



Ray EH Walters "Sonny"

AUG 9, 1944 - AUG 22, 2023



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Ray EH Walters "Sonny"

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Ray E.H. Walters, affectionately known as Coach Walters, passed away on August 22, 2023, in Tavares. Born on August 9, 1944, in Eustis, he was the beloved son of Hazel and Griggs Walters. Ray was reunited in death with his parents, as well as, his brothers Buddy and Ronnie Walters, and his sister-in-law Jeannie.

Ray, or Sonny as he was fondly called, enjoyed a vibrant partnership with his wife of over 40 years, Nancy K. Anderson. Their relationship was a testament to love, devotion, and unwavering commitment, marked by a lifetime of cherished memories, shared laughter, and steadfast support for each other.

A lifelong resident of Tavares, he proudly graduated from THS in 1963 where he excelled at football and would go on to play football while in the service and at Central Missouri State in Warrensburg, once he graduated with his degree in Physical Education, he felt the call of home and returned. He served his country with distinction in the U.S. Army- 1963-1966 (medals received: Army Service Ribbon, Army Overseas Ribbon, and the Meritorious Service Medalx2) Army Reserves- 1966-1969 (medals received: Army Reserve Achievement Medal), and the National Guard- 1979-1986. Sonny was a member of the First Baptist Church Tavares.

Sonny's passion for his hometown was only rivaled by his love for teaching and coaching. For a remarkable 35-year career, he imparted knowledge and inspiration at Tavares Middle School. A true sports enthusiast, Sonny found joy in coaching and enthusiastically rooting for his beloved teams, the Florida Gators and the THS Bulldogs, where he rarely missed a game.

Nature held a special place in Sonny's heart, and he reveled in outdoor pursuits like fox hunting, deer hunting, and fishing. His collection of mounts and trophies was a testament to his skill and dedication in these pursuits.

A man of strength and a spirited nature, Sonny embraced the joys of life—friendship, family, and fun. His pride in his son Cody's achievements knew no bounds, and his role as a loving



Obituary

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grandfather to Logan, Paxton, and Steven brought even more light and happiness into his world.

Beyond his personal circle, Sonny's bravery shone. He was recognized as a real-life hero, honored with the Dr. Phillips award for Community Service. His daring act of saving two drowning victims by leaping off the Howey Bridge showcased his remarkable courage and selflessness.

Sonny's warm and welcoming nature made friends out of strangers and reunions with old acquaintances a delight. His legendary fish fries were a testament to his hospitality and the joy he found in bringing people together.

Sonny is survived by his devoted wife Nancy, his son Cody (Wife-Amanda) of Tavares, and his sister-in-law Betty Walters of Defuniak Springs. He leaves behind a legacy of love in his three cherished grandchildren, Logan, Paxton, and Steven, along with a host of nieces, nephews, and numerous cousins.

In celebrating the life of Coach Walters, we honor a man whose spirit, love, and indomitable zest for life left an indelible mark on all who were fortunate to know him.



Events

Ray EH Walters "Sonny"

