



## Donald Rexford White-Smallwood

October 28, 1943 - April 24, 2026

Donald Rexford White-Smallwood passed away at home on Friday the 24th of April, 2026 at the age of 82. He was the son of Bessie Greer and Russell Smallwood, born on October 28th of 1943. Later raised with the help of his stepdad, Ray Cable, from early childhood. He leaves behind three children (Steven, Jennifer, and Redd), two grandchildren (Ryan and Gavin), three siblings (Billie, Russ, and Jerrie), a son-in-law (Joe), a large beloved extended family, and an extensive network of friends and pets. From his first marriage to Lucinda came his son Steven and daughter Jennifer, who went on to have Ryan and Gavin respectively. Later he married Valerie, and they had Redd (formerly Abigail).

He is now able to visit with those who preceded him in death, including his wife of 41 years, Valerie Anne White-Smallwood, his brother Mike, his parents, and many others.

As a very driven and hardworking person, he started his career in the Airforce at seventeen years old and continued through twenty years to retire as a E6 Technical Sergeant. His favorite part of being in the service was making friends and seeing the world, and he felt fulfillment being the best airplane mechanic he could be. Something he always remembered fondly was working with the military museums and acquiring interesting vehicles for them. His own religious beliefs were modeled by his upbringing as Christian and his time traveling through Asia, where he was introduced to Buddhism and incorporated that into his views. These views led him to many short-term

volunteering positions and jobs in and out of various military postings, but he was most proud of his work building houses for people with Leprosy, and coaching sports for his kids. Donating time and money made him feel like he was helping to balance any negative karma, and his generosity continued throughout his life.

After his retirement from active duty in the Airforce, Don and Val made the most of the GI bill and got bachelor's degrees together at Shawnee State University. Around college his love of the outdoors and Val's love of camping grew into a decades-long tradition of spending weeks 'roughing-it' every year and adventuring around the country. They had many fun hours of spelunking, off-roading, hiking, and enjoying nature, especially in Vermont with Val's family and Idaho with his friends from the Airforce. Using his mechanical engineering degree to help him get a career at Honda of America, he worked in multiple branches and held several positions, including training in Japan and helping train workers in multiple newly opened plants in America. Twenty-seven years later he retired from Honda and got to spend more time with Val at home. One solid through line to his life was a deep love of cars and vehicles in general, including radio-controlled vehicles, model trains, miniatures, museums about vehicles, racing in all forms, history of transportation, driving extraordinary distances, enjoying car shows/expos, and enthusing with anyone who was interested, especially his brother Russ. As an open and friendly person, it was easy for him to share his passion and vast knowledge. Some notable special skills of his are (in an inexhaustive list): accurate car diagnostics from a ~five-minute drive in any car, identifying make/model/year of (almost) any car from just the headlights in the dark, naming most planes/helicopters make/model/specs from just the silhouette, fixing most things himself at home, working ~eighty-four hour work weeks for many months at a time, learning how to speak conversational Thai and Japanese while being unable to understand almost all European accented English, re-naming any and all pets to more catchy/accurate names, giving maddeningly ambiguous answers to all questions involving aliens/military

secrets/drugs/disco/advanced technologies/financial info, having the grip strength of Hephaestus, ironing with military precision, and creating a character using so many cheat codes that he accidentally killed the titular final boss in Diablo with one random arrow shot into the dark.

Donald will be sorely missed as a warm presence and hilarious commentator, and a celebration of life will be held for both him and Val in early July 2026 with details to be posted soon to social media and by mail. Any donations in his honor should be made out to the Auglaize County Humane Society or to any local veteran's charity near you.

# Tribute Wall



“ *May the love of God surround you and your family during this difficult time,  
May you come to know that the love of God is with you always,*

*May your memories of Donald Rexford White-Smallwood, give you peace, comfort and strength...*

*Rest now in the arms of our Lord your mission on earth is complete.  
I thank you for your service to our Country and my Freedom.  
You will not be forgotten...*

*My thoughts  
and prayers to the family of ....*

*US Veteran, Donald Rexford White-Small Wood, is “A True American Hero” God Bless†*

*† Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. John 15:13 †*

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**Cheryl Skinner, Tri-state Military Museum - April 27 at 07:31 AM**