



SES promotion ceremony, second in two weeks for Hill Air Force Base

By Lee Anne Hensley
Hilltop Times staff

Sue Dryden, 309th Maintenance Wing vice director, was promoted to Senior Executive Service rank in a ceremony held Jan. 15 at the Hill Aerospace Museum Fighter Gallery, Hill Air Force Base, Utah. One week prior, an SES ceremony was held for her colleague, Angie Tymofichuk, director of the Ogden Air Logistics Center Engineering Directorate.

Mark Johnson, Ogden Air Logistics Center (OO-ALC) executive director, presided over Dryden's ceremony in place of Debra Walker, fellow member of the SES and Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Logistics, who is currently performing the duties of the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Installations, Environment and Logistics, Washington, D.C.

Walker could not attend last week's ceremony due to illness, but sent congratulatory remarks to Dryden in a letter that Johnson read during the ceremony.

"You are the epitome of what the Air Force needs in its leaders today," Walker said of Dryden. "Not only do you live the Air Force Core Values of 'Integrity First,' 'Service Before Self' and 'Excellence in All We Do,' but you do it with compassion, style and enthusiasm."

Dryden's application for the SES rank competed against 31 others, and she was selected out of seven applicants who made the



ALEX R. LLOYD/U.S. Air Force

Maj. Gen. Andrew Busch, Ogden Air Logistics Center commander, hands the Senior Executive Service flag to Sue Dryden, 309th Maintenance Wing vice director, during her promotion ceremony Jan. 15 at the Hill Aerospace Museum. The SES flag will be displayed at official ceremonies attended by Ms. Dryden to indicate the presence of an SES official.

final consideration.

Johnson noted that Dryden first entered the Air Force as an Airman basic rank in 1978, and ever since then she has worked her way up from being a jet engine mechanic to her current role of overseeing maintenance operations under the 309th MXW.

After accepting the SES appointment certificate and oath of office from Maj. Gen. Andrew Busch, OO-ALC commander, Dryden attributed the honor of her promotion to those who "helped 'raise me up,' as we say in the South."

Among those Dryden thanked for providing training and support were friends, family, community members and Air Force leadership.

"Today is not about me," said Dryden. "It's about family, friends, civilian and military members, the community -- all who have taken the time, effort and sacrifice to 'raise me up.' ... I am proud and humbled for this opportunity to be a member of the Senior Executive Service."

This SES promotion ceremony was the fourth of its kind for Hill Air Force Base.

The 309th Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Group, located at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz. is aligned under the 309th Maintenance Wing at Hill Air Force Base and reports directly to the commander, Brig. Gen. Cooper and vice director, Ms. Sue Dryden.

Reprinted with permission from the author, article date January 21, 2010.



Modifications on the supersonic B-1B bomber continue at 309 AMARG in compliance with the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), currently undergoing renegotiation. Boeing personnel are rendering the B-1B no longer capable of carrying long-range nuclear air-launch cruise missiles and are installing an advanced targeting pod, the Lockheed Martin SNIPER. The process will continue through August 2010.

Inspired by cannibals

Commentary by Staff Sgt. Vanessa Young

Defense Media Activity-San Antonio

In October, I went to cover a story at the 309th Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Group facility on Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz. Thousands of retired Air Force, Navy and coalition aircraft are retired at this "bone yard." Pilots used these aircraft to shoot down MiGs in the Vietnam War, patrol New York City after 9/11 and transport servicemembers home from Operation Iraqi Freedom. I was impressed by the history parked in this desert facility.

Then I met the maintainers who worked there, and I was in awe.

These maintainers don't perform typical aircraft maintenance. These maintainers tear these "old birds" apart and cannibalize their parts so they can be reused in the active fleet. On any given day they could cut the wings off of an F-15 Eagle, remove avionics from a C-130 Hercules or pull the wheels from an A-10 Thunderbolt II; all in an effort to regenerate the Air Force inventory.

Aircraft maintenance on a typical flightline is labor intensive and at times dangerous. These mechanics don't work on a typical flightline. There are no hangars to shield them from the 110 degree desert heat. The facilities' fences don't keep out the rattlesnakes, scorpions and other animals common to a

desert climate. And since parts are constantly being removed, when they enter an aircraft they have to be extra vigilant for missing floor panels, protruding wires and decrepit components that could fall off the aircraft.

