



Walter M. Plaue

November 7, 1935 - July 29, 2016

Walter M. Plaue, 80, passed away on Friday, July 29, 2016 at Mission Hospital in Asheville, NC. He had been a resident of Asheville, NC since 1990.

Mr. Plaue was born in New York City in 1935 and grew up in Hastings-on-Hudson, NY. He was the eldest son of the late Max and Hildegard Plaue. Upon graduating from Hastings High School, he attended Colgate University for one year and then was accepted into the United States Military Academy at West Point, NY. Upon graduation with a Bachelor of Science degree, he was commissioned in the US Army. Shortly thereafter, he married Elizabeth A. Cole, also of Hastings. Although this marriage did not endure, it produced a son, Mark Douglas, and a daughter, Kirsten Elizabeth, both of whom are still surviving. During Walter's military career, he completed Airborne School, Basic and Advanced Officer Courses, the Ballistic Missile Officer Course, and the Command and General Staff College at Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas.

A variety of assignments saw him serving in San Francisco, CA, and Thule, Greenland, followed by tours of duty in Germany, Vietnam, Korea, and a variety of installations throughout the US. One of his most enjoyable assignments came as the Deputy Post Commander at Ft. Myer, VA, the home of the "Old Guard Regiment", the Army Band, and Arlington National Cemetery. While stationed there, he met Patsy Hull, a Civilian Personnel

Specialist with the Department of the Army. After Walter was transferred to Ft. Bliss, TX, Patsy transferred to the Civilian Personnel Office at the Post, and shortly thereafter, she became his wife and lifelong partner and truest friend. During this assignment, he was dispatched on liaison tours to Iraq and South Korea and later, and later, he would embark on a one-year assignment to Korea. Upon his return, his final assignment was at Ft. Bliss, TX where he had begun his career 20 years earlier. After his retirement in 1978, he received a Master of Business Administration degree (MBA) from the University of Texas, and later became a Certified Financial Planner and real estate investor.

The couple moved from Texas to Virginia where he obtained a position as a Project Manager for a company doing work for the EPA. When Patsy was offered an opportunity to work for the US government in Germany, the couple moved there and spent over five years in Europe. These assignments gave them the opportunity to travel throughout Europe which they took full advantage of. They referred to these years as “the best of their adult lives”. In 1990, Patsy retired and the couple moved to their adopted retirement home in Asheville, NC

Soon after their arrival, the couple became active in numerous civic activities. They joined the Central United Methodist Church, and for several years, he was active in the Asheville Kiwanis Club where he chaired the Terrific Kids Program, served as a “bell ringer” for the Salvation Army at Christmas, and delivered gifts to local nursing homes. Mr. Plaue had also been a member of the Biltmore Masonic Lodge, the Oasis Shrine Temple, Elks Lodge, and American Legion, Post 2. He also was a member of the VFW, Disabled American Veterans, West Point Alumni Association, West Point Society of WNC. He expressed great concern for those who were unable to afford decent housing in the high-cost environment of Asheville, often saying, “There but for the Grace of God, go I”. His concern led him to be a frequent attendee at City Council and County Commission meetings where he often addressed

the elected officials regarding encouraging participation of the private sector in providing low-cost housing. He served on many related study groups offering the unique viewpoint of the role played by the area's many small real estate investors. He was an early advocate of a Housing Trust Fund to encourage small developers in the city and county to add to the stock of such housing. As the son of immigrant parents, Mr. Plaue had a deep feeling of responsibility to his country and to his adopted retirement community. For over a decade, on Christmas Eve, Walter and Patsy made it a family tradition to deliver boxes of holiday treats to the crews manning the local police and Fire Departments. Walter and his wife were always conscious of those who might otherwise be forgotten in the bustle of modern-day life.

