



Remembering our brothers who have passed from this life

## Robert Burl “Bob” Walker, ‘75

November 8, 1956 - February 5, 2019



6th yr.; “Band”; 1st Sgt.;  
Fencing—1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6,  
Soccer—3, 4, 5, 6

Mr. Robert “Bob” Burl Walker, 62, of Fayetteville, NC passed away at Cape Fear Valley Medical Center Tuesday, February 5, 2019. He was the son of the late Will and Virginia Walker of Salisbury, North Carolina on November 8, 1956.

He is survived by his Wife, Bernice Walker; Son William Walker; and Daughter, Jennifer Griffith (Ben) of MS. and Harley the wonder dog.

Bob never met a stranger and will be missed by all who knew him. He served in the military as a military police officer, a bouncer at the former Flaming Mug, and an over-the-road truck driver. He enjoyed traveling and the opportunity to meet new and exciting people. Bob was also an active member of the Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association (CVMA).

A celebration of Life will be held 1:00 p.m.. Saturday February 16, 2019 at Freedom Biker Church, 455 Rock Hill Road Fayetteville, NC 28312.

In lieu of flowers the family requests memorials be made to Walk of Hope, PO Box 482, Union City, TN 38281 or Augusta Military Academy (AMA) PO Box 100, Ft. Defiance VA 24437.

Arrangements for the family are entrusted to LaFayette Funeral Home, 6651 Raeford Rd. Fayetteville, NC 28304.

The following is a tribute by Bob’s classmate Brett Thompson

I first met Bob as a young somewhat undisciplined 14-year-old at Augusta Military Academy. We were in Band Co. and both played the trombone and both freshmen. Bob had started the year before and was a corporal, assistant squad leader. I was a new cadet.

A little about being a new cadet. It was not fun. We were easily seen with blue name tags instead of white and we could not put a dip in our overseas cap. This made it easy for old cadets usually with rank to pick us out. We had to walk the line when in barracks (explain). We could not cut across the courtyard and had to eat square meals among many

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other things. Bob no longer had to do that. Some NCO's and officers made our lives a living hell while others took it easy. Bob was the latter. Always pleasant and fair.

Military schools in those days were all cutting corners to survive as the Vietnam war even affected us and enrollment. Trombones played the bass clef while most of the rest played treble clef. We did not have an instructor or teacher so the band was on it's own, We were blessed with some very talented musicians who would write the music while the trombones were left to figure it out. If you aren't a music major, transposing to bass clef is tough. There were four trombones and only one who was not a new cadet. Bob took the lead as we all worked together to get the music right. To this day I know we had the best version of the National Anthem with a great trombone break in there. Thanks to Bob!

He and I spent the next four years together, three in band. We didn't hang out much but were always friends and never once had an issue. He was always the low-keyed cadet and as a senior Master Sgt. treated the lower classmen with respect. To this day, I do not know anyone who says anything about Sgt. Walker and the way he treated the cadets under his watch.

As the enrollment shrunk each year, our classes got smaller. Our graduating class in 1975 was 33. Everyone knew each other. Everyone looked out for each other. We were the first sergeants and officers. On graduation day we stood on the front field, threw our hats in the air and had no clue if we would ever meet again. Some would go to college, some into the military and others, found some kind of work they loved. Some found their place in making the world better and one of those was Bob Walker.

Many years would pass us by with the closing of the school in 1983. Thanks to our love for AMA, the alumni association kept going on and all of us remember The Bayonet issue, our school newsletter, letting us know the school had closed midterm. All of us wondered what would happen next. Thanks to the alumni association and sometimes a visit by a former cadet finding the school closed, the association grew, and we continued to have reunions. I found Bob again at least 22 years ago and as usual, in Bob Walker style, it was as if we never missed a day.

From that point on we kept in touch, mostly by phone calls, many of which were from a bored truck driver who wanted to make his trip go a little faster and catch up. So many times, I would answer, and he would say, "Guess who I ran in to?" Of course, I had no clue, but he was going to let me know, in great detail. It was always a cadet he saw somewhere in his travels around the country.

