



James C. Van Pelt, Sr.

Virginia - James C. Van Pelt, Sr., D.B.A., Captain USN (SC) ret., passed away December 10, 2014 at age 93.

He was born on May 23, 1921 and grew up in Marion, Kentucky, where he played several varsity sports for Marion High School. After graduating, he attended Columbia Military Academy and the U.S. Naval Academy, Class of '44. He joined the war against Japan as a Naval Officer and served on the USS Purdy and the USS Perkins, having survived the sinking of that ship by a kamikaze attack in November 1943. Among many other military decorations he was awarded the [Bronze Star](#) with Valor for heroism as a ship's gunnery officer in 1945 during the Battle of Okinawa. He served in the occupation of Japan, the [Korean War](#), and in a variety of other assignments in the Naval Supply Corps including the Pentagon and as Chief Logistics Officer of the [U.S. Navy's](#) 6th Fleet in Europe. He then taught at the Industrial College of the Armed Forces and the Naval War College and retired with the rank of Captain. His name is inscribed at the United States Navy Memorial in Washington, D.C.

Having earned a master's degree from Stanford University and a doctorate at George Washington University, both in business administration, he served as a professor in that field at Old Dominion University and Christopher Newport College in Norfolk, Virginia. Afterward, he earned special recognition from the YMCA as a senior citizen for swimming in laps over a period of five years the distance across America (about 3,000 miles). Like his father and his grandfather he was proud to be a lifelong Democrat, and like them he was appointed an honorary Kentucky Colonel by the Governor of that state.

He was predeceased by his beloved wife, Mary Avery "Mitzi" Van Pelt. They are survived by three children: James C. "Jeff" Van Pelt, Jr. and his wife Jane Rudnick of New Haven, Connecticut; William T. "Tom" Van Pelt and his wife Mariella Van Pelt of Virginia Beach, Virginia; and Amanda Van Pelt Scott of Roswell, Georgia; and by his sister-in-law Julia Connally and her husband N. Thomas Connally, MD, of Arlington, Virginia; and also by eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

His remains are to be interred beside those of his wife in Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors (date to be announced). Donations in his memory may be made to the Salvation Army, Habitat for Humanity, the Carter Center, or the Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia and the Eastern Shore.