

Frederick Alexander "Fred" Swegles, Jr., only son of Frederick Alexander, Sr. (1890-1965) and Renzella (Sprik) (1890-1979), was born 12 June 1922, Lansing, Ingham County, Michigan. He graduated from Eastern High School, Lansing in January 1941 and furthered his education at Michigan State College where he was a member of the Michigan State band and ROTC.

With the advent of Pearl Harbor, Fred reported to active duty in the US Navy. In 2007 a reporter from The Times Herald newspaper interviewed Fred about his World War II experiences.

The Times Herald (Port Huron, Michigan) Sunday 30 September 2007

FRED SWEGLES



Swegles of Port Huron was attending Michigan State University when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. A member of the ROTC, he was in training by February 1942.

Eventually, he ended up aboard the U.S.S. Hornet aircraft carrier, reading charts in the navigation department.

"One day I went back to my quarters and there was nothing there but my shoelaces," he said.

He went to report a theft. When the clerk asked for his name, the response was, "Oh, we've been looking for you."

Swegles was handed a sextant and an attaché case and ordered up to the deck, where he was loaded onto a SBD Dauntless dive bomber. Moments later the plane was in the air and the pilot was asking Swegles where they were going. The pilot told Swegles he was the navigator for the bomber wing.



FREDERICK A. SWEGLES JR.

Mr. Swegles, whose birthplace was Lansing, graduated from Albion College with a Bachelor of Arts degree. He taught four years in Okemos, Mich., High School before coming to Port Huron to teach special education at Washington Jr. High School.

He spent four years in Naval aviation, and 10 years in industrial engineering before entering the teaching profession. He is married and has four children: Frederick, 9, Victoria, 6, Pamela, 4, and Kimberly, 9 months.

"I didn't know what in the world was going on," Swegles said.

He witnessed several major carrier battles in the Pacific, including the Battle of the Santa Cruz Islands, at which the *Hornet* was sunk. His plane landed on the beach of an unknown, inhabited island, unable to take off. An English-speaking doctor helped them contact the Navy.

An even closer call came earlier, perhaps during the Battle of Midway. Under heavy fire, Swegles opened his hatch to find the plane on fire. He started kicking at the damaged fuselage and was sucked out into the air.

Flailing around for his ripcord, he pulled something on the front of his pack.

"It opened up and it was the raft,," Swegles said. "The dumb thing inflated, and I'm going down like a rock."

Eventually he found and opened his parachute, which landed on top of him when he hit the water.

When he finally got free, the raft was floating next to him

"I got on the raft thinking, "Well this is it," he said, and started singing to himself the hymn *This World Is Not My Home*.

It wasn't long, however, before an American submarine surfaced nearby.

The bomber's pilot and gunner were never found.

Lansing State Journal (Lansing, Michigan) Sunday 2 January 1944

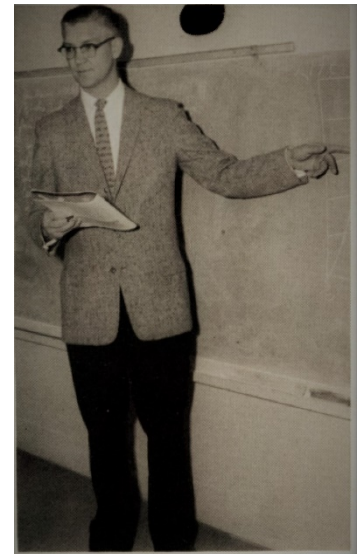
SWEGLES - Chief Petty Officer Frederick A. Swegles is on a seven day leave from Hampden Sydney college, Hampden Sydney, Va., visiting his parents, Mr. and Mrs. F. A. Swegles, 2417 Forrest avenue. Officer Swegles was formerly a student at Michigan State college.

After honorable discharge from the US Navy, Fred married Shirley Jean Young on 7 February 1949. Fred went back to college and obtained both BA and MA degrees. Shirley too completed college and became, like Fred,

a school teacher. Fred taught at Okemos High School in the 1958-1959 year. In 1960 he moved to the Port Huron area and began teaching special education in the Port Huron school system.



Row 1: Ann Smith, Bill Jones, Dave Halliday, Roger Stoll. Row 2: Mr. Swegles, Miss Schram, Mrs. Kluber, Mrs. Moses.



Safe driving procedures are described by Mr. Fred Swegles.

1959 Tomahawk

The Times Herald (Port Huron, Michigan) Thursday 1 October 1959

Mr. Swegles, whose birth place was Lansing, graduated from Albion College with a Bachelor of Arts degree. He taught four years in Okemos, Mich., High School before coming to Port Huron to teach special education at Washington Jr. High School.

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AMONG the delegates from Port Huron High School who will attend the Model UN Assembly at Hillsdale College are, left to right, Sally Wolford, Mr. Fred Swegles, sponsor, and John Aymen, John Castillo and Terrie Nault. They are examining a miniature model of the UN building in New York.

Pamela, 4 and Kimberly, 9 months.

Fred retired from the Port Huron Area School District. He and Shirley celebrated 5 children and 53 years together. Shirley, born 5 September 1929, died 20 June 2002, St. Clair County, Michigan. Fred married again after Shirley's untimely death. Fred died 10 June 2014, Port Huron. Fred was very active in the local Baptist Church and in Gideons International. He and Shirley were interred Lakeside Cemetery, Port Huron.

Source: Pollock Randall Funeral Home Website

Frederick Alexander Swegles, Jr., 91, of Port Huron, went home to be with the Lord on Tuesday, June 10, 2014. He was born June 12, 1922 in Lansing to the late Renzella and Frederick Swegles Sr. He married Shirley Jean Young on February 4, 1949 in Lansing. She died June 20, 2002. He married Donna Rome on July 13, 2005 in Port Huron.



Mr. Swegles was a teacher with the Port Huron Area School District. He served in the U.S. Navy during World War II.

Just last week, Fred went to Washington, D.C. on the Honor Flight for World War II veterans. He was a longtime member of Griswold Street Baptist Church where he served as a deacon and Sunday school teacher. He was past president of St. Clair County Gideons International and was very involved with Child Evangelism Fellowship. He was a founding member and Emeritus Board Member of the Michigan Protection & Advocacy Service.

He is survived by his wife, Donna; a son, Frederick "Rick" Swegles and his partner, Sue Fahey; five daughters, Dr. Victoria Swegles, Pamela (David) Van Soest, Kimberly (Scott) Siple, Michelle (Ali) Guvendiren and Sandy (Charles) Badley; six stepchildren, Gerald (Darlene) Rome, Cindy (Kevin) Kole, Rebecca (Terry) Harrington, Jane (John) Hampton, William (Kelly) Rome and Donald (Karen) Rome; 18 grandchildren; 11 step grandchildren; 18 great grandchildren; and seven step great grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by a sister, Jenny Hinkle.

Funeral services will be held at 10 a.m. on Saturday, June 14, 2014 in Griswold Street Baptist Church. The Reverend James Pettit will officiate. Burial will be in Lakeside Cemetery. His grandchildren will serve as pallbearers. Military honors will be conducted under the auspices of the U.S. Navy.