

Gary Michael Smith

Gary Michael Smith was born in Shelby, Ohio on April 14, 1946. The majority of his youth was spent in Ashland, Ohio before his family moved to Bakersfield, California in 1962. He graduated from South Bakersfield High in 1964 and enlisted in the U.S. Air Force shortly thereafter. He took his 1st phase of basic training at Lackland AFB, Texas and was then assigned to Lowry AFB, Colorado where he completed his 2nd phase of basic training and was promoted to Airman 3rd Class. Gary was then assigned to the Nuclear Weapons school at Lowry AFB and was trained as a Nuclear Weapons Specialist. Upon completion of his training in April 1965, he was promoted to Airman 2nd Class and assigned to the 445th FIS at Wurtsmith AFB, Michigan. In 1967 he was promoted to the newly created rank of Sergeant (previously called Airman 1st Class and since changed to Senior Airman).



Gary left the Air Force after 4 years in July 1968 to pursue a career with IBM Corporation in Saginaw, Michigan as a Field Engineer servicing telecommunications and computer equipment. In 1977, he had the opportunity to join the start-up team of a newly formed subsidiary of IBM called Satellite Business Systems (SBS), a long distance telecommunications company. He was assigned to Los Gatos, California during the company's pre-operational phase as a Service Representative responsible for service and repair of a satellite earth station. While in the field, he developed the first instructional courses for new Service Representatives and Network Controllers and was promoted to Staff Engineer and transferred to SBS Headquarters in McLean, Virginia early in 1979. Upon arriving at Headquarters, Gary played a major role in redesigning the Network Control Center and establishing its first operational procedures and guidelines. Over the next 7 years he held several different staff and management positions – his last position being Senior Manager of the company's Network Control Center. In 1986, SBS was acquired by MCI Telecommunications, another long distance telecommunications company. Again, Gary held several positions as Senior Manager and Senior Project Manager. In 1998, MCI was acquired by WorldCom – again, another long distance telecommunications company. Over the next 4 years, Gary led several development efforts that produced new products/services for the company. He was recognized several times as one of the company's top performing engineers and was promoted to Advisory Engineer.

After leaving WorldCom in 2002, Gary continued to pursue his educational goals and was certified by Microsoft as a Database Administrator, Applications Developer and Solutions Developer. He also received his Project Management Professional (PMP) certification from the Project Management Institute (PMI) and is a member of the local PMI Chapter in Dallas. In addition to his certifications, Gary attended the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) and graduated Magna Cum Laude in 2005 with a Bachelor of Business Administration degree majoring in Management. Gary continued his education and in June 2008, he earned a Master of Science in Information Technology (MSIT) degree majoring in Project Management from the University of Management and Technology.

Gary joined The American Legion on July 21, 2005 and transferred to Post 111 in Cedar Hill, Texas on August 16, 2006. After transferring to Post 111, he volunteered to take over Webmaster responsibilities and subsequently developed a new website, which has garnered awards from the Texas American Legion Press Association (TEXALPA). At the Post level, he has served as

Webmaster since 2006, Hubmaster since 2009, Vice Commander 2007-2008, Commander 2008-2010 and 2012-2013, Adjutant 2010-2011 and 2014-2016, 1st Vice Commander 2011-2012, and Finance Officer since 2013. At the 5th District level, he redesigned the District's website and has served as Webmaster since 2010, Hubmaster 2009-2015, Legislative Chairman 2010-2011, Co-Chairman 2013 Department Convention, 5th District Vice Commander 2011-2013, 5th District Commander 2013 – 2015 attaining Department's Top District Commander award 2014. At the 1st Division level, he was appointed as the 1st Division Hubmaster for 2011-2013, developed the Division's website in 2011, and Historian 2016-2017, and 1st Division Vice Commander for 2017-2018. At the Department of Texas level, he served as a member of the Legislative Council from 2010-2011, appointed 2013 Convention General Vice Chairman, and was appointed member of the American Legion Baseball committee for 2016-2017 and Committee Chairman for 2017-2018. At the National level he was appointed member of the VA&R Council and has served since 2014. Gary is also a member of SAL Squadron 111 and was elected as Squadron Historian for 2012-2013 and Finance Officer 2014- 2018. At the District level, he was elected 5th District Adjutant 2015-2019. As a member of TEXALPA, he has held the following positions: TEXALPA Vice President – 1st Division 2011-2012, President for 2012-2014, and Secretary/Treasurer 2015-2017. To further expand his knowledge of The American Legion, he took The American Legion Extension Institute Course and received a certificate of completion. He also attended the Department Legion College and received a diploma and attended the Department's Commander School each year 2011-2014. In November of 2016, Gary was certified by National to be a Trainer in the Department of Texas. Gary is a Paid-Up-For-Life (PUFL) member of The American Legion.

In addition to being a member of Post 111, Gary is also a member of the Texas University at Arlington Alumni Association, a Benefactor member of the National Rifle Association (NRA), a past member of the Project Management Institute (PMI) Dallas chapter, a past member of the American Society for the Advancement of Project Management (asapm is the U.S.A. member affiliate of the International Project Management Association (IPMA)), a member of the Texas Border Volunteers, a member of the TEXALPA, a member of the National American Legion Press Association (NALPA), and a life member of the Beta Gamma Sigma and Alpha Chi honor societies. Gary also holds General Amateur Radio (HAM - K2GMS) and General Mobile Radio Service (GMRS – WQKJ896) licenses and belongs to The American Legion Amateur Radio Club, the American Radio Relay League (ARRL) and the Ellis County Amateur Radio Club (ECARC).

Gary is currently semi-retired and is available to businesses (on a contract basis) that are in need of a certified Senior Project Manager to manage their software development activities.

Gary currently resides with his wife, Laura, and the family pets Chigger (dog) and Bazzie and Flossie (cats), in a country setting outside Midlothian, Texas. They enjoy traveling, fishing, boating and camping; and, Gary likes to hunt. Gary has one grown son, Gary Jr., living in Las Vegas, Nevada who served in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1987 to 1991. During that time his son was deployed to Panama (Operation Just Cause) and to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait during Desert Shield and Desert Storm.