The conversations with Bob were always a proud man telling me about his job but mostly about the family he was so proud of. Bernice's job and how it was going, Jennifer's accomplishments through high school, college and then to the good jobs she was getting after graduating from college. Then there was William who I always knew as WG... the little boy I met a few years after Bob started to come to the reunions, some of which were alone, driving the big rig. Bernice, Jennifer and William would attend at times and as Jennifer got older, it was William. A fun, happy little guy. As he grew older, I would hear about what he was doing and of course, when he went to technical school, Bob couldn't be prouder. As WG moved into the working world and would get jobs, no matter what they were, Bob was proud of him. During these phone calls with Bob he always asked about my son and said to give him his best.

One day I got a call from Bob telling be he has skin cancer, no big deal, "I'm going to take care of it." It was a roller coaster over the next years but we can all learn from Bob Walker, not once did he complain. Just like his days at AMA when he was sent there by his aunt and uncle from Falls Church, VA after the death of his parents, just six months apart. Not once did he complain or want pity.

As many of you know, Bob loved his motorcycle. He road it to the reunion once many years ago and took my son for his first ride on a Harley. Years later a group of alumni who have motorcycles formed a group called the Roller Riders, named after the founder of AMA. We would take trips after our spring reunions, through VA, NC, WV, KY, PA. Anywhere we could find good roads with minimal interstate travel. The one year Bob was able to attend a ride we went into NC and road a famous motorcycle road, The Tail of The Dragon. We took this road with only a few at one time because it has 318 curves in 11 miles. Some of the curves were so tight the floor boards would scrape. Bob was pleased that his scraped many times and with his loud pipes, no one wanted to ride behind him. When he finished the eleven miles, Lewie told him he was crazy, Bob said, "You kept up with me so that makes us both crazy." Lewie later said, "I rode right be behind Bob on the Dragon. Watched those floorboards throw sparks, and smelled that gas coming from that old oil leaker." We would stay in mom and pop motels and motorcycle campgrounds. I was Bob's roommate on

this trip. He told me he snored. After the first night I told him, why didn't you tell me your snoring sounded like a Jake break! He loved that trip and spoke of it to me again when I visited him in early January.

A few years later one of our classmates and a member of Band Co. was getting his first star in the Marine Corps and would be the last General AMA would produce. Bob dropped everything, drove to my house for our day trip to Quantico along with many other AMA graduates. Bob loved his AMA brothers.

AMA cadets take care of their own. Bob loved coming to reunions but his battle with cancer ended his ability to work. As usual, he never complained about his finances, but I knew it was getting harder. The Roller Riders pitched in to see to it that Bob and Bernice could attend what might be his last reunion. At first, he didn't want to accept it but after some conversation he graciously accepted the invitation. It ended up being his last reunion to a place he called home. A place he loved and the men, who were once boys, grew into manhood.

In closing I would like to share a few things his brothers have said about Bob:

*"I just saw your post on Bob Walker. It hurts to see him this bad. Every once in a while 2 people will meet on FB for the first time and really hit it off. I like to feel that Bob and I had this type of friendship/relationship. We never met but had promised to have a beer with each other one day. He told me once that he looked forward to my posts and I looked forward to his. I guess this won't happen now. I have been praying daily for Bob for almost a year. I have several I pray for daily who has problems of some kind and obviously he has some. To say I am sad today, is an understatement. I was afraid this day would come just not this soon."*

*"They have shovelheads in Heaven!! Ride on my brother"*

*"Bob is a connector of people. And a persistent one at that. There must be many of us that are in touch with each other because of Bob. It's obvious that he loves people and especially his AMA brothers."*

*"This is the way I remember Bob Walker. God bless you, Bob. He's stood a valiant and long battle with an evil enemy and that makes him a Warrior Hero by my standard."*

*"This makes me sadder than words can describe..."*

*"I love you Bob. You're truly a wonderful friend. Your love and kindness knew no end. And I myself knew how much you loved your AMA brothers and me, your AMA sister. Just want you to know how much you're loved by us as well."*

*"May he rest in peace. Bob fought a long hard battle, and showed us how much character and strength he had. He will be missed. TAPS"*

Bob is our friend, our brother. As we remember him, we can all learn from his ability to always look for the good in any situation and never complain. I as well as you and his AMA brothers will miss him greatly, but I will never forget the man who never met a stranger.