

RICHARD DeWERT, HOSPITALMAN
U. S. NAVY, DECEASED

NAVAL HISTORY DIVISION

Richard DeWert was born in Taunton, Massachusetts, on November 17, 1931, and was killed on April 5, 1951, northeast of Chunchon, Korea, while rendering assistance under fire to wounded infantrymen of the First Marine Division.

He enlisted in the U. S. Navy at Taunton, Massachusetts, as a Seaman Recruit on December 2, 1948, and on February 29, 1949 was advanced to Seaman Apprentice. On July 15, 1949 his rating was changed to Hospital Apprentice and on April 16, 1950 he was promoted to Hospitalman.

Upon enlisting in the U. S. Navy in 1948, he had boot training at the Naval Training Center, Great Lakes, Illinois. He remained there until March 1949, when he reported for instruction at the U. S. Naval Hospital Corps School, Great Lakes. From July 1949 until July 1950 he served at the U. S. Naval Hospital, Portsmouth, Virginia, after which he was assigned to the First Medical Battalion, First Marine Division.

"For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty while serving as a Medical Corpsman, attached to a Marine Infantry Company, First Marine Division, in action against enemy aggressor forces in Korea on April 5, 1951...." he was awarded the Medal of Honor. The citation further states:

"When a fire team from the point platoon of his company was pinned down by a deadly barrage of hostile automatic weapons fire and suffered many casualties, DeWert rushed to the assistance of one of the more seriously wounded, and, despite a painful leg wound sustained while dragging the stricken marine to safety, steadfastly refused medical treatment for himself and immediately dashed back through the fire swept area to carry a second wounded man out of the line of fire. Undaunted by the mounting hail of devastating enemy fire, he bravely moved forward a third time and received another serious wound in the shoulder after discovering that a wounded Marine had died. Still persistent in his refusal to submit to first aid, he resolutely answered the call of a fourth stricken comrade and, while rendering medical assistance was himself mortally wounded by a burst of enemy fire. His courageous initiative, great personal valor and heroic spirit of self-sacrifice in the face of over whelming odds reflects the highest credit upon DeWert and enhanced the finest traditions of the United States Naval Service. He gallantly gave his life for his country."

The Medal of Honor was posthumously presented to his mother, on May 27, 1952, by Secretary of the Navy Dan A. Kimball.

In addition to the Medal of Honor, Hospitalman DeWert was entitled to the Purple Heart Medal; the Korean Service Medal; and the United Nations Service Medal.

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