

# Tribute to Lt Col Stephen “Muddy” Watters, USMC (Ret.)

Muddy Watters, who served the AOC in many capacities and most recently as AOC President from 2018 to 2020, passed away on 5 March 2022. We say goodbye to one of the EW Community's staunchest champions.

After graduating from Western Colorado University in 1979, Muddy joined the US Marine Corps and embarked on a distinguished 35-year career in EW. He was an Honor Graduate and Outstanding Student of the 453d EW Course at Mather AFB, CA, and served as an EA-6B aviator in various VMAQ squadrons during his years of military service. He flew combat missions in Desert Shield, Desert Storm, Operations Deny Flight and Deliberate Force. His awards and accomplishments included Nine Air Medals, three for valor in combat; lead briefer for Marine Corps Suppression of Enemy Air Defense Lessons Learned for Bosnia; US lead for NATO Suppression of Enemy Air Defense training and coordination; and Instructor of the Year – Instructor Hall of Fame Landing Forces Training Command Pacific. In 1996, he earned an MA in National Security and Strategic Studies (with honors) from the US Naval War College and later was selected as commander of Marine Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron 3 (VMAQ-3) at MCAS Cherry Point, NC.

After retiring from the Marine Corps, Muddy held various industry positions and participated in several high-level EW studies for OSD and NSA, including the 2002 Airborne Electronic Attack Analysis of Alternatives (AEA AOA) study. During the Iraq War, Muddy provided support to the Joint Staff J-65 for Counter IED (Improvised Explosive Devices) and also served as Director of the Technical Analysis Group at the Joint IED Defeat Organization (JIEDDO). RCIEDs were a relatively new threat to US troops, and Muddy was a strong

advocate for developing a counter-RCIED strategy because he knew that EW systems could be effective at saving soldiers' lives. Muddy later served as the Senior Manager for Cyber and EW at Raytheon Advanced Missile Systems in Tucson, AZ, where he worked on advanced EW concepts and technologies.

During his career in Industry, Muddy became more involved with the AOC and was a strong advocate for STEM education. Muddy believed that students (future Crows) needed to be engaged at an early age, and he helped build the foundation for what the AOC STEM program is today. It was his vision to create the learning stations and the hands on "petting zoo," as he liked to call it, at the AOC's International Symposium and Convention.

Muddy's tenure as AOC President was very popular, and all 67 AOC chapters and over 14,000 members benefitted from his inspirational leadership. Every EW advocate, regardless of service or of company affiliation, counted Muddy as a fighter in their ranks. Muddy always handled himself with great competence and confidence, whether addressing congressional representatives, military and civilian leaders or young STEM students.

Muddy has earned our farewell salute for a job well done. He was one of our very best and brightest EW professionals, and we will miss him dearly. Semper Fi.

*Glenn "Powder" Carlson*

President, Association of Old Crows