through death or divorce fail to notify the Defense Finance and Accounting Center. When either one of these events occur, please contact DFAS-C at Defense Finance and Accounting Service, U.S. Military Retirement Pay, PO Box 7130, London, Ky., 40742-7130 or call (800) 321-1080. The fax number is (800) 469-6559. For annuity pay, write to Defense Finance and Accounting Service, U.S. Military Annuity Pay, PO Box 7131, London, Ky., 40742-7131 or call (800) 321-1080.



Retirees are presented Certificates of Appreciation for their volunteer service at Fort Hamilton's Harbor Defense Museum.

Harbor Defense Museum

The Harbor Defense Museum is located at Fort Hamilton N.Y. Admission is free. The hours of operation are Mon-Fri, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. and Sat, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. It is closed on federal holidays. Tours are free and can be tailored to any curriculum. For additional information, contact the Harbor Defense Museum staff at (718) 630-4349 or email the director at Richard.j.cox1@army.mil. You may also visit the Harbor Defense Museum's website www.harbordefensemuseum.com.

Legal Assistance

Fort Hamilton Legal Assistance office is located in the Lee House, Building 117, General Lee Avenue. Legal services are available to all retirees and their family members with I.D. cards. Help is provided for all personal and civil legal problems. There are four areas of the law for which representation cannot be provided: criminal law, labor law, business law relating to your business, and claims against the government. Every effort is made to see urgent cases as soon as possible. For an appointment, call (718) 630-4743.

USO Mission on Fort Hamilton

The USO is willing and able to serve you in a variety of ways. The executive director of the USO of Metropolitan New York said of the Center, "It serves as a satellite operation for faster input for service members in the Fort Hamilton military community." The USO is located at 237 General Lee Ave. The hours are Tuesday-Friday, 11 a.m.-7 p.m. or call (718) 630-1023.

Post Decal

Stop in at either the Fort Hamilton Visitor Control Center office located at the 101st Street entrance gate or stop at the PMO desk sergeant located at the 7th Ave gate exit and fill out a DA Form 3626 (Vehicle Registration Card). You will need to have a valid driver's license, insurance card, registration and military I.D. Once all information has been verified, a DOD decal will be issued to that particular vehicle and logged into the system. For additional information on eligibility call (718) 630-4377.

Retired Decals, AAFES Clothing

The Army Retired logo that retired Soldiers display proudly through their Army retired pins and decals is now featured on T-shirts, ballcaps and window strips being sold through the Army and Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES). AAFES is also selling the Army Retired decal. The decals and window strips are being sold in exchange stores and military clothing sales stores. The decals are sold in sets of two for \$3.95. The window strip is similar in shape to a bumper sticker with the Army Retired decal on either end and U.S. Army in the middle. It costs \$3.95. The ballcap and T-shirt can be purchased not only at exchange stores, but also at the exchange online store by logging on through the AAFES Web site <http://www.aafes.com>. You can also call (800) 527-2345 to order these items. Remember to include the item numbers with you order. The one-size-fits-most embroidered ballcap has the Army Retired logo on the front and is available in black, navy and red for \$17.95. The unisex crewneck T-shirt has the embroidered Army Retired logo on the left side. It's avail-

able in a variety of colors and sizes for \$22.95.

Community Activities Center

Stop by to roll a few balls for fun or sign up for a league. We have leagues for all – children, senior citizens, veterans and more. This is a great way to mingle with friends. Our manager is always running fun contests and unusual tournaments. The Bowling Center & Strike Zone Restaurant is located in building 124 on Wainwright Drive. For additional information, call (718) 630-4916.

Hamilton Inn

This state-of-the-art facility welcomes military members who are arriving on PCS, TDY or other official travel status. Others may use the facility on a standby basis. For standby please call one week in advance. The four-floor hotel has 46 rooms. Family suites for \$75 per night, extended stay suites for \$65 per night and standard rooms for \$54. There is an addition person fee of \$5. Family suites and extended stay rooms are equipped with a full kitchenette. As you enter the new hotel, you are greeted by the friendly staff at the reception desk and a view of the double-sided fireplace that faces on the lobby and also the breakfast area. All guests receive a wonderful continental breakfast. For reservations or additional information, please call (718) 630-4892.

