



## Capt. Paul Xavier Rinn, U.S. Navy (retired)

September 13, 1946 - August 3, 2022

Retired U.S. Navy Capt. Paul Xavier Rinn, 75, of Fairfax Station, Virginia, passed away unexpectedly August 3, 2022.

A visitation will be held on August 11th, 2022 from 6 pm - 8 pm at Jefferson Funeral Chapel in Alexandria, Virginia. A Catholic Mass will be on August 12th, 2022 at 11 am at St. Raymond of Peñafort Church in Springfield, Virginia. Burial will take place at Arlington National Cemetery at a later date. In lieu of flowers, memorials in his name may be left to Food for The Poor (<http://foodforthe poor.org/>) and Navy Safe Harbor. (<https://safeharborfoundation.org/>)

Paul was born on September 13, 1946 in New York, New York, the fourth child of Roger and Dorothy (Gonzales) Rinn. He married Pamela (Paul) Rinn July 19, 1969. He is survived by beloved wife Pamela, daughters Courtney (Cappy) Surette of Windermere, FL; and Kirstin (Ryan) LeTellier of Summerville, SC; son Matthew Rinn of Castle Rock, CO; grandchildren, Tyler Paul Rinn, Cooper Rinn LeTellier, William Xavier Surette, Rowan McCarick LeTellier, Elizabeth Grier Surette, Abigail McCauley Rinn and brother, Gregory Rinn of Rockville Centre, New York.

Paul was an accomplished U.S. Naval Leader and successful businessman. His career in the Navy spanned almost three decades and encompassed

challenging positions in a multitude of key operational assignments and combat encounters as well as significant Pentagon postings.

A Surface Warfare Officer, his professional path took him from the rivers of Southeast Asia to the command of the U.S. Navy's most sophisticated ships: the Guided Missile Frigate Samuel B Roberts FFG 58 (the heroic story of which is required reading at the US Naval Academy, Naval War College and Surface Warfare Officers School) and the AEGIS Cruiser Leyte Gulf CG 55 (selected as the "Top AEGIS Cruiser" in the Atlantic Fleet during Paul Rinn's Command).

Paul was the recipient of the United States Congress's 1989 National Day of Excellence Award, the 1989 Stephen Decatur Award for Operational Excellence and the 1995 U.S. Navy League John Paul Jones Award for Inspirational Leadership. Ashore he served as Executive Assistant to the Head of the Surface Navy and later as Special Assistant to two Chiefs of Naval Operations.

He was awarded five Legion of Merit Awards (one with Combat V), Purple Heart, four Meritorious Service Awards, Combat Action Ribbon with bronze star and other personal and unit commendations.

In 2008, Paul was Inducted into the Surface Navy Hall of Fame.

Following his naval service, Paul joined the international consulting firm of Whitney Bradley and Brown and was an integral part of the company's growth from a \$5 million-dollar organization to a \$95 million company in ten years.

He retired in 2011 and embarked up a successful public speaking career inspiring thousands across the world with his lessons about inspirational leadership.

Paul was an active champion of veteran causes and a leader in the Marist College Alumni program. He loved spending time with family, volunteering at Church functions, public speaking and all things associated with U.S. Navy Surface Warfare and the Sailors who serve their country.

No Higher Honor

# Cemetery Details

## Arlington National Cemetery

1 Memorial Drive  
Arlington, VA 22211

# Previous Events

## Gathering

AUG 11. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Jefferson Funeral Chapel  
5755 Castlewellan Drive  
Alexandria, VA 22315  
(703) 971-7400  
[info@jeffersonfuneralchapel.com](mailto:info@jeffersonfuneralchapel.com)  
<https://www.jeffersonfuneralchapel.com>

## Memorial Mass

AUG 12. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

St. Raymond of Penafort Catholic Church  
8750 Pohick Road  
Springfield, VA 22153

# Tribute Wall

IT

“ *Captain Rinn, Thank you for your great service to our Country. RIP Sir.*

IAN TAIT - February 22, 2025 at 04:03 PM



“ *No Higher Honor!*

Dan Tannehill - May 21, 2023 at 10:19 PM



“ *Capt. Paul Xavier Rinn, U.S. Navy (retired)*

October 27, 2022 at 09:45 PM

GW

“ *My sincere condolences to the Rinn family. Paul was a standout Officer and leader. He will be sorely missed, but his legacy will live on. I had the honor of meeting Paul at Marist College, where he spoke at a Veterans Day luncheon. His talk was from the heart and he just mesmerized the attendees, especially Army ROTC Cadets who hosted the event. Paul put in perspective what it was like to lead in combat and his experiences not only had a lasting impression on the Cadets, but also on all attendees. He will be sorely missed by all. RIP Capt Rinn.*

George P Wilcha - August 15, 2022 at 05:46 PM

JS

*I knew Paul Xavier Rinn when we both rowed for the Marist College crew team in the 1960s. I also saw Paul at our Marist College veterans flag dedication. Paul was a dedicated man who did a lot for his country. USA 🇺🇸.*

Joe Sommers - September 27, 2025 at 03:22 AM

BD

“ So sorry for your loss... Captain Rinn gave my commencement speech. His commitment to Marist will ever be forgotten!

