



The family of LtJG John Joseph Wiley strongly supports the proposal for a memorial to be placed at Arlington National Cemetery to honor the men and legacy of the USS *Thresher* lost at sea on April 10, 1963. We feel this is important because:

- The lessons learned through this tragedy continue to drive the protocol used for submarine safety programs.
- We must never forget the human cost in defense of our nation during any period of conflict, but especially the Cold War, a period of American military history which is often overlooked.

A memorial in the nation's foremost sacred national cemetery would honor their sacrifice for our country and emphasize the point that freedom is not free - in times of contentious peace or armed conflict.

The SUBSAFE program established after the loss of the USS *Thresher* is a dynamic program that has potentially saved countless submariners from a similar disastrous accident. It is our understanding that the men of the USS *Thresher* stayed at their assigned stations while descending, making reports on the situation and the submarine's condition even though knowing that they were doomed. They displayed an outstanding example of courage and commitment to ensure the challenges they encountered would not happen again.



The tragic death of LtJG John Joseph Wiley was mourned by his hometown of Altoona, PA in 1963 and his memory as an outstanding student-athlete continues 55 years later in a scholarship at his high school, Bishop Guilfoyle High School. Like his comrades aboard the submarine, he accepted the call President Kennedy gave to the nation during his inaugural address in 1961: "And so, my fellow Americans, ask not what your country can do for you -- ask what you can do for your country." Just months after that address, John accepted his diploma from President Kennedy at the U.S. Naval Academy, and ironically these two Navy men both died tragically in 1963. The memorial would not only honor the USS *Thresher* men, but also be a challenge to others to do their part in keeping our nation safe and free as President Kennedy asked of all Americans. The impact upon our family due to the USS *Thresher's* tragic

loss and John's commitment, is that we have since dedicated over 100 years of serving and defending our country as U.S. Army officers and as special agents in the Federal Law Enforcement Community. John's dedication continues to inspire the younger generations of our family to serve and defend our country.

It is our sincere hope that the Arlington National Cemetery Memorial Board approves this request and moves forward in selecting a site for the USS *Thresher* Memorial. The men of the USS *Thresher* qualify for the national recognition Arlington provides.

Sincerely,

The Wiley Family