

Colin Henry Saari



Captain Colin H. Saari, USN (Ret.), died after a long battle with cancer in Seattle, WA, on 19 January 2016. He was 78 years old.

Colin was born in Port Angeles, WA, on 27 December 1937 and attended Port Angeles High School prior to receiving his appointment to the U.S. Naval Academy. A member of the Fourth Company, he graduated in June of 1960.

Colin served in the destroyer LYMAN K. SWENSON (DD-729) and submarines HENRY CLAY (SSBN-625), TIRU (SS-416), BARBELL (SS-580) as executive officer (1970) and BLUEBACK (SS-581) as commanding officer (1973). Shore assignments included Submarine School, Nuclear

Power School, Submarine Flotilla Eight (Naples, Italy), flag secretary and aide to ComSubPac, BuPers as submarine detailer and placement officer and chief staff officer, Submarine Squadron One. Colin commanded three shore facilities, all in San Diego: Fleet Antisubmarine Warfare Training Center, Submarine Training Facility and Recruit Training Command. His last tour was Chief of Staff, Naval Base Seattle, retiring from the Navy in 1990. During a change of duty station from the East Coast to Hawaii, he and his daughter, Michelle, kayaked across Idaho on the Salmon River from Salmon to Riggins, ID.

Colin was awarded the Legion of Merit (2), Meritorious Service Medal (2) and Commendation Medal (2). He earned an M.B.A. from National University, an M.P.A. from The George Washington University and graduated from the Industrial College of the Armed Forces.

After he retired from the Navy, Colin was a research coordinator at the Applied Physics Laboratory, University of Washington, for 17 years.

Colin was an inspirational leader in his community. He served in many positions in the USNA Alumni Association, including president and national trustee of the Puget Sound Chapter. He was president of the Navy SEAFAIR Committee in Seattle and served on the board of directors of the Seattle Chapter of the Navy League. Colin was a member of the Washington Athletic Club and the 101 Club, which honored him with the 2015 Torchy Torrance Award. Colin's wife of 30 years, Patricia O'Brien Saari passed away on 5 March 2016. They are survived by daughter, Michelle Flynn (Robert '92); three cherished grandchildren, Colin, Aidan and Bridget; and his sister, Elizabeth Christian.

March-April 2016 Shipmate