What may have given him his greatest satisfaction occurred in the months following the 9/11 attacks. On his own initiative, Mr. Plaue put together a group of volunteers who planned and conducted the first Memorial Day ceremony in Asheville in recent memory, when he brought in a retired Marine Corps Commandant to be the guest speaker in May 2002. For several more years, Mr. Plaue served and chaired the committee to ensure that it became an annual event on the city calendar. His leadership was evident when he insisted that the Memorial Day Ceremony recognize, in addition to the standard military services, all "First Responders" who gave so much on 9/11/01. As he stepped back from this project, he was recruited to be the Vice-Chairman of the WNC Veteran's Memorial committee, primarily involved in fundraising and liaison with the city and county and other veteran's groups. This effort came to fruition in November 2009 when the Western North Carolina Veteran's Memorial was dedicated in the renovated Pack Plaza.

Mr. Plaue was predeceased by his parents and younger brother, Rudolf, and several aunts and uncles. He is survived by his widow and true love, Patsy, son Mark and his wife, Cindy; daughter Kirsten; sister-in-law Janis Plaue,

step-children Teresa Burzynski, Pamela Lester and husband Kevin, Timothy Hull and wife Susan, and eleven grandchildren and three great grandchildren. Survivors also include several cousins, nieces and nephews. He also leaves behind his beloved and loyal canine companion, Heidi.

A memorial service will be at 11:00AM on Tuesday, August 2, 2016 in the Chapel of Morris Funeral Home, 304 Merrimon Avenue.

Tribute Wall



“ *Walter M. Plaue*

October 07, 2023 at 11:15 AM



“ *Dear Patsy,*

My deepest sympathy to you and Walter's family. I was so shocked to see Walter's orbit. in the newspaper. I'm the daughter,Debbie, of Ila who was in the room at end of Walter's hall at Emerald Ridge. I also lost my Mama Sunday night. We both enjoyed meeting you and having you come down to visit with us. I often wondered how Walter was doing after his discharge to home every time I passed his room as his name was still on his door.

Walter was a very interesting and knowledgeable man, He was never at a loss for words. I always enjoyed talking to him in his room or in passing him in the hallway. He was a very nice, friendly and knowledgeable man and it was a pleasure getting to know him and you in our short acquaintance at Emerald. Please take care of yourself. Again my deepest sympathy. Debbie Parham

Debbie Parham - August 02, 2016 at 05:14 AM

SA

“ *What a wonderful man to all he came in contact with throughout any day. He was a bright spot for myself and my staff when he had appointment to come into our office.*

I will always remember him as a sentry for the public by his attendance at all City Council meetings and keeping the council honest for the common man.

If I remember correctly, Walter worked with congressman Taylor to get the Veteran's Cemetery in Swannanoa a reality. My father is buried there.

I look forward to seeing Walter again in heaven.

Steve Adams

Steve Adams - August 01, 2016 at 11:05 PM

JH

“ *My condolences to Patsy. I knew Walt as a good friend, loyal and supportive. He was especially devoted to the causes of veterans, affordable housing and legislative action. May he rest in peace.*

Jack Hall - August 01, 2016 at 01:22 PM

DT

“ *Offering deep condolences to the Plaue family. May the prayers ascending On your family's behalf be a comfort to your family and give you peace. 2Cor. 1:3-4.*

D. Tyler - July 31, 2016 at 06:48 PM

JM

“ *Walt was a very caring person. He loved people and showed it. He especially loved Patsy and always showed this love and respect. I will miss seeing him when I visit with Patsy.*

Jacque Morgan - July 31, 2016 at 03:34 PM

FS

“ Walt was a dynamic and active member of our Hastings High School Class of 1953. He was always in the forefront, pushing us to do our best and contribute in a positive way to our community. I realize now that this was just the beginning of a caring life devoted to the service of others. May he sleep in peace.
Francine Flynn Silberman

Francine Silberman - July 31, 2016 at 01:10 PM

RC

“ Walt started the Public Policy Committee with CREIA many years ago and doggedly followed Asheville City Council members promoting Affordable Housing in the city. He directed CREIA's efforts for minimum housing standards and the City listened. He created so many memories for all of us. They are far too numerous to put on this page.

We have lost a devoted man. Devoted to his family, his pet Heidi, and the many, many organizations he supported during his time here. We have lost a great man. You will be missed. Godspeed my friend.

Roy Chapman - July 31, 2016 at 08:18 AM