

# The Hamilton Connection

Serving the Fort Hamilton Community Vol. 7 No. 21 June 8, 2012



## Fort Hamilton top NCO retires, stays close

**F**our years ago, Fort Hamilton made history when Command Sgt. Maj. Sylvia Laughlin became the first black female command sergeant major for U.S. Army Garrison Fort Hamilton, and now she bids farewell to the Fort Hamilton community — but that's only as the command sergeant major.

Laughlin retired June 8, but said she plans to make Brooklyn, N.Y., her home and will continue to use all the services Fort Hamilton provides.

"Soon, everyone will be able to call me Sylvia when they see me out and about using the commissary or the PX," she said.

After 28 years in the Army, Laughlin said she hopes she helped to make things better, especially here.

"When you're replacing someone else, you build upon the foundation they have made, and you hope and pray that you are able to leave it better than be-

fore," she said.

She said she's learned a lot while here but is also taking much away from her experience.

"If there was a challenge here, it was the effect that came with the downsizing of Fort Hamilton, which helped it to become familiar to Brooklyn, but not to the rest of the city," she said.

"Not as many doors were opened throughout all of the boroughs, and during my time here, I think we have been able to concentrate not only on Brooklyn, but made significant headway with the other boroughs and making opportunities there," she said.

"We were able to tell the Army story, from the female perspective, in ways that it wasn't told before where the city knows the face of the Army. I believe we've met that goal, so that when they see me or any Soldier, they see the Army."

Though she will always be remem-

bered as the first, her claim of legacy is one that she is willing to share with her fellow Soldiers, and that, she said, is for New York City to know that this is America's Army, the best Army in the world.

"I don't take that honor lightly, but I hope I've left the imprint of people understanding that the Army is not just a job or career," she said, "but a passion stemming from the love of country, God and its citizens.

"Although we are a rough, tough, fighting machine, we want to let people know that we are also very compassionate human beings and that we can only be as good as the people that work with and for us. We are more than Soldiers, We are America's family and privileged to serve."

She also said she hopes to leave a legacy of empowerment, strength, encouragement and love that she said has much to do with service to the nation. She departs with a note of encouragement to empower everyone to be the best they can be in anything that they do.

"Each individual has unlimited and untapped potential. Don't strive to be a carbon copy of anyone," she said. "It's great to be an original, so always strive to be the best you that can be and you can mold and carve your own legacy."

As a devout Christian, Laughlin plans to remain in New York and become a pastor.

"I get to go from passion to passion," she said. "I've been passionate about serving the Army, now I'll get to be passionate with my next calling."

**Command Sgt. Maj. Sylvia Laughlin, outgoing U.S. Army Garrison Fort Hamilton command sergeant major, discusses and rehearses her retirement and change of responsibility ceremony with Juan Caez, director of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security on the Bluff June 6.**



# Summer movie series to begin

Story and photo by  
Capt. Christina Mouradjian

**F**amily, Morale, Welfare and Recreation's summer movie series on the Bluff returns June 24 at 8 p.m. with the 1980s classic "Back to the Future."

This free event is fun for the whole family, and was originally set to open May 27 but was cancelled due to rain. The summer series runs through August on the last Sunday of each month. Since it's outdoors, chairs, blankets, flashlights and bug spray are recommended items to bring, and FMWR has concessions for refreshments.

Movies on the Bluff are a great way to relax under the stars with a spectacular view of the sun setting on the Verazano Bridge.

Fort Hamilton residents Capt. James Zavala, his wife Fancy and children Crystal, 17, Mia, 3 and Bella, 11 months were regulars at movie night and said it's a great way to spend quality time together as a family and also a chance to connect with other residents in the Fort Hamilton community.

Fancy, who was pregnant with their youngest child during last year's movie season, said that even with the children



there and being pregnant, it felt romantic on the bluff under the stars. The entire family agreed it was one of their favorite summer activities as a family, and they will definitely be back this year.

This year's line up also includes, "The Lion King" in July and "Indiana Jones: Raiders of the Lost Ark" in August.

FMWR has teamed up with Balfour Beatty Communities to offer giveaways or raffles at every showing. Last year they raffled Nintendo Wiis and Xbox 360s, and gave away gifts like Mr. Potato Heads and autographed footballs signed by former New York Giants wide receiver Mark Slawson to all of the children.

Follow all FMWR activities on their webpage at <http://www.hamiltonmwr.com> or on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/>



**Capt. James Zavala, wife Fancy and their children left to right Crystal, Mia and Bella. They also have a 21-year-old son not featured.**

**Have a story idea for the Connection? Call 718-630-4780 or e-mail [usarmy.hamilton.imcom.mbx.pao-distro-list@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.hamilton.imcom.mbx.pao-distro-list@mail.mil)**

## Fort Hamilton Announcements

### Transportation provided for Twilight Tattoo

All are invited to attend Army birthday celebrations including the Twilight Tattoo at 1:30 p.m. June in Bryant Park, Manhattan, NY to celebrate the Army's 237th birthday and thank our nation for its support of our Soldiers, Families, Civilians and Contract Employees.

