

Off duty hours at Reforger were few but 2 2nd soldiers made the best of it

By Jim Koenig

Working long hours under extreme pressure was the order of the day during NATO's Autumn exercise "Carbine Fortress". But brigade soldiers did have a few hours of well deserved time off.

Off duty time, during Reforger, found many of the field GIs writing home about the long hours, the dust and mud, and the annoyance of German insects. Some read, others slept, and many were reporting for work on the night shift.

The NCOs and officers were swapping war stories of days gone by in Southeast Asia, while younger soldiers spoke of their latest trips to Paris.

It was reported by one NCO, who asked not to be identified, that a few hot poker games took place in the headquarters brigade area in smoked filled tents, sometimes up to two o'clock in the morning. But the NCO was quick to



add, "Come O-dark thirty, the GI Joes were up and on the job."

Like their fathers and grandfathers before them, soldiers have never changed, and from all indications from Reforger 82, 1983 won't be any different.

Brigade mechanics kept Reforger troops rolling

There were very few vehicle breakdowns during Reforger due to mechanics like Sp4. Calvin Gardner, HHC Brigade. Gardner burnt up 500 miles a week on German roads repairing and inspecting everything from jeeps to five-ton trucks at several signal sites.

The Power Generator and Wheel Vehicle Mechanic for the past two and a half years said, "a lot of times we end up doing the operators job, it's long

hours, it's trying and it's hard." Rubbing his rough, callused hands together, the 25 year-old soldier added, "Sometimes being a mechanic is a thankless job, but our guys still like it."

Continuing, the Idaho-born soldier said, "a few of our vehicles are fairly new but many are up to 15 years old," he admitted. "We keep parts on hand and can handle just about anything that comes along."

17th Signal families visit troops at field sites

By Daniel Gerstein

The 17th Signal Battalion, on September 4, held a family day at the Schweinfurt and Wurzburg field sites.

Family members were united in the field with their spouses and treated to a tour of the signal centers. They later enjoyed a meal prepared by the battalion dining facility consisting of hamburgers, hotdogs, french fries and cokes.

The families were a welcome sight for the field troops and came prepared with care packages filled with cookies and cakes for the 17th soldiers.

"The families thoroughly enjoyed the visit," one official said, and everyone agreed that the 17th Signal "Family Day" was a great success and a terrific morale booster. (1st.Lt. Gerstein is the 17th Signal Battalion Adjutant.)