Commissary

The Fort Hamilton Commissary will allow authorized patrons with military ID cards to sign in a family member, who is not an authorized patron. The family member will be allowed to accompany the authorized patron in the commissary, but only the authorized patron may make purchases. For additional information on upcoming sales and hours of operations, call (718) 630-4951.

Army Community Service

We have added a number of exciting new classes and groups. We are located on General Lee, building 405. Here is a sampling of our planned offering:

- Army Emergency Relief (AER)
- Weekly Stress Management

- Monthly Budgeting classes
- Monthly Newcomer's Briefing

held the last Thursday of each month from 8:30 a.m. - noon.

- Computer Lab with six computers
- Sponsorship Classes
- Employment Readiness and Resume writing

Please stop by building 405 or call us (718) 630-4754 and sign up for a class. Leave your name, email address and phone number for class schedule notifications. Volunteers with financial management experience are also needed. For additional information, call ACS during normal business hours Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Army Emergency Relief

Army Emergency Relief helps Soldiers retired from active duty because of longevity, physical disability or retired upon reaching age 60 for reserve Soldiers and their dependents. Widows (ers) and orphans of Soldiers who died while on active duty or after they retired. AER offers include interest-free loans, grants if repayment of loan will cause undue hardship or part loan and part grant, help with emergency financial needs for food, rent or utilities, emergency transportation and vehicle repair, funeral expenses, medical and dental expenses, personal needs when pay is delayed or stolen, undergraduate-level education scholarships, based primarily on financial need, to children of Soldiers. AER cannot help pay for nonessentials such as finance, ordinary leave or vacation, fines or legal expenses, liquidate or consolidate debt, assist with house purchase or home improvements, purchase, rent or lease vehicle, cover bad checks or pay credit card bills. For more information, contact ACS at Fort Hamilton at (718) 630-4471.

Fort Hamilton Community Club

The Fort Hamilton Community Club offers quality dining and social atmosphere for the military members, retirees, and federal employees of the New York area command and beyond. We are a dues paying organization. We serve Lunch Tuesday thru Friday from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m., \$8 for members and \$10 for guests. Dinner is served Fri-Sat, 6 p.m. and Sunday brunch at 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. During the summer months, we have an outdoor BBQ

from 4 - 8 p.m. on Friday evenings. In addition, the club offers many other fun activities such as dinner dances, dinner theater, holiday events and picnics. We have the latest bar décor with state of the art lighting and sound system, six TVs and a 12-foot projection screen. Our newly added game room includes a pool table, dartboards and chess. The bar hours are from 4:30 p.m. - 2 a.m. There is also entertainment featured on these nights. Dinner Buffet on is Thursday 5 - 9 p.m. and Karaoke in the Hamilton Bar, A la carte dinner is on Friday from 5 - 9 p.m. and Saturday 6 - 10 p.m. All programs are subject to change. During the summer months there is a bar operated outside in the pool area Tuesday - Sunday. For membership information, please contact the staff at (718) 833-9772 ext. 10. For the club's monthly activities, please come by and pick up a calendar., however, the calendars are also mailed. Please consider us as your first option when planning your official or unofficial functions or special events. Contact Suzanne DeVita in the catering department at (718) 833-9772 ext. 16.

USFSP

This article is general information, not a legal brief nor a position. It cannot be used as evidence of intent, interpretation, or precedent in any legal action. Because of the complexity of the Uniformed Services Former Spouse Protection Act state divorce laws, and personal situations involved, individuals involved in a divorce process are encouraged to obtain legal counsel.

The USFSPA decrees that state divorce courts, if they chose, may treat military retired pay as community property. The USFSPA does not create a Federal right to any portion of the military retired pay on behalf of the former spouse, but rather recognizes that the states may treat it as such. The USFSPA does not allow the law to confer an entitlement to a portion of retired based solely on length of marriage.

If a court awards a portion of retired pay as property, the former spouse may apply to the Defense Finance and Accounting Service-Cleveland Center, Operations Directorate, PO Box 998002, Cleveland, OH 44199-8002 to receive it as a "direct payment". To qualify for direct payment, the USFSPA requires that a former spouse must have been married to

the member during at least 10 years of the member's service creditable for retired pay.

Under the USFSPA no more than 50 percent of a member's disposable retired pay will be sent as a direct payment. However, if there are garnishments for alimony or child support, up to 65 percent may be sent as a direct payment.

