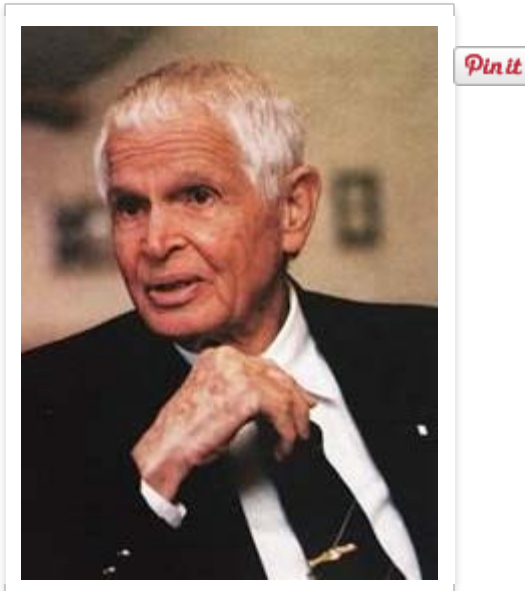


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## *In Memory of* **Charles W Rush Jr.**

**March 18, 1919 - February 27, 2015**

Charles Wesley Rush, Jr., Captain, U.S.N., Retired, 95, of Port St Lucie, Florida passed away on February 27, 2015 in his home surrounded by loved ones. Charlie, son of Charles W. Rush, Sr. and Dorothy McFaddin, was born in Greensboro, Alabama on March 18, 1919. He is survived by his wife, LaVonne Rush, his children, Michelle Liset, Suzanne Oken, and Stephen Rush, his stepchildren, Timothy Dirks, Darcy Kimmel, Marcine Stone, James Dirks, David Dirks, Dale Dirks, and many grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Charlie spent his youth in Dothan, Alabama. In 1935, he was awarded a scholarship to Gulf Coast Military Academy in Gulfport, Mississippi. He graduated from GCMA in 1937 with highest honors and received an appointment to the Naval Academy from the Secretary of the Navy.

After graduation from the Naval Academy on February 7, 1941, Charlie served on destroyers in the Pacific until he volunteered for submarine duty while in Pearl Harbor. He was assigned to the submarines USS Thresher and USS Billfish for seven war patrols in the South Pacific and East Indies.

On his sixth patrol, Billfish was attacked by three Japanese destroyers that made extremely severe depth-charge attacks over a period of 12 hours. These attacks rendered the Captain and all officers senior to Charlie unable to take action.

Charlie, then a Lieutenant, took command in the face of seemingly certain death, saved the ship and the entire crew. Nearly 60 years later, when the facts of his actions were revealed, the Navy awarded Charlie its highest honor, the Navy Cross.

Post-war, Charlie attended graduate school at Caltech in Aeronautical Engineering and developed a number of submarine-launched missiles, including a notable high-speed wake-less torpedo. He served in command of the submarines USS Queenfish and USS Blackfin before retiring from the Navy in 1961.

In civilian life, Charlie was a member of the Royal Ocean Racing Club of England, Sons of the American Revolution, and Submarine Veterans of World War II. Charlie and his wife, LaVonne, were married in October 1976 at the Naval Academy. Avid fans of ocean sailing, Charlie and LaVonne sailed their boat, Windward Star, throughout the Bahamas and Caribbean in their retirement.

Charlie's ashes will be spread at sea and a private memorial will be held. May he rest in peace.

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