

AGCM Claude R. Mullen, Jr.

Aerographer Mate Master Chief Claude Robert Mullen, Jr., better known as “Moon”, passed away in his home on January 28th, 2026, just 5 days short of his 95th birthday in Thousand Oaks, California.

He is survived by his loving wife, Nadine Klindt Mullen and two children Pamela Long and Jeff Mullen. He will be deeply missed by his family.

He was born February 2, 1931 in Allentown, PA. February 2nd is GroundHogs Day and he always said he was destined to be a meteorologist. He led a full and interesting life with a lot of variety along the way.

As a seventeen year old in Coopersburg, PA in 1948, a US Navy recruiter got his parents signature and he began his basic training at NTC Great Lakes. In June '49 he was selected as an Aerographer Mate striker which he thought was a flying photographer ! During his early career he served on the USS Coral Sea, Block Island and Rehobeth.

In October '52 Moon transitioned to the naval reserve. He had never driven a tractor trailer but bought one from a hometown acquaintance. Twelve days later he started carrying explosives to 42 states. In December, while carrying 600 cases of dynamite through Cedar Rapids, Iowa, through no fault of his own, he hit a Mack diesel carrying 29,000 pounds of hogs. During the two months it took to repair his rig he had a blind date with Nadine Klindt. In June of '53 he moved Nadine to live with his parents in Centre Valley, PA and they married September 27th, 1953. They would end up spending 72 years together.

In June of 1960 Moon returned to active duty with orders to Trinidad, British West Indies. This began their long naval life together. Nadine said she would move the family 20 times but she exaggerates, it was really only 19! On Saturday nights in Trinidad Moon was “The Trinidad Nite-Mayor” disk jockey (11pm-3am) for Armed Forces Radio, WVDI. This gave him the skill and experience to provide shipboard and Naval base television weather briefings throughout the rest of his career.

The first part of his career was on the east coast. In the mid 60's he was with the Aerial Ice Reconnaissance Office flying over the North Pole, Alaska, Greenland, Iceland and Norway plotting ice and guiding ships. He was also unofficially flying the plane as a copilot trainee and loving it. Off duty he played fast and slow pitch softball. Moon made Chief Petty Officer in September 1966. While in Norfolk he started the Navy Norfolk Flying Club and served as manager.

In March 1969 Moon was transferred to the other side of the planet to Guam and the VW-1 Typhoon Trackers. From the ice to the tropics chasing typhoons and measuring wind speeds up to 155 mph. In the off season they flew classified missions out of DaNang and

Chulai South Vietnam. He received two Air Medals for this service. At home in NAS Agana, Guam he served as check pilot for the Navy Flying Club and was manager of the Chief's softball team.

1972 transferred to Pacific Missile Test Center in Pt. Mugu, CA as leading Chief and Senior Forecaster. Advanced to Master Chief. Umpired and played fast and slow pitch softball 6 games per week.

In 1975 was one of the original group that started the Naval Weather Service Association (NWSA) in Lakehurst, NJ.

May 1975 transferred to Bureau of Naval Personnel, Washington DC as Detailer for all 1600+ Aerographer Mates in the USN. In October 1978 retired from US Navy with 30 years of service. From DC Moon and Nadine made their final move to Thousand Oaks, California where Nadine still resides in the same beautiful home.

While in Washington DC he used his years of accumulated experience to earn his FAA Commercial, Instrument and Multiengine Pilot licenses.

Moon's passion for weather and aviation came together in his next job as weather forecaster for Continental Airlines at LAX Airport from 1978-1983. He personally briefed the pilots before their flights.

Continental Airlines closed down their meteorology department in 1983 so Moon returned to government service as a GS-9 in Pt. Mugu. He ended up with a very rewarding second career there as a meteorologist and also flying aboard helicopters for atmospheric research with missions in Kauai, Hawaii, Puerto Rico and Wallops Island, VA. He retired from the Dept of Defense as a GS-11.

In early 1996, just to make sure he didn't get bored, Moon and son, Jeff bought a Mail Boxes, Etc. franchise and built a new store near Thousand Oaks. Moon managed the store providing friendly service 50 hours a week until they sold it 10 years later.

This finally gave Moon the time to relax and do things he really enjoyed. He became a Docent at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library in Simi Valley. He learned all about President Reagan and became an expert in the library. His favorite was giving tours of the Boeing 707 Air Force One.

Another thing Moon loved was softball. He joined Senior Softball USA in 2000 and played until 2013. In addition to weekly local games he and Nadine travelled all over Europe, Japan and the Caribbean touring with their team.

When writing his biography Moon finished with: "It's been a great life, but the best part has been meeting so many great people in the service. Thanks to each of you! And particularly to my wonderful wife Nadine."