Damage controlman master chief retires in blaze of glory

Story and photo by Jeffrey C. Doepp, CFAY Public Affairs

After more than 30 years of loyal and dedicated service to the Navy, Master Chief Damage Controlman (SW/AW) David D. Singer retired during what may be considered a highly unique retirement ceremony held at the Center for Naval Engineering Learning Site on board Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka Oct. 21.

Move over skydiving or underwater reenlistments. Get out of the way in-flight helicopter or top of Mount Fuji retirement ceremonies; this is one for the ages. Singer retired while fighting a fire.

But wait, the originality didn't begin there as Singer and his Commanding Officer Capt. Curtis J. Gilbert kicked off the ceremony by riding Harley Davidson motorcycles, into the fire school. Both Singer and Gilbert are motorcycle enthusiasts.

"The first time I had ever heard about Master Chief Singer was about three years ago and probably about six months before I was even going to come to Japan," Gilbert said during his opening remarks. "The guy I was relieving, Captain Carpenter, said 'I know a guy who rides motorcycles' so we started exchanging emails and a few months later I was finally able to meet the master chief. He helped me get my bike in and got me off my butt to help me get that bike registered. Then he got me off the base to get out riding around the country and see what a beautiful place this is. So, I thank you for that."

More than 200 people attended the ceremony including members of the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force, Singer's two daughters Nicole and Lynn and his brother Paul, who travelled from the state of Washington for the event. *USS Patriot* (MCM 7) Command Master Chief Michael D. Kaszubowski, a long-time friend of Singer, was guest speaker.

"It is such an honor for me to not only be here, but be able to say a few words to someone who has not only seen me grow as a Sailor but be a mentor as well," Kaszubowski said. "I have known Dave for a little more than 16 years now. Dave was my first LCPO (leading chief petty officer) in the Navy. I remember when Dave made senior chief followed by master chief. It says a lot about a Sailor who makes master chief in the year the Navy only promoted one. His passion for taking care of his Sailors and doing the right thing, even when faced with an obstacle, is what sets him apart. I would not be where I am today if it wasn't for his leadership and most important, his friendship."

According to Gilbert, Singer provided a well-rounded sounding board that was needed for unbiased opinions.

"He always told it like it was," Gilbert said. "His one main goal has always been to help make Sailors better. You may not have always agreed with his methods, but you always knew where his heart was, and his heart is always been to train Sailors, to help them to be better than he was. So that's how I'm always going to remember him - passionate, a little loud, but always doing what's right by Sailors on the deck plates."

When Singer, the man of the hour took the stage, he began rattling off the number of times he had spoke at other retirement ceremonies but admitted he didn't really have a clue as to what to say at his own. Somehow he was able to find the words.

"It's been a wonderful career," said Singer from the podium while not using the microphone because he said he was loud enough without it. "I won't say I have any regrets. I probably would have done some things a little bit different. I made some choices and part of them was career related, but the payoff and the dividends are what we have now."

After the Benediction and a reading of the centuries old Navy poem "*The Watch*," there was a brief intermission to allow Singer to don gear to fight one last fire.

Singer entered the enclosed compartment of the fire school that was set ablaze and proceeded to put out the fire. After the fire was extinguished, he exited the compartment and reported to his commanding officer that the fire was out and then requested permission to go ashore.

"Permission granted," Gilbert said.

(Left) DCCM (SW/AW) David Singer from the Center for Naval Engineering Learning Site Yokosuka removes his gear with the help of colleagues after successfully putting out a staged fire at the fire school as part of his retirement ceremony Oct. 21. Singer retired after more than 30 years of loyal and dedicated service to the U.S. Navy.

OCHR explains federal job ads and application process

From Department of Navy,
Office of Civilian Human Resources

WASHINGTON – Sailors transitioning out of the Navy now have a one stop shop for job advertisements and applications at www.usajobs.gov.

This year, the Department of the Navy (DON) joined other federal agencies using USAJOBS as the single source for announcing civilian job opportunities. Each day, new job opportunity announcements are posted to the USAJOBS database - the central repository for thousands of federal civilian jobs around the globe.

According to Jean Mercer, director of the DON's Office of Civilian Human Resources, HR Systems and Business Transformation Department, more and more veterans are seeking to continue their public service by pursuing a civilian career.

"Learning to read and understand the job opportunity announcements is critical to the applicant's success in their job search," said Mercer. "Having the right documents, matching their military experience with appropriate occupations and paying attention to the details in the job announcements improve the job search for applicants."

Applicants first should pay attention to the job announcement overview - particularly on "Who May be Considered." In order to apply, applicants must meet the eligibility specified in this section or their application will not be considered (information on veteran's hiring eligibilities is available on the Veterans section at www.donhr.navy.mil site). Other details to note are the key requirements to include security clearances, medical examinations, travel requirements, shift work, and more.

Qualifications requirements cited in the job opportunity announcement refer to the essential job knowledge, skills, abilities or competencies required for the position; educational requirements also may be specified. Applicants must ensure that their qualifications noted are contained in their resumes and suitably documented. If educational requirements are noted, veterans should ensure that their educational or SMART transcripts are available to be uploaded with their resumes. (Information on translating military experiences and transcripts is available at the Verification of Military Experience and Training (VMET) website https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/vmet/index.jsp; The Mil2Feds website http://mil2fedjobs.com/ and the Sailor/Marine American Council On Education Registry Transcript (SMART) https://www.navycollege.navy.mil/smart_info.cfm.

Many federal job opportunity announcements require applicants, including veterans, to complete an assessment questionnaire. As with the qualifications, applicants should ensure that the responses to the assessment questionnaire are reflected in their resumes. Most qualification standards allow applicants to qualify on the basis of education/training, experience or a combination of the two. Some positions or occupational series require applicants to meet certifications, licensure or registration requirements along with their experience and/or educational requirements.

Human resources professionals will compare the resume information with the qualification standards outlined by the Office of Personnel Management. From this analysis, applicants are identified who are likely to perform successfully.

The Department of the Navy (DON) webpage for veterans interested in pursuing civilian careers www.public.navy.mil/donhr/Employment/Vets/Pages/Default.aspx not only contains information on the application process, but also provides tip sheets and links to additional resources.

Veterans should first pursue the resources and support provided through their local Fleet and Family Service Centers (FFSC). Resources and information also are available through www.fedshirevets.gov/ or, for information on veterans hiring eligibilities and tip sheets to help with the application process, visit the DON Civilian Human Resources website: www.donhr.navy.mil or the Department of Labor Veterans Preference Advisory website at www.dol.gov/elaws/vetspref.htm.

The DON remains committed to improving the applicant's experience, reducing the time to fill vacancies and securing quality candidates for DON positions. Civilian careers in the Department of the Navy offer real world challenges with real life rewards - careers where purpose and patriotism unite. Additional questions on DON civilian employment and the application process may be directed to DON Employment Information Center at DONeic@navy.mil.

A civilian career with the federal government is one of the opportunities that should be considered by separating Sailors including those affected by the Enlisted Retention Board (ERB).