



Charles Henry Propster

February 14, 1929 - March 11, 2019

In the early morning hours of Monday, March 11, 2019 Charles H. Propster, Jr., a member of the Greatest Generation, passed away, 7 weeks to the day of his beloved wife Nancy. They were happily married for 69 years.

Charles “Chuck” Propster was born February 14th, 1929, to Charles H. Propster, Sr., a Lt. Commander in the Navy, and Edna Propster (later O’Dair). Charles Propster also enlisted into the Navy in 1946 at age 17. The Navy quickly realized his intelligence and aptitude in math and science and sent him to the University of Missouri, where he graduated in 1950 with a degree in electrical engineering. After college he received a Fulbright Scholarship in physics. While at college, he met and later married Nancy McClure, which he considered to be the best decision he ever made!

The timing of his entrance into his professional career coincided with the advent of computers, and he truly was one of the pioneers of the computing revolution. While working for GE in 1960, he was part of the team that created the GE-225, built to be able to run the computer program BASIC, and this was a huge breakthrough and shift of computing into business applications. Charles worked for several technology companies during his career, including GE, RCA, and IBM. There are at least 15 patents in his name, all related to computer hardware and data processing.

Charles and Nancy raised five children and moved several times before settling in Chapel Hill, NC. They later lived an active retirement in Palm Coast, FL before returning to the Triangle area of NC in 2011.

Charles will be lovingly remembered as a brilliant, yet quiet and humble man, who maintained a voracious love of books and an endless curiosity well into his twilight years. He had an amazing ability to retain all of the information that he took in, which made him a fountain of knowledge. He could converse intelligently on a wide range of topics, from Greek philosophers, great literature, and economics, to science, math and engineering. (He could also fix anything—computers, cars, appliances, electrical, plumbing, anything!!)

Charles could be very witty and warm, and he was also a bit quiet, probably because he was taking in everything and processing so much information all of the time. Whenever he did speak, it was with purpose. Even if it was to make a witty comment, it was always purposeful, often with a twinkle in his bright blue eyes. His children remember him for teaching them HOW to think for themselves. He would bring up ideas and subject matter and would give his kids books and then later discuss them. He was always doing his best to help his children and grandchildren become independent and intelligent adults.

Charles Propster was a “regular guy”, a family man, a hard-working man, a self-made man, who in his profession contributed so much to such a vital industry as the computer industry and yet neither sought nor required recognition of what he gave professionally, personally, or as a Navy veteran. His devotion to his wife, Nancy, is a precious legacy that his children and grandchildren will cherish.

Charles was preceded in death by his parents; his beloved wife, Nancy Propster; his dear sister, Margaret Mattke; and his precious grandson, Thomas Valerio.

Charles is survived by his children, Robert Propster, William Propster (Agnes), Pamela Umstead (Kevin), Margaret Propster, and Cynthia Valerio (Benigno); his grandchildren, Sean, Peter, Jennifer, Kimberly, Emily, and Kaila; his siblings, John Propster, Robert Propster, Suzanne Hill, Catherine Nicholson, and Sharon O’Dair; and many wonderful nieces and nephews.

A private Celebration of Life for both Charles and his wife, Nancy Propster, will be held to commemorate them, their lives together, and the legacy of love they pass on to their families.

Comments



“ Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of Charles Henry Propster.



May 08 at 09:50 PM



“ My Condolences to the Propster Family, Love and Prayers - Steve Furman

Steve Furman - April 04 at 03:23 PM