When more than one former spouse has been awarded a division of a member's retired pay, payment will be handled on a first-come, first-served basis. When conflicting court orders exist, DFAS-CL will send the amount specified in the lower of the two conflicting orders (not to exceed 50 percent of disposable pay), and retain the difference until the matter is resolved.

The USFSPA does not allow a state court to order a member to apply for or to specify a date of retirement. Unless court ordered, remarriage of a former spouse will not stop the direct payment of retired pay as property. For court orders finalized on or after Feb. 3, 1991, payment of retired pay as property is taxable. DFAS-CL will send an IRS Form 1099R to the former spouse.

If a member remains on active duty following divorce, the former spouse should send a copy of the divorce decree or property settlement to DFAS-CL. If SBP is awarded, DFAS-CL must be notified within one year of the final decree or property settlement date. If the court order meets the criteria of the law, it will be retained until the member retires. The former spouse must inform DFAS-CL of changes in address or marital status.

If a member voluntarily elects SBP coverage for a former spouse and that agreement has been ratified or approved by a court order, or, if the member has been ordered to elect SBP coverage for a former spouse, the retired member must make that election within one year of the date of the divorce. A former spouse, within one year of the date of divorce may submit to DFAS-CL a request that a "deemed" SBP election be established. If neither the retiree nor the former spouse requests former spouse SBP coverage within one year of date of divorce, former spouse coverage will not be established.

A retired member can not voluntarily elect nor can a court order former spouse SBP coverage if the retired member had not elected SBP spouse coverage at time of retirement. SBP coverage for a former spouse will be no more than the amount of SBP coverage for the spouse.



Staff and volunteers who helped make Retiree Appreciation Day a success stand proudly.

A former spouse who remarries before age 55 loses SBP eligibility; however, if the marriage ends in death, divorce, or annulment, eligibility is reinstated. A former spouse who remarries after age 55 does not lose eligibility. Former spouse SBP coverage is generally irrevocable. However, if a retired member remarries a change from former spouse to spouse coverage, may be made with the former spouses written consent. Such a request for change must be submitted to DFAS-CL within one year of the date of remarriage. If the former spouse SBP coverage was ratified or approved by a court order, the court order must be amended within one year.

Military ID cards cannot be ordered or decreed by a divorce court. Questions concerning eligibility should be directed to the nearest military ID card issuing facility. Generally former spouses are eligible if:

- o The marriage lasted 20 years or more
- o The member served 20 years or more of service creditable for retired pay
- o The marriage and the creditable service overlap 20 or more years. (In some cases, restricted benefits are authorized if the overlap is less than 20 but greater than 15)

For additional information on the USFSPA, contact the nearest military legal assistance office or retirement service office.

Fort Hamilton Events Schedule

May 2008

- May 3-5 Five Borough's Bike Race, Community Activity Center
- May 5 Cinco de Mayo, Fort Hamilton Community Club
- May 10 Mother's Day Tea, CYS
- May 11 Mother's Day Brunch, Fort Hamilton Community Club
- May 21 Salute to Ships of Fleet Week on the Bluff
- May 26 Memorial Day BBQ, Fort Hamilton Community Club

June 2008

- June 10 USAG Fort Hamilton Change of Command Ceremony
- June 11 Fort Hamilton's 183rd Birthday
- June 13 Army BD/Flag Day Ceremony
- June 14 Army Birthday / Flag Day
- June 15 Father's Day Brunch, Fort Hamilton Community Club
- June 25 End of School BBQ, CYS
- June 28 Twilight Tattoo, Military Pageant 6 p.m. Marine Park

July 2008

- July 11-13 Under the Bridge Basketball Tournament, Fitness Center

August 2008

- Aug. 7 National Purple Heart Recognition Day
- Aug. 7 Commander's Cup Golf Tournament, Dyker Beach Golf Course

September 2008

- Sep. 3 Labor Day BBQ, Fort Hamilton Community Club
- Sep. 6 Block Party, YS
- Sep. 19 POW/MIA Retreat Ceremony
- Sep. 27 Retirement Appreciation Day US Family Health Plan



MILITARY PERSONNEL SERVICES
114 WHITE AVENUE
US ARMY GARRISON FORT HAMILTON
BROOKLYN, NY 11252