



Dallas Chapter
MOWW

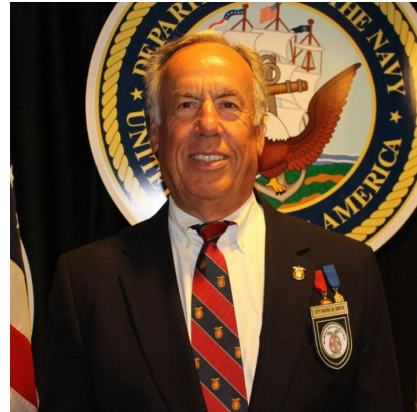


Commander's Report

Attention Dallas Companions

The month of November marks two significant anniversaries for all veterans: the birthday of the Marine Corps and Veterans Day. I would like to provide some background information on each of these commemorations.

On November 10, 1775, the Continental Congress authorized the formation of two battalions of Marines, thereby establishing the Continental Marines as landing forces for the early colonial naval fleet. This year, we celebrate the Marine Corps' 250th anniversary.



- Tun Tavern in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, is widely regarded as the birthplace of the Marine Corps, where the first Marines enlisted under Commandant Samuel Nicholas.
- The Continental Marines conducted their inaugural amphibious operation in March 1776, successfully capturing New Providence Island in the Bahamas.
- The Marine Corps Birthday is observed globally by Marines, irrespective of their location, including those deployed in combat zones or remote assignments.
- The primary tradition associated with this anniversary is the Marine Corps Birthday Ball, featuring formal ceremonies, a cake-cutting ritual that honors both the oldest and youngest Marines present, and the reading of Marine Corps Order 47, which commemorates the Corps' history.
- Each year, the Commandant of the Marine Corps delivers an official message reflecting on the organization's legacy and values.

In addition, I wish to highlight Veterans Day by providing an overview of its origins:

- Hostilities between Germany and the Allied nations ceased at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month in 1918.
- This armistice ended major combat operations in World War I, prompting global celebrations as well as mourning for the millions who were killed or wounded. The conclusion of the war also led to the establishment of the Military Order of World Wars.
- November 11 was designated Armistice Day to honor World War I veterans; it became a national holiday in 1938 and evolved into Veterans Day, which now recognizes all U.S. military veterans. President Eisenhower enacted this change in 1954.

- Veterans Day is deeply meaningful as a national holiday dedicated to honoring all individuals who have served in the United States Armed Forces, acknowledging their patriotism, dedication, and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the greater good.

Turning to recent developments within our chapter, I have been conducting an analysis based on discussions at prior meetings regarding how we might improve our competitiveness for national MOWW awards. My objective is to restore the chapter's historical success.

The analysis indicates that our recordkeeping of member attendance at military, community, and veteran events requires enhancement. To address this, we are introducing a new feature on our website designed to more efficiently capture attendance data. Going forward, when you access the events page, a pop-up form will prompt you to provide your name, email address, and allow you to select the events you attended. Completing this process should require only a few seconds and will enable us to maintain accurate attendance records. Your participation in this initiative is greatly appreciated.

Finally, our historian, Ryan Sisak, continues to expand our America 250 virtual library. This week, he will be posting material about the founding of the Marine Corps as well as his interview with former commander and fellow Aggie, LTC Chuck Chamberlin. His next project will focus on Col Ron Forrest and his work related to Russia.

November Luncheon Recap

The Dallas Chapter convened on November 4th for a meaningful and well-attended luncheon filled with updates, recognition, and an engaging message on leadership and trust.

The meeting opened with the invocation by Rev. Dr. Todd Collier, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by HPM Pat Teipel, and the Preamble delivered by Past Commander 2LT Natan Ton-that, USAR (Fmr). Commander CPT Mark W. Smits, USA (Fmr) welcomed members and guests, setting a warm tone for the afternoon.

Highlights included:

- **National Security Update** – Robert Epstein provided timely insights on current U.S. and global security issues.
- **Care Star Recovery & Wellness** – Kevin Ing, Community Veteran Liaison, shared resources available to local veterans and families.
- **JROTC Awards** – Presented by CDR CPT Mark W. Smits, USA (Fmr), recognizing outstanding cadets MSG Edgardo Ramos-Colon and SPC Hector Delgado for their excellence and leadership.

