

Top court officer Walter Glowacz hangs hat after 38 years of mob trials, celebrity arraignments

Glowacz kept order during Dominique Strauss-Kahn media circus and helped secure temporary courts after Hurricane Sandy.

By [Shayna Jacobs](#) / NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

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Photo Credit: Jefferson Siegel

Walter Glowacz, a Vietnam veteran who served in the Navy, plans to spend his retirement with his new grandson and family.

He courted danger for decades and loved every second of it.

After 38 years as the head of security and operations for some of the nation's busiest courthouses, Chief Walter Glowacz retired Wednesday to praise from friends and colleagues. More than 100 officers and staffers lined up near the steps of 100 Centre Street, Manhattan's main criminal court building, where he began his career in 1978.

"It has been such a great ride," Glowacz after the teary goodbye. "Every day with the great people I worked with, it has been an honor."

In recent memory, Glowacz, 63, deftly handled an unprecedented media and security scrum — that the world was watching in 2011 — for fallen financier Dominique Strauss-Kahn.



Photo Credit: Jefferson Siegel

During Walter Glowacz's 38 years, he worked the arraignment of Mark David Chapman, the trial of John Gotti and many others.

"DSK was through the roof," Glowacz recalled of the appearances that flooded the courthouse with more press than it had ever seen. "I just wanted to make sure that everybody got to go home safe that night."

He also helped get arraignments up and running when courts were crippled by Superstorm Sandy and saw court appearances of the famous perps of tabloid glory including "Teflon Don" John Gotti, "Subway Vigilante" Bernhard Goetz. He even worked the arraignment of Mark David Chapman, John Lennon's killer as an arraignments lieutenant.

"He has been the point person on just about every high profile case in New York City and we have had our fair share," said David Bookstaver, spokesman for the state court system.



Photo Credit: Jefferson Siegel

New York's Chief Court Officer Walter Glowacz (right) waves goodbye as he leaves the Manhattan Court building with a gathering of 100 uniformed officers.

His colleagues describe him as a pro under the pressure, who kept hundreds of people safe and calm in tense situations.

"He basically ran the busiest courthouses probably in the world and definitely in the United States," said Chief Joseph Baccellieri, a longtime friend and colleague.

"He's genuinely a fine officer and gentleman," added Major Thomas Garvey of Manhattan Criminal Court, who has known Glowacz for 31 years. "He's the best boss you could ever work for."



Photo Credit: Jefferson Siegel

Walter Glowacz (right), the Chief Court Officer of New York City, leaves the Manhattan Court building for the last time on Wednesday. Glowacz, affectionately known as Chief Wally, served for over 38 years.

Glowacz left the courthouse for the day with his son, Walter Glowacz Jr., 27, who was inspired by his dad to become a court officer.

"It has been a real honor to follow in his footsteps," Glowacz Jr. said. "I'm very proud of him."

Glowacz, a Vietnam veteran who served in the Navy, plans to spend his retirement with his new grandson and family. He said he'll occupy his time with golf and some part time consulting work, but will miss his time on the job and has told his family he wants to be buried in the uniform he proudly donned for decades.

"I couldn't have asked for a better career," he said. "I wouldn't have changed one day."

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