



Walter (Walt) Carlson

September 10, 1934 - September 2, 2022

Walter (Walt) Carlson, age 87, completed his life's journey on Sept 2, 2022, following a recent bout with pancreatic cancer.

He was born on September 10, 1934, in Aurora, Illinois, to Walter O. and Ann H. Carlson, the youngest of five children. His deceased siblings were Russell, June, Jack and Rosemary. He attended local schools before graduating from Admiral Farragut Academy in New Jersey. Walt earned a BS degree from the US Naval Academy, class of 1956, and a BS in Engineering Electronics from the US Naval Postgraduate School in 1964.

After graduation, Walt attended pilot training in Pensacola, FL earning his wings as a Naval Aviator. Rated in large jets and eventually becoming an aircraft commander, Walt flew mostly single piloted missions throughout the Far East and across the Pacific Ocean. Afterwards, while attending post graduate school in Monterey, California, he met and married Charlene Antos, a high school teacher from Bemidji, Minnesota. In his Navy career, he completed assignments as an engineering test pilot in Oxnard, CA, staff officer to a senior admiral afloat in Viet Nam, and four years with NATO in Vicenza, Italy, planning and directing large scale military exercises. His final posting was in Washington D.C. to the Office of Acquisition as program manager of highly classified electronic systems.

Following retirement from the Navy with the rank of Captain, he transitioned to the civilian corporate structure working for Honeywell in Rome, Italy, and Northrop Grumman in Baltimore, MD, in the field of advanced solid-state electronics. Retiring from corporate life, Walt formed a small consulting company. Walt spent over 50 years in military and civilian military related endeavors in the field of electronics. He received multiple government and corporate performance awards including the Legion of Merit. He was awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Medal, the highest US military award for non-combat lifesaving. Internationally, he received the honor of being knighted by the President of Italy with Italy's highest award for civilian heroism. Special permission from the State Department was required to accept this award.

Eventually the lure of full-time retirement and a serious pursuit of duplicate bridge were too great, so in 2002, Walt and Charlene moved to Misty Creek in Sarasota, FL for the winter months and Waynesville, NC for the summer months. Their last move in 2018 to The Glenridge in Sarasota was a natural progression.

His hobbies include competitive duplicate bridge (silver life master), hacker's golf (but he loved it), theater, anything Italian (language, literature, history, food, art, opera, etc.), and jogging (later, walking). But most of all, Walt and Charlene loved their retirement years together enjoying more time with their family and friends.

Walt is survived by his wife, Charlene, of 59 years, their 2 sons, Stephen (Aili) of Melbourne, Australia and Christopher (Eva) of McLain, VA. Walt is also survived by their five grandchildren, Mark, Cameron, Ann, Cooper and Paul.

The family would like to extend special thanks to the incredible staff at The Glenridge Carroll Center and to Tidewell Hospice for their caring and comprehensive support keeping him comfortable in his last days.

His memorial service and interment were held at the Sarasota National Cemetery.