

World War II veteran's daughter produces DVD to honor Army Engineers



Photographs by Michael Morgan

Marion Chard of Alger, Michigan has been extensively involved over the years in recording the history of engineer units that fought so bravely during the Second World War. Specifically, she has been focused on the 36th (2826th, 2827th & 2828th), 39th, 540th (2832nd & 2833rd) and the 1108th (48th & 235th) Combat Engineer Regiments, who fought against the Axis powers from North Africa into Sicily, Italy, France, Central Europe and ended their tour of duty in Germany in 1945.

She took on this massive task in honor of her father, Walter (Monday) Poniedzialek, of the 540th Engineers, but also to recognize the service and valor of all other Army Engineers—and not just those who served in the units of interest.

In 2004 she developed an outstanding website (www.6thcorpscombatengineers.com) which went at first from a couple of pages about her father and his unit, to a comprehensive site that today not only includes many stories and history of the VI Corps engineers, but features the memoirs and photos of various other soldiers from airborne to infantry.

The site contains a large amount of WWII training and combat photographs, historical information, memoirs written by those who served, and an extensive 1940's music, era broadcasts and video gallery. One might assume based on the level of excellence of her website that she is an educated

creative graphics professional. She is not—having learned everything about online publishing essentially by herself.

This year she took on another project—one much larger than anything else she had earlier accomplished, and one which tasked her abilities for a time. She is producing a three-part DVD series which will be an in-depth presentation, six-hours in length. It will encapsulate the combat engineers' footsteps from training in the states in '41 and '42, through war's end in Germany and Austria. The first two parts, two hours in length, have been completed (photographs above) and are now available for purchase (see below).

The work includes photographs from the men themselves, diaries, biographies and autobiographies, archived film footage, and features audio & video interviews of many veterans, and historians from the Army Corps of Engineers Office of History. The entire project is being funded by the private sector—including veterans, and their family members and friends.

Those interested in purchasing the first DVD set now available at \$25.95 which covers the early stages of WWII including mobilization and training, plus fighting in North Africa, may do so at Amazon.com (search for "No Bridge Too Far") or through her website mentioned earlier. Veterans receive a \$5.00 discount when purchased through the website E-Store. **AE**