The chapter also proudly conducted the Induction of New Members, welcomed by Senior Vice Commander CDR CPT James D. Runzheimer, USA (Fmr), and Adjutant CW3 Ramón E. Ramos, USA (Fmr). New members included:

- BG David Foley, USA (Ret)
- LTC Marci Miller, USA (Ret)
- MAJ Michael J. Neri, USA (Fmr)
- CW3 James Goodrich, USA (Ret)
- SGT Dan Edelman, USA (Fmr)
- Cpl Larry Allen, USMC (Ret)
- PFC Adam Nieto, USA (Fmr)



The Speaker Series featured a special message from Commander Mark W. Smits titled "Building Trust Through Teamwork." Introduced by Junior Vice Commander LTC Carl D. Wiley, USA (Ret), Commander Smits shared powerful reflections from his military and

corporate leadership journey, emphasizing the enduring value of character, communication, and trust in every level of service.

The meeting concluded with a Question & Answer session, raffle drawing led by HPM Pat Teipel, the benediction by Rev. Dr. Todd Collier, and final adjournment by Commander Smits.

Another strong month of camaraderie, recognition, and purpose for the Dallas Chapter of MOWW.

More Luncheon Photos



November Birthdays

LT Raymond J. Adams – USN (Fmr)
Maj Arden L. Blaylock – USAF (Fmr)
Col Earl M. Buys – USAF (Ret)
Mrs Adele D. Chamberlin
LTC Earl V. Dunnington III – USAR
COL Larry A. Greene – USA (Ret)
Mrs Katherine A. Grogan
Lt Col Phil R. Hardin – USAF (Ret)
Capt William A. Harper – USAF (Fmr)
CW3 James W. Hume – USA (Ret)
Maj Cedric M. Ingram, Sr. – USMC (Ret)
Mr Joseph K. Latimer
LT Philip Eugene Lindley – USNR (Fmr)
Ms Katherine A. Merbler

Ms Georgeann E. Moss
Ms Janie L. Paleschic
Mr Nicholas W. Paleschic
LtCol K. Lawson Pedigo – USMC (Ret)
LtCol David S. Portillo – USMC (Ret)
CPT Dennis J. Sheridan – USA (Fmr)
Brig Gen George L. Schulstad – USAF (Ret)
2LT Natan Anh-Huy Ton-that – USA (Fmr)
Capt David W. Wallace – USAF (Fmr)
Ms Angelesa M. Ward
CPT John D. Waldrop – USA (Ret)
LT Nathan E. White, Jr. – USN (Fmr)
CPT Ronald L. Williams – USA (Fmr)
Col Anthony A. Wood – USAF (Ret)

Upcoming Programs

Register to Attend



December 2

MOWW Christmas Party

"A Celebration of Service, Fellowship, and the Season"

Please join the Dallas Chapter for our annual Christmas Banquet at the Park City Club. This year's celebration features Commander remarks from CPT Mark Smits, USA (Fmr), and a special program by MG James L. Williams, USMC (Ret).

The evening will include a seated dinner, holiday entertainment by the Frascoli Jazz Trio and vocalist Carolyn Carson, and music from Classic Pro DJ for those who wish to dance. It will be a wonderful night of fellowship as we honor our year of service and enjoy the spirit of the season together.

National Security and Homeland Security

THE STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF RARE EARTH ELEMENTS AND CRITICAL MINERALS

By: LtCol Michael W. Menefee, USMCR (Ret)

[Download a PDF copy of the article here](#)

There are seventeen rare earth elements today. Rare earth metals are rare, not because of their scarcity, but because they are found only in compounds in amounts ranging from a few pounds to tons which make mining extremely expensive. These metals are all soft metals which have a white to silver look and are considered soft heavy metals. According to the US Geological Survey (USGS), there are fifty critical minerals to the economy and national security. The USGS also includes fifteen commodities which they believe are essential to our economy and national security. Rare earth metals and critical minerals are necessary for many industries. They are specifically used in these industries - defense, technology, energy, medical, consumer and industrial electronic processes. Batteries, jet engines, electric motors, missile systems, satellites, communication systems, photonics, magnets, fiber-optics, lasers, x-rays, medical imaging, MRIs, radars, and night vision goggles are just some of the uses of rare earth metals and critical minerals. Rare earth elements and critical minerals are essential for computer chip technology used in developing AI.