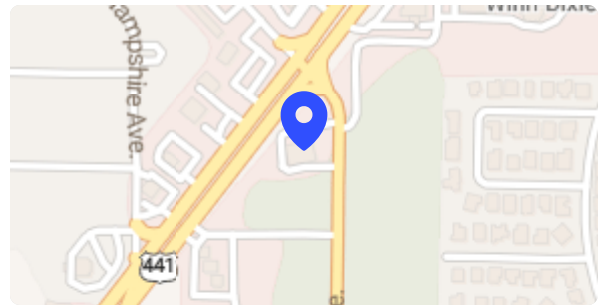
AUG 9, 1944 - AUG 22, 2023

Gathering with Viewing

Sunday, August 27, 2023

2:00 PM - 3:00 PM ET

Steverson, Hamlin & Hilbish Chapel
226 E. Burleigh Boulevard, Tavares FL 32778

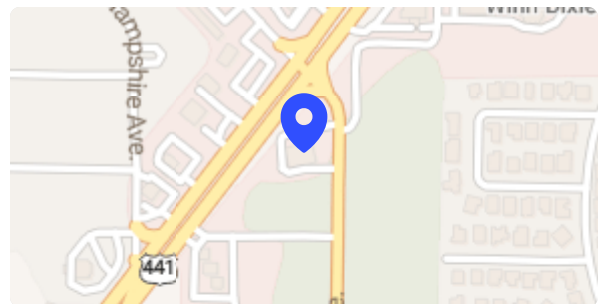


Funeral Service

Sunday, August 27, 2023

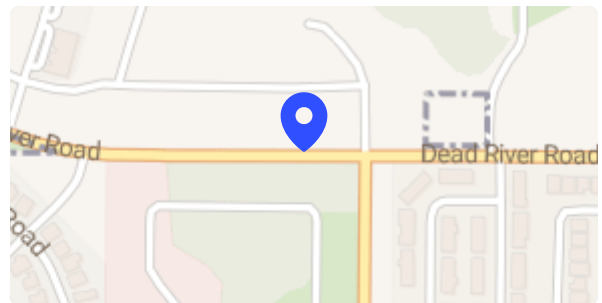
3:00 PM ET

Steverson, Hamlin & Hilbish Chapel
226 E. Burleigh Boulevard, Tavares FL 32778



Cemetery Details

Tavares Cemetery
Dead River Road, Tavares FL 32778





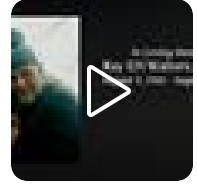
Tribute Wall

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Steverson, Hamlin & Hilbish Funerals Andcremations shared a **Video**.



August 26 at 5:49 AM



Marg Eicher posted:

To Nancy and family: please accept our most sincere sympathy as you find a path through Sonny's loss and your own grief. Marg and Tom Eicher, Anderson, SC

August 26 at 8:10 AM



Melodie Peio Saladino lit a candle in honor of Ray.

My sincere condolences to Sonny's family.



August 25 at 9:07 PM



Anonymous sent a Healing Tears - Blue and White to the Walters family.



August 25 at 1:40 PM



Anonymous sent a Classic Sympathy Dish Garden to the Walters family.



August 25 at 10:46 AM



Tony posted:

Coach was definitely a grounding point of my athletic career. So many times I would revert back to that sandy playground getting beat to Hell, not knowing then , he was introducing us kids to the world of ACCOUNTABILITY. Thanks Coach, never be another...

August 24 at 8:03 PM



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Scott White posted:

I met Coach Walters during the inaugural season of Midget (Peewee) Football in Tavares. Him and Coach Tamsett coached the Chargers and I learned how to play football. Coach Walters was tough, but inspiring. I went on to have him as a PE coach in middle school and a football coach in high school. The guy always pushed you to get the most out of you, and yet you knew he cared about you. RIP my friend.

August 24 at 5:25 PM



Anonymous sent a Lavender & White Standing Spray to the Walters family.



August 24 at 3:44 PM



Tara (Smith) Erkert lit a candle in honor of Ray.

Coach Walters was an amazing and awesome teacher. He was super fun to joke around with always making us laugh and have fun while trying to teach us rotten middle school kids. He will be missed. GOD bless his wife and family.



August 24 at 3:14 PM



Cherryl Russell lit a candle in honor of Ray.

Cherryl Russell lit a candle in memory of Ray Walters



August 24 at 11:19 AM



James Bridgewater lit a candle in honor of Ray.

Sonny was my middle school PE teacher, JV and Varsity football coach at Tavares schools. He was a positive influence on me as a teacher and coach and I'm so glad as an adult we stayed in touch and developed a good friendship. My heartfelt condolences to Nancy, Cody and all his family and friends....RIP Coach ...We are Bulldogs forever!



August 24 at 7:31 AM



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James Bridgewater lit a candle in honor of Ray.

James Bridgewater lit a candle in memory of Ray Walters

August 24 at 7:24 AM



Mike Giddens posted:

Coach Walters was very influential back in my middle and high school days during his tenure as football coach and PE teacher. He was tough as Hell but fair. RIP Coach.

August 24 at 6:06 AM



April Stoffel lit a candle in honor of Ray.

I was blessed to know Coach Walters in my time at Tavares Middle School. I'll never forget the look on his face when he realized that I was the daughter of one of his past students. He always pushed me to do my best and to go beyond. He will be dearly missed by all who knew and loved him. He always told me I reminded him of my dad which always made me smile. Rest easy coach.

August 23 at 12:18 PM





Media

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August 26 at 5:49 AM





Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Ray by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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