

Whitmire assumes command, Harraghy heads to Middle East

WILSON A. RIVERA

Monitor Staff

The 'Renegade' battalion, 1st Battalion, Training Support, Air Defense Artillery, 362nd Regiment, passed its colors during a change-of-command ceremony April 5.

Lt. Col. George W. Whitmire succeeds Lt. Col. Thomas A. Harraghy, who will deploy to Saudi Arabia this summer to be the senior air defense advisor to the Saudi Arabian army.

"Tom Harraghy led the Renegades for the past two years with extraordinary success," said Col. Raymond Lamb, commander, 5th Armored Brigade, Division West, Training Support. The Soldiers of this battalion ... under Tom's leadership ... were singularly focused on accomplishing one of the Army's and nation's major homeland defense missions ... that being training designated, Army National Guard air defense battalions to provide an umbrella of protection over the nation's capital region in Washington D.C. to defend this vital area against the possibility of an attack from the air."

Whitmire takes command of the 34-man battalion comprised of experienced and very talented senior leaders who are skilled and are professional, said Lamb.

Whitmire has served in a variety of assignments

including platoon leader, executive officer for B Battery, 2nd Bn., 1st ADA, 11th ADA Bde., commander for Headquarters and Headquarters Btry., 4th Bn., 3rd ADA, 3rd Infantry Division, in Kitzingen, Germany, deputy director for the Department of Defense High School News Service, Norfolk Naval Air Station, Va., the operations officer for Third Army Support Bn., Third Army, Fort McPherson, Ga., as the deputy chief of Homeland Defense for the 32nd Army Air and Missile Defense Command here. His deployments include Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm, Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom.


Whitmire was commissioned into the ADA after graduating from Central Wesleyan College in 1989. He earned his master's degree in public administration from Troy State University. He graduated from the ADA Officer Basic course, ADA Advance course, Combined Arms and Services Staff School and the Command and General Staff College.

During his 18 years of service as an air defender, Whitmire has earned a Bronze Star Medal, the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters, the Army Commendation Medal with a three oak leaf clusters, the Army Achievement Medal with one oak leaf cluster and the Parachutist Badge.




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Lt. Col. George W. Whitmire takes command of 1st Battalion, Training Support, Air Defense Artillery, 362nd Regiment, during a ceremony held April 5 at the Fort Bliss and Air Defense Artillery Museum.



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'Ready and Vigilant' holds NCO, Soldier of the Year competition

SPC. BROOKS FLETCHER

31st Brigade Public Affairs Office

The names of the 31st Air Defense Artillery Brigade's NCO and Soldier of the Year were announced Thursday.



Staff Sgt. Charles Robinson

The announcement came after a four-day competition that put the physical fitness, knowledge and Soldier skills of Staff Sgt. Charles Robinson, Sgt. Angelo Alarcon and Spcs. Imad Odeh and Valerie Fishkin, to the test,



Spc. Valerie Fishkin

as they endured tasks such as land navigation, weapons qualification, and casualty evacuation; all while preparing themselves for the board preceding the initial task.

Robinson was named the "Ready and Vigilant" Brigade 2006 Non-commissioned Officer of the Year. Robinson is an Air Defense Tactical Operations Center Operator, assigned to the brigade's Headquarters and Headquarters Battery as an assistant operations NCO.

"The key to success is preparation," said Robinson.

With a one-point difference between her and Odeh; Fishkin, a health care specialist assigned to HHB, was named the 31st ADA Bde.'s 2006 Soldier of the Year.

Robinson and Fishkin will represent 31st ADA Bde. at the Fort Bliss NCO and Soldier of the Year competition to be held in May.

"This is just the beginning" said Command Sgt. Maj. Bryan McGhee, 31st ADA Bde. "Robinson and Fishkin must get the ball rolling in preparing for the post competition."