*Barrie Daneker 89*

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**Barrie Daneker** - August 12, 2022 at 06:06 PM

MO

“ What a great man-meet him in the pentagon as a young worker who was beyond great. Most caring person I have ever meet. Will be thinking of you and your family and praying. Monica

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**Monica** - August 12, 2022 at 03:37 PM

JI

“ To Pam and the Rinn family I wish to offer my deepest and most sincere condolences. I am very saddened to hear of Capt. Rinn's passing. He had a very strong and profound impact on my life, as he did for everyone who had the fortune to serve with him in the Navy. I imagine that there are many who, like myself, feel that they really became who they are in the Navy - and Capt. Rinn's example of leadership, selfless sacrifice, dedication and passion for being the best he could be are lessons I still carry to this very day. I can't imagine who I'd be without his guidance those many (many...) years ago on the USS Leyte Gulf. I hope Pam and her family can take some measure of solace in knowing how truly he was admired, respected and loved by a great many people who are better for having known him. We won't forget what he meant.  
"There is a destiny that makes us brothers; none goes his way alone. All that we send into the lives of others comes back into our own"

*James Scanlon, MD  
(former LT, SC, USN)*

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**Jim** - August 11, 2022 at 08:15 PM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Capt. Paul Xavier Rinn, U.S. Navy (retired).*



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August 11, 2022 at 10:26 AM



“ *The Gonsalves Family purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Capt. Paul Xavier Rinn, U.S. Navy (retired).*



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**The Gonsalves Family** - August 11, 2022 at 01:50 AM

MG

“ Dear Rinn Family,  
Our hearts and prayers go out to Paul and your family in this difficult time. I have known of Paul for some time, Pauls Mother, Dorothy, was my Grandfathers (Thomas J Gonsalves Sr. ESQ,) Sister and over the years my Dad and Mom would go to any event for Paul as we were all so proud of him. The biggest event of course in his storied career was when the commissioned the Sammy B in Maine. My Dad loaded up a couple of cases of champagne and headed to Maine. The last phone call I had with Paul (a couple of years ago), he reminisced about my Dad and the huge cheer that erupted when the Admiral introduced him, and yes it was my Dad, Mom and some of his Sisters, Paul knew immediately it was the “GONSALVES” side of the family, as they knew how to whoop it up! In any event I can heartily recommend his book, No Higher Honor, and his Ted Talkx on YouTube. He was a great guy.



Again, we are praying for you all.

Our Deepest Condolences,

Michael & Liz Gonsalves

Richard & Carol Gonsalves

Beth & Tony Massucci

Stephen & Lucy Gonsalves

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**Mike Gonsalves** - August 11, 2022 at 01:24 AM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Capt. Paul Xavier Rinn, U.S. Navy (retired).



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August 10, 2022 at 05:57 PM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Capt. Paul Xavier Rinn, U.S. Navy (retired).*



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August 10, 2022 at 04:48 PM



“ *RIP Paul.*



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**Frank Titus** - August 10, 2022 at 12:57 PM



“ *Fred Mitchell purchased the Small Garden Dish for the family of Capt. Paul Xavier Rinn, U.S. Navy (retired).*



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**Fred Mitchell** - August 09, 2022 at 03:07 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Capt. Paul Xavier Rinn, U.S. Navy (retired).*



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August 09, 2022 at 10:48 AM



“ *Strength & Solace Spray was purchased for the family of Capt. Paul Xavier Rinn, U.S. Navy (retired).*



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August 08, 2022 at 03:53 PM



“ *Enduring Grace was purchased for the family of Capt. Paul Xavier Rinn, U.S. Navy (retired).*



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August 08, 2022 at 03:46 PM



“ *We knew Paul as a Eucharist Minister and appreciated the time he spent to bring us Holy Communion and spend a bit of time visiting. What an impressive career he had! We had no idea.*

