



*Retirement ceremony  
in honor of*

*Master Sergeant  
John G. Shirron*

*14 October 2006  
Portland Air National Guard Base  
Portland, Oregon*

## *Schedule of Events*

*Arrival of the Official Party*

*Welcoming Remarks*

*Presentations*

- *Federal Awards*
- *Retirement Certificates*
- *Letters of Appreciation*
- *Gifts for Retiree and Spouse*

*Departing Remarks*

*Departure of the Official Party*

*Reception*

## *“Old Glory”*

I am the flag of the United States of America. My name is “Old Glory”. I fly atop the world’s tallest buildings. I stand watch in America’s halls of justice. I fly majestically over great institutions of learning. I stand guard with the greatest military power in the world. Look up! And see me.

I stand for peace – honor – truth and justice. I stand for freedom. I am confident – I am arrogant – I am proud. When flown with my fellow banners, my head is a little higher – my colors a little truer – I bow to no one!

I am recognized all over the world. I am worshipped – I am loved – I am feared!

I have fought in every battle of every war for more than 200 years: Gettysburg, Shilo, Appomattox, San Juan Hill, the trenches of France, the Argonne Forest, Anzio, Rome, the beaches of Normandy, Guam, Okinawa, Japan, Vietnam, in the Persian Gulf and a score of places long forgotten by all but those who were there with me. I was there.

I led my soldiers – I followed them – I watched over them – they loved me. I was on a small hill in Iwo Jima. I was dirty, battle worn and tired-but my soldiers cheered me-and I was proud!

I have been soiled, burned, torn and trampled on the streets of countries that I have helped set free. It does not hurt – for I am invincible.

I have been soiled, burned, torn and trampled on the streets of my own country – and when it is by those with whom I have served in battle – it hurts. But I shall overcome – for I am strong! I have slipped the bonds of earth and from my vantage point on the moon, I stand watch over the uncharted new frontiers of space.

I have been a silent witness to all of America’s finest hours. But my finest hour comes when I am torn in strips to be used as bandages for my wounded comrades on the field of battle. When I fly at half-mast to honor my soldiers, and – when I lie in the trembling arms of a grieving mother, at the graveside of her fallen son or daughter.

I am proud. My name is “Old Glory” – Long may I wave – Dear God – Long may I wave.



## History of the Shadow Box

The tradition of presenting the shadow box to a retiring military member is born of an early British Navy custom. In the days of sail, when England ruled the seas, it was considered bad luck for a sailor, upon final departure from a ship, to allow his shadow to hit the pier before he himself departed the ship. In order to ensure no such misfortune would befall their shipmate, the crew would construct a box of the finest timber and place within it all things, which reflected his accomplishments. Only then could the sailor, with the "shadow" of himself in hand, safely depart the ship and go ashore once and for all.

John G. Shirron was born in Floriana, Malta in 1964, the third of four children. He spent several of his formative years living in the Vancouver, Washington area. In April 1972 John was attending Peter S. Ogden Elementary School when it was struck by a tornado and destroyed. John went back to Malta several times during his youth where he attended a British Military School. During one of these trips John witnessed a RAF Vulcan plane crash in the town of Zabbar. While living in Malta, John attended a summer camp in Italy. John also traveled to Egypt, Turkey, Rhodes, Greece, and Austria. John then moved to Arkansas in 1977 and lived back and forth between Locust Bayou, Arkansas and Vancouver, Washington. John Finally graduated from Hampton High School, Hampton, Arkansas.

