

# McCadden Family

This year, the Town of Amherst's Veterans Memorial Wall Ceremony will honor a father and son who both served in the Navy. The McCadden family joins several Amherst families with multiple generations honored on the wall.

John E. McCadden and Michael J. McCadden are part of the Amherst Memorial Wall Class of 2025, which includes 47 names in total. Their entire family is extremely proud of their service and looks forward to attending the ceremony on Sunday, August 17. Charlene Rozewicz, who completed the application process for her dad, John, and brother, Michael, said having their names on the wall gives the family a place to go to honor and remember them.

John, known as Jack, grew up in Kenmore and his father, James McCadden, was Chief of Police. He joined the Navy in 1951 when there was a strong draft call for the Korean conflict. After basic training and seamanship at Great Lakes Naval Training Center in Illinois, he was transferred aboard the USS Tidewater A.D.31, a destroyer tender that was being recommissioned in Charleston, S.C.

The family jokes that Jack's service was less about conflict and more about cruising. He saw many parts of the world, including the Caribbean, Europe and Mediterranean. Although his years of service were not as hazardous as others, Jack was honored for outstanding service include Medals of Good Conduct, European Occupation and Service Commendation. He was honorably discharged in 1955.

With his wife, Shirley, they built a home on Smith Road in Amherst. They had four children, Charlene, Patrick, Kevin and Michael. He worked in the automobile industry before starting his own business as a contractor. He worked in concrete and carpentry until he retired.

Jack stayed involved as a veteran. He was a member of the Alfred J. Jurek American Legion Post #1672 and served as Commander. They have found members of social and community events at the Post. Charlene remembers her dad being very supportive of veterans, commenting about how



Amherst native, **Michael J. McCadden**, a Navy Veteran, will be honored on August 17, 2025 at the Amherst Veteran Memorial Wall Ceremony. A shadow box created by his family displays his numerous medals and ribbons received during his 26 years of service.

veterans were treated after returning from Vietnam and how upsetting it was. Jack passed away in September 2004.

Two of Jack's sons, Michael and Patrick, followed in his footsteps and served in the Navy. The family will also honor Michael's service, who passed away in 2001 at the age of 46 in Norfolk, Virginia.

Michael grew up in Amherst and attended Williamsville North High School. He enlisted right out of high school. The McCadden children remember their father being proud of his service, and Charlene thinks that was a driving force for her brother's path.

Stationed on the USS Nimitz and later the USS Preble he started as a Machinist's Mate. He served as a Steam Propulsion Maintenance Supervisor for 10 years and retired as a Chief Petty Officer. Michael served from 1973 to 1999 when he was honorably discharged.

Charlene said that her family didn't know a lot about Michael's service but after his death, they worked diligently to learn what they could. She thanks Congressman Timothy Kennedy's Office for helping the family receive Michael's medals posthumously. Charlene recalls it was Christmas Eve when she got the call from Rep. Kennedy's Office with the list of her brother's honors: Good Conduct Medal; Sea Service Deployment Ribbon; National Defense Service Medal; Humanitarian Service Medal; Navy Unit Commendation; Southwest Asia Service Medal; Coast Guard Special Operations Service Ribbon; Navy/Marine Corps Achievement Medal; Navy E Ribbon; and the Kuwait Liberation Medal. The family was so grateful to learn of Michael's honors, especially to share with his children.

They received the medals and created a shadow box for their mother, Shirley, to have. Now, with Michael's name inscribed on the Amherst Memorial Wall, they have a place to honor and remember him, along with his father, Jack.