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Spring is finally here.....

Easter and Palm Sunday have come and gone. It was a time to reflect on religious beliefs and exercise them. It was also a time to spend time with Family and the little ones out in the yard hunting Easter Eggs. It brings joy to me when I see the little ones searching for eggs, seeing who can get the most and seeing the smiles on their faces.

Spring is here in South Mississippi. During this month it’s typically windy and wet and we get our last frost in late March. But despite all of that, it is still gorgeous weather. During the evenings, it tends to get chilly and we can experience some isolated showers. This is a great time to venture out of the house with Family and see what the South has to offer during this season. Make sure you plan accordingly and always Safety First!

The days are getting longer and warmer. With that said, that means outdoor adventures and recreational activities are going to increase.

Cmd. Sgt. Maj Steven Chancellor

With warmer temperatures approaching, that tends to entice riders to fire-up their motorcycle engines. But before you do that, remember to do your pre-ride checks and services on the bike and your put on your PPE before you cruise the roads.

Whether home, water, privately-owned weapon activities, outdoor sports or vacationing – whatever your activity may be, always Think Safety!

This year’s NCO Association Conference will be held at the Whispering Wood

Hotel Conference Center in Olive Branch April 19-21. I highly encourage all NCOs to attend this year’s conference in support of our association. By being a member of the NCO Association, you receive some great benefits. Some of the events include a bowling tournament, fishing and golf tournament. We need max participation. See you there!

Camp Shelby’s Headquarters Detachment will be having a Change of Command ceremony April 6 or . Outgoing commander Capt. Hope Singleton will relinquish her command to incoming commander Capt. Stephanie Williams. Both women are unique in their own way. Capt. Singleton did a superb job and even though Capt. Williams has some big shoes to fill, I am confident she will continue to set the bar high.

As I close, may God continue to bless you, your Families and all our brothers and sisters in arms, wherever they may be.

SOLDIERS FIRST!

PERSONNEL PROFILE

ENLISTED

Soldier succeeds with Ed Ctr. help

By DANA ELISE SMITH
CSJFTC Public Affairs

Sgt. 1st Class (P) Phillip Mandrell serves in the battalion operation and training section of the 2nd Battalion, 305th Field Artillery Regiment, 158th Infantry Brigade.

The native of Clinton, Ill., has 21 years of service in the U.S. Army. He was recently selected for promotion to the rank of master sergeant.

During February, with the help of the Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center’s Education Center, Mandrell graduated from Excelsior College in Albany, N.Y. with an associate degree in liberal arts with a focus in administration and management studies.

He is now working towards his bachelor’s degree. Mandrell said his success is due to the Education Center and John Junkins, the education services officer.

“Mr. Junkins and his staff at the education center will stay as long as it takes to help all

Mandrell

the Soldiers out who come to them,” said Mandrell. “He will facilitate his day, even staying as late as it takes to administer a test for example. He and his staff know that the duty day for Soldiers is not nine to five, so he’ll do everything in his power to meet Soldiers on their schedule.”

He said his unit’s command team reinforces education as a goal for every Soldier.

“It is because of Command Sgt. Maj. Oscar Sims Jr.’s guidance and the leadership of my battalion commander, Lt. Col. Douglas Carbone, that every single NCO in our unit either has a degree already or is enrolled in college right now,” he said.

Mandrell resides in Hattiesburg with his wife, Katie. He has two sons, Mark, 20 and Matthew, 12, who both live in Illinois. Katie is also taking advantage of the Education Center. She is enrolled in Excelsior College and is benefiting from Mandrell’s Post 9/11 GI Bill.

In his spare time, he enjoys taking part in physical fitness activities, hunting and spending time with his dogs, Khyber, who is a Belgian Malinois, and Karma, a Coonhound and Beagle mix.

Importance of self assessment

By BRYAN THARPE
ACAP TSM

What occupation will you pursue after you separate from the Army? Think hard. Is that what you really want to do?

For some Soldiers, the transition back to civilian life is relatively easy.

They have ideas, goals and back-up plans for civilian employment. They are undaunted, open-minded and flexible about how to get what they want.

But for other Soldiers, this transition is not so easy. Through the years, they may have set aside personal goals or lost sight of a few dreams. They felt too busy for hobbies or college classes and let military service envelop them. Consequently, it became more and more difficult for them to identify

what it is that makes them truly happy. When it is time for these Soldiers to separate from military service, even the smallest decisions can become difficult.

Much to their dismay, the job search process does not start with resume writing. It must necessarily start with a comprehensive, honest self-assessment. If soldiers have been out of touch with their true values, interests and strengths, they run the risk of pursuing the wrong vocation or drifting toward the path of least resistance.

Don't let that happen to you. Regardless of how much time you have left to serve in the Army, it is never too early to begin and maintain your vocational self-assessment. There are many ways to keep in touch with the feelings that will lead you to the right civilian vocation. Answering the

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