None of these maintainers are active-duty military; however, most of them are former Air Force or Navy aircraft maintainers. I spoke with a few of the maintainers who have been turning wrenches since the Vietnam War -- tearing apart the same aircraft they were charged with keeping in the air.

Why would these guys still want to do this after all of these years?

The bad economy? Possibly. But looking in their eyes and listening to them talk about the aircraft they work on, the challenges they face and the Airmen they help, I knew it was something more.

It's something more than overtime pay that makes them stay after hours or come in on the weekend to get a critical part to an Airman downrange. It's something more than the opportunity to work on aircraft that keeps them working under the extreme conditions of the Arizona desert.

The white overalls they wear today have replaced the battle uniforms of their day, but it is evident their commitment to the mission hasn't changed. Almost everyone I spoke with told me how proud they were to still be able to support Airmen, but played down the

fact that they were, at times, as integral to keeping an aircraft in the air.

I expected to be impressed by the thousands of planes. I expected to be humbled by the history of the aircraft. I even expected to be completely dwarfed by disassembled C-5 Galaxies.

I didn't expect to be inspired by the dedication of these aircraft "cannibals."

My mission was to write about how the "bone yard" saved the Air Force money. I quickly realized this story was about more than a money-saving storage facility; it's the people who make this organization successful. For all the time they spend in the sun, these civilian Airmen deserve their time in the limelight.

To the men and women of the 309th Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Group: thank you for your service.

Reprinted with permission from the author, article date January 12, 2010

Staff Sgt. Vanessa Young's story, *Aircraft Cannibals*, may be found in Airman Magazine's January/February 2010 edition; <http://www.airmanonline.af.mil/news/story.asp?id=123184159>

Advertising

Maintenance discipline; more than pride in workmanship

By Gregory R. Barnes

Chief, Aircraft Disposal Flight, 578th Storage and Disposal Squadron

As one looks across the 2600 acres of aircraft stored here at AMARG, personal thoughts usually come to mind about the history behind each aircraft or perhaps, how many maintenance hours may have gone into keeping them flying safely through the years. Sometimes, just wonder and amazement is all we can think about. Nevertheless, over 4000 symbols of freedom, strength, determination and accomplishment grace these desert grounds. So many lives affected, so many stories to tell, and so many examples of what went right in aircraft maintenance.

But what about when things went wrong? As we reflect upon our accomplishments, we must also remember and learn from our sacrifices. We must never forget the Airmen and aircraft the Air Force lost due to inattention to detail--the result of not properly following technical data or overall poor maintenance discipline practices.

Maintenance discipline, often directed towards individual maintainers to do the right thing, encompasses a much broader scope than a technician doing his or her best or having pride in workmanship. These characteristics, although essential, mainly

apply to each of us internally.

Maintenance discipline also applies externally through meaningful and relevant maintenance policies coupled with active management and



supervisory involvement to ensure compliance with established policies.

There must be a conscious effort to ensure proper maintenance practices throughout the entire organization. For example, management must ensure availability of serviceable tools and support equipment to prevent and discouraged unsafe workarounds or shortcuts. There must be strong Quality Assurance and Safety programs.

Additionally, management must ensure there are enough adequately trained personnel as they are the foundation of a good maintenance program. Without a doubt, maintainers at every level of leadership are accountable and contribute to proper maintenance discipline. It's definitely a team approach!

This discipline, or work ethic concept, applies to every Air Force Airman. A mishap of any kind in any career field could cost lives or waste valuable resources. We must keep asking ourselves if we are performing our jobs correctly; if we are following all regulatory guidance; if there are better ways to meet the mission; if our personnel are trained appropriately; and, if we are following up as required, etc. Discipline takes work and there are no holidays.

Today, as we witness AMARG's aircraft resting patiently, waiting for a chance to fly again, in whole or in part, know their mere presence is a testament to the many years of dedication, service, diligence and sacrifices of our aircraft maintainers; both past and present.

Having ensured a long, productive, and safe service life for these national assets was maintenance discipline at its best. That discipline continues through the life of the aircraft at AMARG.

Advertising

Advertising