

12:30 p.m. House Transportation and Public Facilities Finance Subcommittee Presentation:

Highways and Aviation by Dept. of Transportation; 1 p.m. House Military and Veterans' Affairs
Special Committee

HB 223 Naming a Vietnam Helicopter Pilots' Memorial Bridge — public testimony

Good Afternoon my name is Charles Gallagher and I reside at 3769 Azurite Drive, Ester Alaska 99725. I would think it a great honor to name a Bridge in Honor of our Vietnam Helicopter Pilots. I especially recognize two of my personal friends to name this bridge in honor of their service.

The First is William Walters, who was my classmate and roommate at the The University of Alaska Class of '69. Bill interrupted his education to serve our country. I never saw Bill after 1968, but his enthusiasm for aviation and military service was above and beyond duty. His Service was heroic and his sacrifice was the ultimate one which we will never forget. This VIDA is thanks to the VIRTUAL WALL Website.

William Francis Walters
Chief Warrant Officer
175TH AHC, 214TH AVN BN, 164TH AVN GROUP, 1ST AVIATION BDE, USARV
Army of the United States
Anchorage, Alaska

January 01, 1946 to June 11, 1970

WILLIAM F WALTERS is on the Wall at Panel W9, Line 49



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William Francis Walters

ON THE WALL: Panel W9 Line 49

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PERSONAL DATA:

Home of Record: Anchorage, AK

Date of birth: 01/01/1946

MILITARY DATA:

Service Branch: Army of the United States

Grade at loss: W2

Rank: Chief Warrant Officer

Promotion Note: None

ID No: 574164930

MOS: 100B: Utility/Observation Helicopter Pilot

Length Service: **

Unit: 175TH AHC, 214TH AVN BN, 164TH AVN GROUP, 1ST AVIATION BDE, USARV

CASUALTY DATA:

Start Tour: 12/29/1968

Incident Date: 06/09/1970

Casualty Date: 06/11/1970

Status Date: Not Applicable

Status Change: Not Applicable

Age at Loss: 24 (based on date declared dead)

Location: Bac Lieu Province, South Vietnam

Remains: Body recovered

Repatriated: Not Applicable

Identified: Not Applicable

Casualty Type: Hostile, died of wounds

Casualty Reason: Helicopter - Pilot

Casualty Detail: Air loss or crash over land

URL: www.VirtualWall.org/dw/WaltersWF01a.htm WE

Data accessed: 2/3/2020

3.

Secondly is Captain Howard O. Sturgis Jr. "Howie" was my second cousin who Graduated from the University of Alaska in 1965 in Education, and as a Second Lt. from the University of Alaska Army ROTC Program. The Army trained Howard as a helicopter command officer. From Vietnam Howard wrote to me about his service in combat leading his pilots. It was tough, and he survived, when so many of his fellow soldiers did not. After his service he remained in the area of his last base near Fort Stewart Georgia where he married and became an educator. I visited him once in Savannah while I was in flight training at Embry Riddle Aeronautical University. The war had left its mark as can be expected. I last spoke to Howard about our family history in the fall of 2017 he was over 80 and he was "feeling it". Captain Howard O. Sturgis was a dedicated Patriot all of his life, but it is my hunch he was always feeling the pain of his experience and lost comrades as he wrote me in those long ago (now lost) letters sent in 1967. Howie and his wife only returned to Alaska once on a cruise when I happened to be Outside. Months after he passed his children found my address and sent this Obituary which I shared with The University of Alaska Alumni Office. As with Bill Walters, Howard Sturgis sacrificed a lot!



Howard O. Sturgis, Jr.
November 30, 1938 - July 09, 2018



Howard O. Sturgis, Jr., 79, of Waycross died Monday evening at Baptist Village Nursing Home after an extended illness. Mr. Sturgis was born in Boston, Massachusetts to the late Howard O. Sr. and Eleanor Brown Sturgis but had made Waycross his home since 1977. He served his country faithfully in the United States Army, as a Captain he was Helicopter Pilot that flew many missions and received the Distinguished Flying Cross. He graduated from NorthStar (wrong should be UA '65) College in Alaska. He taught locally in the Waycross area before becoming the popular "Plant Doctor" at Ace Hardware in Blackshear. Mr. Sturgis was a member of St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Waycross.

In addition to his parents he is preceded in death by his wife, Donna Marie Helverson Sturgis and two daughters, Kathleen Elizabeth Smith and Virginia Loraine Jesse Smith. Mr. Sturgis is survived by eight children, Rosalind Weeks (David) of Conway, South Carolina, David Curtis Smith of Dixie Union, Andrew Wesley Smith (late Sandra) of Blackshear, Christopher Daniel Smith (Julie) of Patterson, Paul Joseph Smith of Blackshear, James Darnell Smith (Geri) of Waycross, Dennis Matthew Smith (Vicki) of Waycross, Mary Elizabeth Sturgis of FT. Wayne, IN; 13 grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren; a sister, Ellie Rose Wilder of Tucson, AZ; numerous nieces, nephews and other relatives.

A funeral service will be held Saturday (July 14, 2018) at 11:00am in the Miles-Odum Funeral Home Chapel. The family will be receiving friends beginning one hour prior to the service. A committal service will be held Monday (October 1, 2018) at 2:00pm at Greenlawn Cemetery. Memorialization is by Cremation. In lieu of flowers the family request that you plant a flower, bush or tree in honor of the "Plant Doctor".

I thank the Representatives for this opportunity to testify on behalf of the naming of the bridge.

Charles W. Dullaghan
2-4-2020