China is the dominant producer and processor of rare earth metals. China is also a major polluter. Rare earth metals and critical mineral mining operations frequently use open-pit mining which often creates landscape devastation. Many rare earth metals have radioactive elements, which must be monitored and managed to prevent habitat destruction. Soil erosion often results and allows radioactive elements and toxins into the ground water and surface runoff, contaminating the environment. Disposing and managing the radioactive tailings in the production of rare earth metals and critical minerals are a challenge in many third world countries. Reforestation, environmental restoration, and recycling may be necessary to reduce water pollution for the local habitats and inhabitants. The US is challenging China for rare earth metals and critical minerals. China has invested \$57 billion in its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The nineteen BRI countries were promised benefits of mineral extraction but are not told the heavy cost - pollution, corruption, and Chinese ownership. China also controls the production and the supply chain.

Maintaining adequate supply chains and having access to mining, control, and production,

of rare earth metals and critical minerals resources will be necessary for the US and the West to enhance and develop our continued economic and military superiority especially in computer chips and AI development. China has the largest, rare earth metals deposits and produces about seventy-five percent of the rare earth elements. Australia has the largest mining operation of rare earth metals outside of China. Russia also has significant reserves on the Kola peninsula. India, Vietnam, Brazil, Greenland, and Canada also have large deposits. The US is exploring for rare earth and critical mineral deposits, as are other countries. Our enemies would like to develop monopolies on the rare earth metals and critical minerals, as well as mining, production, and control. Developing economic and military alliances with countries which have rare earth metals and critical minerals is essential to US national security. The US must develop domestic stockpiles for future use. Future sources of rare earths include mining other planets and asteroids. As our economy and national security become more linked to our foreign policy, rare earth metals and critical minerals are essential for the US to ensure its preeminent superpower position.

Information for this article was gathered from Open Sources – media, published articles, websites, graphs, charts, and general knowledge of the author. There is no classified information in this article, no known quotations from any source, and this article does not have footnotes or endnotes due to its brevity. The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not reflect official policy or positions of the Military Order of the World Wars (MOWW) or the Dallas Chapter of MOWW.

Honoring LTC Don B. Munson, USA (Ret)

LTC Don B. Munson, USA (Ret)

August 27, 1938 – November 10, 2025

Retired U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel Don Black Munson, a decorated veteran and resident of Dallas, Texas, died of cancer November 10, 2025 (Veterans Day minus one), at the age of 87.



Don was born in Indianapolis, Indiana, on August 27, 1938, to George William “Red” Munson, Senior, and Emily Black Munson. During World War II, his father served in the American Red Cross with troops overseas. Don’s mother lived in Daytona Beach, Florida, with Don and his older brother Bill. Following the war, the reunited Munson family, now including his younger sister Ann, was stationed near military bases in several deep South states.

Don spent formative years in Biloxi, Mississippi, where he graduated from high school in 1956. Don’s high school activities include the Order of DeMolay, student government, sports, theater, and broadcasting at the WLOX radio station. Don was selected to attend the leadership training program Mississippi Boys State following his junior year. As a Senior, Don received numerous scholastic honors, and his peers recognized his warm and gregarious personality by naming him student body president and “Mr. Biloxi High School.” Don then attended Tulane University on a full scholarship. He continued his family’s prowess behind the plate as a catcher for the Tulane baseball team and served as Commander of the Army ROTC Pershing Rifles Drill team. As a Distinguished Military Graduate, he received a Regular Army commission. Years later, he was inducted into the Tulane Hall of Fame. Don graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Communications in 1960. The U.S. Army was a central part of LTC Munson’s life. His military-related training and educational accomplishments included the Infantry Officer Course at Fort Benning, the Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, and a master’s degree in Russian Area Studies from Georgetown University.

