

HM3 William R. Charette
U.S. Navy Medical Corpsman
(serving with a marine rifle company. Korea, 27 March 1953.)

Citation:

"For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty in action against enemy aggressor forces during the early morning hours. Participating in a fierce encounter with a cleverly concealed and well-entrenched enemy force occupying positions on a vital and bitterly contested outpost far in advance of the main line of resistance, HC3c. Charette repeatedly and unhesitatingly moved about through a murderous barrage of hostile small-arms and mortar fire to render assistance to his wounded comrades. When an enemy grenade landed within a few feet of a marine he was attending, he immediately threw himself upon the stricken man and absorbed the entire concussion of the deadly missile with his body. Although sustaining painful facial wounds, and undergoing shock from the intensity of the blast which ripped the helmet and medical aid kit from his person, HC3c. Charette resourcefully improvised emergency bandages by tearing off part of his clothing, and gallantly continued to administer medical aid to the wounded in his own unit and to those in adjacent platoon areas as well. Observing a seriously wounded comrade whose armored vest had been torn from his body by the blast from an exploding shell, he selflessly removed his own battle vest and placed it upon the helpless man although fully aware of the added jeopardy to himself. Moving to the side of another casualty who was suffering excruciating pain from a serious leg wound, HC3c. Charette stood upright in the trench line and exposed himself to a deadly hail of enemy fire in order to lend more effective aid to the victim and to alleviate his anguish while being removed to a position of safety. By his indomitable courage and inspiring efforts in behalf of his wounded comrades, HC3c. Charette was directly responsible for saving many lives. His great personal valor reflects the highest credit upon himself and enhances the finest traditions of the U.S. Naval Service."

NOTE: HM3 William R. Charette was not a submariner at the time he received the MOH but later transferred to the Submarine Service, becoming one of the first hospital corpsmen to serve on a nuclear submarine. He served as an Independent Duty Corpsman (IDC) in the Navy's nuclear submarine program. He served under Captain Edward L. Beach, Jr. on the USS Triton (SSN-586) and was also an IDC on the USS Sam Houston (SSBN-609) Gold crew 1962-1965, USS Quillback (SS-424), USS Daniel Webster (SSBN-626), USS Simon Bolivar (SSBN-641)

<http://www.cmohs.org/recipient-detail/3093/charette-william-r.php>