

UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY BAND  
685 HARDEE PLACE – EGNER HALL  
WEST POINT, NEW YORK 10996-1587

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

STAR SPANGLED SPECTACULAR  
WITH CANNON AND FIREWORKS

West Point, NY – The West Point Band will present a free concert in celebration of our nation's birthday. The concert will include the music of John Philip Sousa as well as other patriotic favorites. The band will close the concert with a performance of Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture featuring fireworks and live cannon. The concert is free and open to all on Saturday, July 4th at 8:00 p.m. In the event of inclement weather, the concert will be Sunday, July 5th at 8:00 p.m. (weather call is made at noon on 4 July, contact [www.westpoint.edu/band](http://www.westpoint.edu/band) or call 845-938-2617 for concert updates). Sixteen cannon shots are written into the score of the 1812 Overture. The piece opens with the plaintive Russian Orthodox Troparion of the Holy Cross "God Preserve Thy People" played by the woodwinds. The overture moves through a mixture of pastoral and military themes portraying the increasing distress of the Russian people at the hands of the invading French under Napoleon. The piece includes a Russian folk dance, "At the Gate, at my Gate." At the turning point of the invasion, the Battle of Borodino, the score calls for five Russian cannon shots confronting a boastfully repetitive fragment of La Marseillaise, the French National Anthem. A descending woodwind passage represents the subsequent retreat of the French forces, followed by victory bells and a triumphant repetition of "God Preserve Thy People" as Moscow burns to deny winter quarters to the French. A musical chase ensues, out of which emerges the anthem "God Save the Tsar!" thundering with eleven more precisely scored shots. The overture utilizes counterpoint to reinforce the appearance of the leitmotif that represents the Russian forces throughout the song.

Please allow extra travel time for the 100% vehicle and photo I.D. inspection at Stony Lonesome and Thayer gates. Due to changing security requirements at West Point, call the Academy Band's hotline at 845-938-2617, or check [www.westpoint.edu/special](http://www.westpoint.edu/special) before leaving for the concert.

For concert information, cancellations and updates, call the Academy Band's 24-hour hotline at (845) 938-2617; or visit us on the Internet at [www.westpoint.edu/band](http://www.westpoint.edu/band).

**INCLEMENT CALL:** Will be made at Noon on 4 July. If it is called inclement, the concert will move to 5 July at the same time and place (8 p.m., Trophy Point Amphitheatre). Please call 845-938-2617 or check [www.westpoint.edu/band](http://www.westpoint.edu/band) for this information.

**HANDICAPPED PARKING:** Off Washington Road across from Battle Monument (the large polished granite column at Trophy Point)

**HANDICAPPED RESERVE AREA:** Approach Battle Monument and find this area on the sidewalk to the left as you look at the concert amphitheatre stage. This site is level with Washington Road.

**BENCH SEATING:** Is occupied during this concert, only grassy areas are open to the public. The Plain (where cadets often march, is off-limits to concert-goers).

**WASHINGTON ROAD:** Will be blocked at 7:30 p.m. Plan ahead and arrive early for this event.