*We are praying for the repose of his soul and send our heartfelt condolences to his family in hopes that they find much comfort knowing that he touched the lives of so many.*

*Serrin Marie and Donna Foster*

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**Serrin M. Foster** - August 08, 2022 at 02:28 PM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Capt. Paul Xavier Rinn, U.S. Navy (retired).*



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August 08, 2022 at 01:12 PM



“ *My family joins me in prayers for the eternal repose of Paul's soul. May you rest in peace... Our deepest sympathy goes to Pam and family in this sorrowful time.*

*I will not forget your nice smiles and pleasant encounters while we served together as Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion at St Raymond's.*

*We will see you on the other side!*

*Lena Maraya*

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**Lena Maraya** - August 08, 2022 at 12:03 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Capt. Paul Xavier Rinn, U.S. Navy (retired).*



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August 08, 2022 at 09:23 AM

JS

“ Captain Paul Rinn was a friend, mentor, shipmate, patriot, and fellow Marist College Red Fox. He lived his faith and loved his family. No higher honor. The entire Marist College community is heartbroken at his lost. Much love to his wonderful family.

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**Jo-Anne Sears** - August 07, 2022 at 08:00 PM

DC

“ Tom and I are so saddened at the news of Paul's passing ! So many fond memories of his smiling face at MASS !! Sending prayers for strength to Pam and the family !  
Tom and Donna Crean

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**Donna Crean** - August 06, 2022 at 08:59 PM



“ Beautiful Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Capt. Paul Xavier Rinn, U.S. Navy (retired).



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August 06, 2022 at 07:40 PM

LC

“ Pam, our condolences to you and the family. What a shock for us all. Paul and I were classmates at Marist, joined the Navy together, went to OCS together and supported Marist as loyal alumni. this is a shock and make me very sad. what a great guy!  
Larry and Sandra Carr

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**Larry Carr** - August 06, 2022 at 06:54 PM



“ *A New Sunrise Spray was purchased for the family of Capt. Paul Xavier Rinn, U.S. Navy (retired).*



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August 06, 2022 at 06:28 PM



“ *My deepest condolences to the family of Capt. Rinn. There is a hole in my life that he had filled, as the first senior Naval officer I really knew. He was a very real father figure to me. He taught the crew so much, as he drove us (precom unit) of the Sammy B to "never rest on our laurels" but always work a little smarter than our enemy. Later in life, we were friends on social media, and we reunited at the ship's reunions. He was a GREAT man, and I will miss him very much. Fair winds and following seas, Sir. John Preston*

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**John Preston** - August 06, 2022 at 04:08 PM

RK

“ A great CAPT, husband and father. Was honored to have served under CAPT Rinn when he was the CO of the USS Leyte Gulf (CG-55). I was the LAMPS Det SCPO and there were times when we had a few challenging moments on work-ups and our deployment to the Persian Gulf. When the air det had a major incident on the flight deck, CAPT Rinn was the first person that came to me and asked me what I needed to safely traverse the aircraft into the hanger. Also had the opportunity to support a few of his efforts with WBB when I supported the Standard Missile Program office after I retired.

No higher honor then to have served with this great man. Kim and I extend our deepest condolences to Pam and the entire Rinn family.

*Russ Knaub, AECS(AW/SW), USN (ret)*

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**Russ Knaub** - August 06, 2022 at 03:26 PM

CH

“ My thoughts and prayers go out to Captain Rinn and his family. From our time at Marist College and throughout the years you were a guiding light and inspiration to us all. You served your country with honor and courage. Throughout the years, you continued your service to our college in countless ways, for which I will always be grateful. From a former Marine and college classmate, I salute you. God bless you, Paul.

*Dr. Chuck Howlett*

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**Charles Francis Howlett** - August 06, 2022 at 03:20 PM

MS

“ To the family of Captain Rinn,

*We are deeply sorry to hear of the loss of your husband/father/grandfather. We met Captain Rinn at the decommissioning of the USS Samuel B. Roberts. He was an inspirational speaker.*

*He is in God's hands now. No higher honor.*

*Marty and Mary Sherman*

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**Mary Sherman** - August 06, 2022 at 01:49 PM



“ *Fair winds and following seas sir. No Higher Honor.*

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**Tom Mowry** - August 06, 2022 at 01:38 PM

MO

“ *Mike Script, Kristi, Brad & Lindsey Otto purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Capt. Paul Xavier Rinn, U.S. Navy (retired).*



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**Mike Script, Kristi, Brad & Lindsey Otto** - August 06, 2022 at 01:37 PM

DS

“ I too echo what many of the crew of the SAMUEL B. ROBERTS have to say about this extraordinary Skipper, Naval Officer, and man. I consider Paul to be the ultimate example of leadership and the one, to this day, I try to emulate. He will be missed but Paul will also live on through the lives of all who had the honor of serving for and with him.

