

FRONT & CENTER

The holidays are here

Happy Holidays! I hope that everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving. We all have so much to be thankful for during this time of year. As we transition to the Christmas season, I want each of you to take time to be with Family and friends. Cherish the ones we hold dear and if you can, help someone in need this holiday season. It doesn't take a lot to change someone's holiday season and their life for the better.

Now is the time to prepare your care packages for your recently deployed comrades of the 184th Expeditionary Sustainment Command, Mississippi Army

National Guard. To ensure your packages beat the holiday rush, you need to get them in the mail as soon as possible.

CSJFTC is a little quieter since the 116th Cavalry Brigade Combat Team from Idaho, Oregon and Montana Army National Guard, the 2nd Brigade Combat Team 34th Infantry Division from Iowa and Nebraska Army National Guard, the 54th Military History Detachment from Louisiana Army Reserves and the 104th Chaplain Detachment from Maryland Army National Guard has departed for their missions in support of the Overseas Contingency Operations.

To all service members embarking on their fight for freedom, God speed for a steadfast mission and a speedy return home.

Take this time to regroup and begin preparations for the beginning of the year when we will see our next surge of troops.

I want to take this opportunity to thank Toyota of Hattiesburg and the University of Southern Mississippi for their efforts in recognizing all branches of the military as well as military members serving at CSJFTC during the Military Appreciation football game on Nov. 20 at USM. This team of professionals went out of their way to show appreciation to all who serve.

Safety is always a concern during the holiday season. Ensure

your Christmas lights are properly plugged in, open flame candles are blown out and children are safe during their time off from school. Take every precaution available to have a safe and happy holiday season. Make sure your team is completing their vehicle inspections prior to a holiday weekend travel and that safety briefing are given to all of your personnel. The roadways are especially dangerous during the holiday season. Be careful on the roads, wear your seatbelts and stay off of the cell phones while driving. Prevention is key to a happy and safe holiday season.

As always, thank you, team for your hard work and dedication to the ongoing CSJFTC mission. God bless you, your Families and the United States of America.



Col. Steve Parham

TOWER

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pieces of the towers were allowed to simply fall to the ground. Each piece was removed in a controlled and safe process. He explained that his team was used to the heights and that they were seasoned professionals when it came to water tower tear downs.

The old tanks were not only a landmark, but an opportunity for a constant practical joke on the Camp Shelby command. Every time the 278th Regiment Combat Team of the Tennessee Army National Guard trained at Camp Shelby, members of their unit would climb the endless stairs up the side of the water tower to paint their trademark "T" on the side as a lingering reminder of their presence and to poke fun at the command of course. After their departure, Camp Shelby would complete the daunting task of repaint-



ing the tower. After a while, it became a part of the trademark towers just like the Minute Man.

A new water tower system was constructed in 2003. The current tower in use at Camp Shelby holds an average of 300,000 gallons of

water ensuring that this post has adequate water serviceability.

Even though Camp Shelby has been forced to conform, 'out with the old and in with the new', the signature trademark will surely be remembered and missed.

SOLDIER

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Free trip

The Okatoma Hunting Club is offering free hunting trips for military personnel and veterans.

Hunting trips range from one day to a weekend trip. For more information or to schedule your trip, please call Harold Juno at 504-756-0401.



ASVAB testing

The ASVAB (In-Service) Test is available at the Camp Shelby Education Center.

Soldiers who wish to improve their GT/ASVAB scores in order to qualify for re-enlistment, a MOS change, Warrant Officer training, Officer Candidate School or Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC), may take the in-service ASVAB exam at the Camp Shelby Education Center.

A complete test appointment form and a DA Form 4187 are required prior to testing. Both forms are available at the education center or by email at john.junkins1@us.army.mil. Practice exams are available on Army Knowledge Online (click on My Service and select My Library on the drop down menu.)

The practice exams block will appear on the right side of the screen. For more information, contact Junkins at 601-558-4025.

PERSONNEL PROFILE CIVILIAN

Strickland says her job here is

By DANA ELISE SMITH
Camp Shelby Public Affairs

Erica Strickland is a Licensed Practical Nurse working at Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center's Troop Medical Clinic. She describes her work experience as "Fantabulous!"

Strickland is a native of Newton. She graduated in 2001 from Newton High School among the top ten in her graduating class. Strickland earned her Nursing degree from Jones County Junior College in 2002.

She said that she enjoys working with her co-workers and working for the Soldiers. "The people I work with are great cooks!" she said.

Strickland stays very busy in her spare time. She volunteers with various church affiliated organizations, mostly Church of God In Christ churches and Baptist Churches.

"I worked at a church once and seen many celebrities. During Thanksgiving holiday I volunteered and served at a

missionary luncheon," she said.

Strickland also serves as the secretary of her church's branch of Young People's Willing Workers. It is a religious organization that is devoted to training and educating youth. She also serves as a Sunday school teacher, usher and choir member at her church. She also participates in "Bible Band" which is a Bible study group that meets every Tuesday night at 6 p.m.

In addition, she tutors children and students of all ages and in all subjects.

Strickland also pursues her passion for real estate.

"I enjoy riding looking at real estate properties for possible investments. I own a couple real estate properties, not much but looking into enlarging," said Strickland.

Still with all the things on her plate, she still finds time to enjoy shopping and eating.

Strickland has been married to her husband, Edward Lee Strickland, Jr., for six years.

Together they have a daughter, Elise Zaire



Erica Strickland

Strickland, 6, and a son, Edward Lee Strickland III, 2.

"Elise attends Oak Grove Primary School. She had an educational IQ evaluation done and they said her intelligence level was beyond the charting system. My son can already count to 10 in Spanish and has the dreamiest eyes

you have ever seen," she said.

Strickland also makes time to spend with her Family with a designated "Family night".

"My Family and I love Family night when we all watch movies together and play games! And we love to eat!" she said.

Every year she vacations

with her Family in Memphis. Together they attended the annual Holy Convocation until this year when it was moved. Still, Memphis remains her favorite vacation getaway.

Her other favorites include her favorite book, The Bible, her favorite television show, "House of Payne", her favorite movie "Brown Sugar" and her favorite board game "Life." Strickland's favorite person is her best friend, Ada Walker.

"She is the type of person that tells you the truth because she worries more about your soul than your feelings, but she is also the type that will give you the clothes off her back and when you are sick she will get there before your Family and friends. She is truly a virtuous woman and the best friend anyone could ever ask for," Strickland said.

Strickland's future goals consist of putting her children through college, earning her nurse practitioner degree and becoming debt free.

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