Round trip transportation to Bryant Park for the Twilight Tattoo will leave at noon June 14 outside 114 White Ave. More than 80 seats are available to Hamilton personnel and area veterans. Seats are on a first-come basis--once capacity is reached, you are on your own to get to Bryant Park.

Bring a blanket or lawn chair if you want to sit down, but you will have to hold your items on your lap on the bus. Four hours of admin leave to attend the

Twilight Tattoo is authorized if mission permits and your supervisor approves your attendance.

### Security guard opportunities

Fort Hamilton has many vacancies for security guard positions, GS-0085-04, with a starting salary of \$31,560. For more information, visit <http://www.usajobs.gov/GetJob/ViewDetails/315788600>. The closing date is June 15.

### Lunch and Learn

Two Lunch and Learn sessions will be held June 19 and 26 from noon —1 p.m. at the education center. The first session's topic will be Stress and Chiropractic Medicine with chiropractor, Dr. Scott A. Schwager. The second topic is "10 Things You Should Know About

Estate Planning" with Brendan Murphy. For more information, call Rose Tillona at 718-630-4412.

### Yoga fit and Zumba classes

Zumba and Yoga fit classes are now offered every Wednesday at the sports and fitness center. Yoga fit classes begin at 5:30 p.m. and Zumba classes begin at 6:30 p.m. For more information, call Bilqis Benu at 718-630-4935 or 4793.

**For confidential reporting of domestic abuse or to report sexual assault, contact the Victim Advocacy Hotline at 347-452-4302**

 **237<sup>TH</sup> ARMY BIRTHDAY**  
 America's Army: the Strength of the Nation  
**JUNE 14, 2012**

June 14, 2012 marks the U.S. Army's 237th birthday. This year, the Army celebrates the Soldiers, Family members, Civilians and Community members who make our Army the Strength of the Nation. Please join us in the celebration! These are some events taking place in your area:

**NEW YORK CITY AREA  
 JUNE 14 CAKE-CUTTING CELEBRATIONS**

**Chief of Staff of the Army at 10:30 a.m.**  
 Duffy Square in Times Square, Manhattan, NY 10036

**Newark Recruiting Company at 10 a.m.**  
 60 Park Place, Newark, NJ 07102

**Long Island Patchogue Recruiting Station at 10 a.m.**  
 116 East Main Street, Patchogue, NY 11772

**Father Capodanno Chapel at 11 a.m.**  
 Drum Road, Fort Wadsworth, Staten Island, NY 10305

**Brooklyn Borough Hall at 11 a.m.**  
 209 Joralemon Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201

**Queens Borough Hall at 11 a.m.**  
 120-55 Queens Boulevard, Kew Gardens, NY 11424

**Bronx Borough Hall at 11 a.m.**  
 851 Grand Concourse #301, Bronx, NY 10451

[WWW.ARMY.MIL/BIRTHDAY](http://WWW.ARMY.MIL/BIRTHDAY)

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**NEW YORK CITY AREA  
 ARMY BIRTHDAY WEEK CELEBRATIONS**

**JUNE 12 Brooklyn War Memorial Rededication**  
 Cadman Plaza Park, Brooklyn, NY at 10 a.m.

**Congressman Robert Turner's Birthday Celebration**  
 American Legion Post 1424 at 5:30 p.m.  
 10715 Metropolitan Ave, Forest Hills, NY 11375

**JUNE 13 Boot Camp Workout with Soldiers and Cake-cutting**  
 Big Al's Family Fitness at 2:15 and 3 p.m.  
 88 Merrick Road, Amityville, NY 11701

**Congressman Michael Grimm's Birthday Celebration**  
 John Paul Jones Park at 7 p.m.  
 101st Street Brooklyn, NY 11209

**JUNE 14 The Old Guard and Pershing's Own Performances**  
 Army Birthday Celebration performed by The 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard) and The U.S. Army Band "Pershing's Own"

- Bryant Park Lawn, Manhattan, NY at 1:30 p.m.
- 42nd Street & Sixth Avenue/Avenue of the Americas
- Duffy Square, Times Square, Manhattan, NY at 5 p.m.

**JUNE 15 Statue of Liberty Patriotic Performances**  
 Statue of Liberty from 9 a.m. to noon

**9/11 Memorial Wreath-Laying at 10:28 a.m.**  
 One Albany Street, New York, NY 10006

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