John joined the US Air Force in September 1982. After completion of Basic Military Training at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas he attended Technical School at Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas to be a Telecommunications Operations Specialist. John's first assignment was with the 1905<sup>th</sup> Communications Squadron at McChord Air Force Base, Washington. His next assignment took him to Murted Airbase, Turkey for a year long remote tour with Detachment 17, 2006 Communications Group. After that he was assigned to the 552<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Warning and Control Wing located at Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma. While assigned here, John went TDY several times to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia in support of Operation Elf-One during the Iraq – Iran conflict. He was then transferred to the 1982<sup>nd</sup> Communications Squadron in Kunsan Air Base, Korea. His final active duty assignment was with the 23<sup>rd</sup> Combat Communications Squadron located at Patrick Air Force Base, Florida. While assigned to Patrick, John once again deployed to Saudi Arabia, this time during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. John left active duty in 1992 and joined the Oregon Air National Guard and was assigned to the 272<sup>nd</sup> Combat Communications Squadron as a Telecommunications Operations Specialist. John cross trained to the Crypto Maintenance section in 1996 and attended Technical Training at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas where he was honored as a Distinguished Graduate. John Transferred to COMSEC in 2000. In 2002 John was selected to be the unit First Sergeant and attended the First Sergeant's Academy at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. John was then transferred to the job control section and then finally to Quality Assurance. John is the Unit Marksmanship Coordinator and has competed in numerous shooting competitions on the local, state and national level.

John is currently on active duty with the Oregon National Guard's Counterdrug Support Program and has been with them full time since 1993. His first Assignment was with the Oregon State Police Youth Gang Strike Force. He was then transferred to the Gresham Police Department's Gang Unit. He was then transferred to the United States Attorney's office to be a part of the Treasury Financial Crimes task Force. He was then transferred to the Portland Police Bureau's Drug and Vice Division. He was then assigned to the Drug Demand Reduction Program. He was then asked to go back to the United States Attorney's Office to be a part of the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force.

John has been awarded the following: The Air Force Commendation Medal, the Air Force Achievement Medal with four Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters, the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Valor with one Silver Oak Leaf Cluster and two Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters, the Combat Readiness Medal with one Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster, the Air Force Good Conduct Medal with two Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters, the Air Reserve Forces Meritorious Service Medal with two Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters, the National Defense Service Medal with 1 Bronze Campaign Star, the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, the South West Asia Service Medal with two Bronze Campaign Stars, the Global War On Terrorism Service Medal, The Korean Defense Service Medal, the Air Force Overseas Short Tour Ribbon with two Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters, the Air Force Longevity Service Award Ribbon with three Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters, the Armed Forces Reserve Medal, the NCO Professional Military Education Graduate Ribbon, the Small Arms Expert Marksmanship Ribbon with one Bronze Star, the Air Force Training Ribbon, the Kuwait Liberation Medal from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Kuwait Liberation Medal from the Government of Kuwait, the Oregon Meritorious Service Medal with 1 Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster, the Oregon Commendation Medal and the Oregon Faithful Service Ribbon.

**Dates of Promotion:**

Airman Basic	01 September 1982
Airman	01 March 1983
Airman First Class	01 September 1983
Senior Airman	01 September 1985
Buck Sergeant	01 August 1986
Staff Sergeant	08 April 1993
Technical Sergeant	18 January 1996
Master Sergeant	03 April 2000

## THE NCO CREED

No one is more professional than I. I am a Noncommissioned Officer, a leader of people. I am proud of the Noncommissioned Officer corps and will, at all times, conduct myself so as to bring credit upon it. I will not use my grade or position to attain profit or safety.

Competence is my watchword. I will strive to remain tactically and technically proficient. I will always be aware of my role as a Noncommissioned Officer. I will fulfill my responsibilities and display professionalism at all times. I will strive to know my people and use their skills to the maximum degree possible. I will always place their needs above my own and will communicate with my supervisor and my people and never leave them uninformed.

I will exert every effort and risk any ridicule to successfully accomplish my assigned duties. I will not look at a person and see any race, creed, color, religion, sex, age, or national origin, for I will only see the person; nor will I ever show prejudice or bias. I will lead by example and will resort to disciplinary action only when necessary. I will carry out the orders of my superiors to the best of my ability and will always obey the decisions of my superiors.

I will give all officers my maximum support to ensure mission accomplishments. I will earn their respect, obey their orders, and establish a high degree of integrity with them. I will exercise initiative in the absence of orders and will make decisive and accurate decisions.

I will never compromise my integrity, nor my moral courage.

I will not forget that I am a Professional, a Leader, but  
above all a

**Noncommissioned Officer.**