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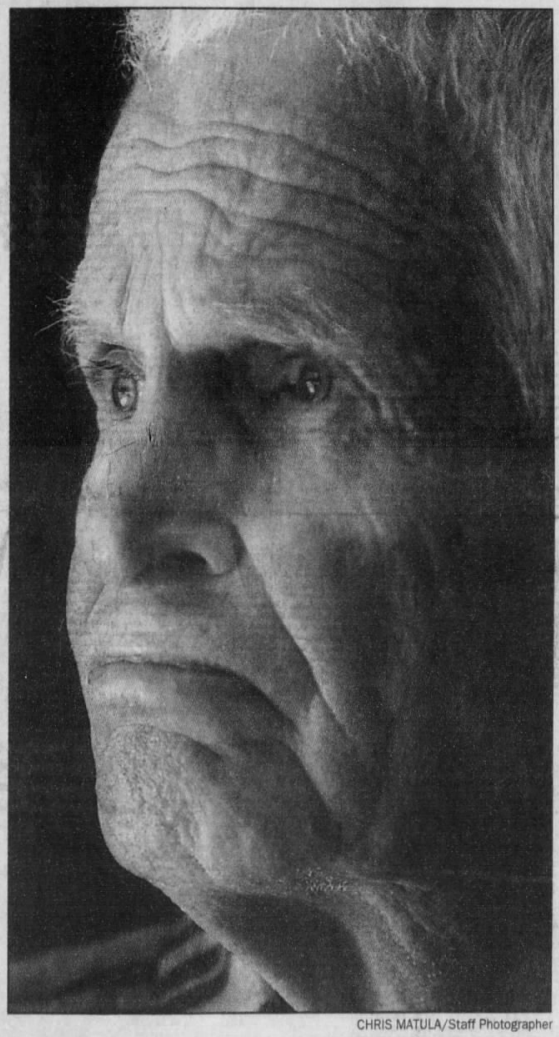


ONE BRAVE MAN

gets his due

As the Japanese attacked Charles Rush's sub in 1943, his superiors crumbled under the pressure. So Rush stepped up to save the sub and all 80 men aboard.

Almost 60 years later, the U.S. Navy has recognized his heroism by awarding him the Navy Cross.



CHRIS MATULA/Staff Photographer

By Paul Reid • *Palm Beach Post Staff Writer*

IF ANYTHING GIVES UP ITS SECRETS with more reluctance than the deep, black sea, it's the U.S. Navy. In the silent service — submarines — the boats run silent and deep, and so do the secrets. But sometimes, for an act of heroism to be recognized, an act of cowardice has to surface as well. Not often. But sometimes.

Charles W. Rush Jr., retired U.S. Navy captain, resident of Port St. Lucie, is the hero. He'd never, ever, call himself that. He'll tell you he did his duty, did his job, especially during 16 terrible hours in November 1943, when his sub came within a few feet and a few minutes of disappearing under the Pacific with all hands.

But the Navy saw things differently, awarded Rush the Navy Cross, the highest medal for valor the Navy can pin on a chest. Thing is, he got the medal seven weeks ago, on April 5. It took the Navy almost 60 years to give Rush his due.

That's because the circumstances that led to Rush's heroism would not — had they come to light during the war — reflect well on certain officers and the demands for perfection and valor that fighting men, especially officers, operate under. There is no room in the military ethic for elemental human fears and reactions, an inherent contradiction that leads invariably to stories such as Rush's.

On Nov. 11, 1943, Rush was a

Please see **BRAVE, 24A**



Charles Rush when he was the captain of the USS Queenfish during World War II.

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