

FIVE *BY* FIVE

22nd Signal Brigade

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Quick thinking 32nd Sig soldier saves Army equipment

By Wray Hall

SCHWEINFURT, Germany (FbF) -- A 32nd Signal soldier has been commended for his quick thinking and immediate response during Reforger, saving the Army thousands of dollars for his actions.

On September 5, at 1:30 a.m. the 32nd Signal Battalion was deployed on exercise CARBINE FORTRESS and well into the communications warm-up phase when a severe storm reached its peak at Conn Barracks in Schweinfurt.

65 knot winds

Heavy rains drenched the entire area as winds up to 65 knots whipped tents and camouflage covers. The wind tore out one complete guide wire on a 135 foot tower where various UHF and microwave communication systems were installed. The wind completely knocked over one 10 foot parabolic dish antenna belonging to a tropospheric communication system, damaging the feed horn beyond repair, causing more than \$9,600 in damages.

Sp4. Darrell L. Hjerpe, a 32nd Microwave and Satellite Communication Systems Operator instantly realized that his second parabolic antenna was in danger of the same fate. The native of Chandler Ariz. powered down all of his



equipment to prevent any high power damage. Then, he ran out of his Tropro van and turned the antenna sideways so that the silhouette would be into the wind, preventing it from being blown over like the first one had been.

Awarded AAM

An Army Achievement Medal has been approved to be awarded to Specialist Hjerpe at the next battalion awards ceremony for his quick thinking and immediate response in preventing any further costly damage to government property. (Sgt. Maj. Hall is assigned to the Brigade C & E Section.)

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