*May God's perpetual light shine upon him and all the souls of the faithfully departed.*

*"No Higher Honor"*

*David M Smith CDR USN (Retired)*

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**David Marshall Smith** - August 06, 2022 at 01:36 PM

AR

“ *Admiral Michelle J. Howard U.S.N., Ret. purchased the Ocean Breeze Spray for the family of Capt. Paul Xavier Rinn, U.S. Navy (retired).*



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**Admiral Michelle J. Howard U.S.N., Ret.** - August 06, 2022 at 01:07 PM

JK

“ Captain Rinn was my commanding officer on the Samuel B. Roberts. He had a presents about him that commanded respect. At our 30th ship’s reunion ( the first that I was able to attend ) he still recognized me and called me by name. I was astonished that he had ability to recall a mere second class petty office three decades later! He will be missed by so many. My condolences to his wife and family. It has been “ No Higher Honor “ to serve with this man!



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**John Kolnitys** - August 06, 2022 at 12:25 PM

 David Heinsohn

“ Then LCDR Rinn was the XO on USS Bowen when I reported aboard for my first tour as a commissioned officer. What a great example of how to be a US Navy officer. He invited Chris and I to join him for supper in the Wardroom on SBR in Newport, RI before they deployed. As expected the gracious host and a great ship. Capt. Rinn you will be missed by all your past shipmates, the US Navy, and the country at large. Fair Winds Captain. David Heinsohn

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**David Heinsohn** - August 06, 2022 at 11:36 AM

GS

“ I had the honor to serve on USS Leyte Gulf (CG-55) with Captain Rinn. He was a highly respected Surface Warrior, thoughtful mentor, great husband, wonderful father and steadfast friend to many. I also served as the Project Manager for USS Samuel B. Roberts (FFG-58) decommissioning when Paul provided an amazing speech to take her out of service. Prayers for Pam and the extended family. Paul was an amazing man and will be missed by all! Fair winds and following seas friend, NHH.

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**Glenn Spigelmyer** - August 06, 2022 at 10:58 AM

BU

“ I had the pleasure to serve under Capt. Rinn from precom , commissioning and during his tour as Commanding Officer of Samuel B. Roberts (FFG58) . A great leader, who inspired us all to always do our best. My condolences to Pam and the family, he will truly be missed. Fair Winds and Following Seas. No Higher Honor. R.L. "Bear" Grafiing

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**Bob Grafiing QMCM (sw) USN/Ret.** - August 06, 2022 at 10:28 AM

MC

“ I first met Captain Rinn in Bath, Maine as we were awaiting the completion of SAMUEL B. ROBERTS. On day one, he knew my name. The leadership factory that he fostered there is what really saved the ship those many months later in the Persian Gulf. You see, although Captain Rinn demanded a lot from his Sailors, he could not have been more proud of us. I am reminded of the many times he gave tours for Department Head school or even PCO/PXO school in Newport. He made it a point to grab whoever was in the scullery and ask them a major Damage Control question. "Seaman Apprentice Jones, show me where the vestibule trips for #1 Diesel are?" Years later, I visited him in his cabin on LEYTE GULF. During the conversation and all of the catch ups, I asked him one very important question. Captain, how did you know my name at FIT Bath? He told me he would study names and pictures routinely to ensure he knew HIS crew! I never forgot that piece of insider information and made it my routine as well. Just this past April while in Atlanta for an annual conference with my Oncology Engineering staff, I showed them his speech, "The Nun, The Fireman and the Suggestion Box." Everyone loved it! God Bless you Captain! God Bless your family as they mourn and celebrate your incredible life.

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Michael Conran - August 06, 2022 at 09:58 AM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Capt. Paul Xavier Rinn, U.S. Navy (retired).



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August 06, 2022 at 09:27 AM

BB

“ Have very fond memories of Paul at St Raymond's. Excellent Lector and whom I considered a Faith filled man, husband and friend. May his soul and the souls of our faithful departed Rest in Peace. Bev & Buz

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**Buz Buczacki** - August 06, 2022 at 07:37 AM

MI

“ A man that we thought was invincible. A man helped shape me as a person. I had the privilege to serve under his command on the U.S.S. Samuel B. Roberts FFG58. My deepest condolences to Pam and family. Rest easy my friend.

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**MikeTilley** - August 06, 2022 at 07:07 AM