LTC Munson’s 22-year military career included the following assignments:

- Infantry Platoon Leader and Company Commander in the 2nd Battalion, 504th Airborne Battle Group, 82nd Airborne Division, at Fort Bragg
- Aide de Camp to the Commanding General of 7th U.S. Army Support Command, Germany
- Commander, Detachment A-1026, 10th Special Forces, Germany

- Commander, Company B, 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, Vietnam
- Professor, Senior ROTC Detachment, University of Delaware
- Commander, Company B, U.S. Army Special Forces, Lop Buri, Thailand
- Chief, Current Intelligence Division, Defense Intelligence Agency, at the Pentagon
- Commander, U.S. Army Airborne School (1st Battalion, 507th Airborne Regiment), Fort Benning
- Commander, U.S. Army Ranger Department, Fort Benning
- Office of the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, at the Pentagon

He was qualified as a Master Parachutist, Army Ranger, Pathfinder, Jumpmaster, and Jungle Warfare Expert. He was awarded Parachutist badges from the Armies of Germany, Belgium, Vietnam, and Thailand. His awards and decorations included the: Silver Star, Distinguished Flying Cross, 2 Bronze Stars for Valor, 11 Air Medals, Purple Heart, Department of Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Joint Chiefs of Staff Joint Service Commendation Medal, and the Department of the Army Meritorious Service Medal. LTC Munson married Marilyn Hession in Delaware in 1969. They welcomed their only child, Mark William Munson, into the family in 1971. The family traveled together to several duty posts in the U.S. and abroad before his retirement in 1983.

Don's second career began with a former Army colleague's real estate development company in DeSoto, TX. Don was presented with a unique opportunity in 1988, when he accepted an offer to lead a year-long exhibition celebrating the 200th anniversary of the U.S. Constitution. The President's Commission on the Bicentennial of the Constitution, chaired by former Supreme Court Chief Justice Earl Warren, tasked Don to lead all operational aspects of this cross-country mobile exhibit that included display of an original version of the Magna Carta, signed and sealed by King John in 1512.

Returning to Texas, Don met and married his second wife, Jo Morris (Joey), an accountant and comptroller. Don and Joey devoted countless hours of service to fundraising, organizing and coordinating the annual Dallas Veterans Day parade for 15 years. From the 1990s to mid-2000s, Don concluded his career by leveraging his extensive military experience in Department of Defense contracts supporting Saudi Arabia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kuwait, and Iraq.

LTC Munson's capstone began in 2007 with his extensive involvement in the Dallas Chapter of the Military Order of World Wars, which focuses on civic and youth engagement in national security, law and order, as well as supporting first-responders and military veterans. LTC Munson produced the organization's national award-winning newsletter for 14 years. He also led and supported the MOWW Youth Leadership Conference at Texas A&M University for 15 years. Don developed a strong camaraderie with many MOWW Companions who supported him through Joey's passing and his recent battle with mucosal melanoma.

Always the storyteller, LTC Munson continued public speaking on military issues as recently as the week before his passing. His selection for the U.S. Vietnam War Commemoration's oral history for the 50th anniversary project will preserve his considerable contributions to his country, which you can watch here https://www.vietnamwar50th.com/history_and_legacy/oral_history/.

LTC Munson is survived by his brother George William Munson Jr. of Baton Rouge, sister Ann Munson Ball of New Orleans, half-sister Brooks O'Connor of Ponchatoula, La., son Mark Munson and his wife Katie and granddaughters Megan and Erin of Alexandria, Virginia, stepson Terry Keith Brown and his wife Christina of The Colony, Texas, and a host of cousins, nephews and nieces.

Don's visitation and memorial service will be held at Rolling Oaks Funeral Home, 400 Freeport Parkway, Coppell, TX. Visitation is from 4-8 p.m., Wednesday, November 19, and the memorial service is at 11 a.m., Thursday, November 20. A brief burial ceremony will occur at the Dallas-Fort Worth National Cemetery. The procession inside the cemetery departs promptly at 1:15 p.m. In lieu of flowers, gifts can be directed to the Military Order of World Wars Youth Leadership Conference at <https://www.dallasmoww.org/fundraising/>.

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