



420th Chemical Battalion

National Guard Welcomes New Members

By Major Robert J. Coy



Photo courtesy of Major Robert J. Coy

LTC Robert L. Bray Sr. (back to camera) with CPT Cynthia Millonzi and 1st SGT Laughery of the new 790th Chemical Company at the ceremony in Union Gap.



Photo courtesy of Major Robert J. Coy

LTC Robert L. Bray Sr. salutes the West Valley High School Junior ROTC color guard.

The Washington Army National Guard Unit welcomed its newest members during a ceremony on 3 October 1999—the 420th Chemical Battalion and its subordinate unit, the 790th Chemical Company (Recon/Decon). Both units are not only new to the Washington National Guard, they are also new to the United States Army.

During the ceremony at Athanum Youth Park in Union Gap, LTC Robert L. Bray Sr., 420th Chemical Battalion; CPT Alan R. Johnson, Headquarters Detachment located in Yakima, Washington; and CPT Cynthia Millonzi, 790th Chemical Company located in Grandview, Washington, assumed command of the units.

Senior National Guard and active Army military officials, civic leaders, and the mayor of Yakima participated in the ceremony. Adding something unique to the ceremony, the Eisenhower High School band and students from the West Valley High School Junior ROTC also participated. The band played the national anthem, the Army Song, and the Chemical Corps march. The Junior ROTC provided the color guard.

In the next three years, the battalion will be adding the 791st Chemical Company (Recon/Decon) in training year 2001, 792nd Chemical Company (Recon/Decon) in training year 2002, and the 793rd Chemical Company (BIDS) in training year 2003.

Major Robert J. Coy is the Battalion Executive Officer for the 420th Chemical Battalion (Washington National Guard). He is a graduate of the Command and General Staff College. He has held assignments with numerous commands including the 4th Brigade, 91st Division (Army Reserves), the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment (Active), the 9th Infantry Division (Active), all at Fort Lewis, Washington.