



All-Female Crew Stars in Flag Ceremony

By Jay Pickett, Manager of Boundary/Lucky Peak

This year's Energy and Construction Best Practices Summit offered attendees more than a vision of the energy industry's future. It offered them a source of inspiration as well.

The June 25 opening ceremony took place inside the immense cooling tower of a nuclear plant that never opened for business. In a historic first, the line crew that raised the United States flag was made up entirely of women.

"During the opening speech, they silently climbed the pole and stood at attention. Bob Guenther (IBEW labor representative) handed the flag to the most experienced climber and it passed from there to the top of the pole. It was hung on a cross arm at the top," said Alice Lockridge, a City Light apprenticeship training and education coordinator who helped organize the event. "It was a very moving moment."

The ceremonial line crew included City Light Lineworkers Cecile Rieder and Shannon Fitch, four other lineworkers, an apprentice and a graduate. They represented Portland General Electric, Bonneville Power Administration, Eugene Water and Electric Board, Tacoma Power, and Avista Line School.

The flag they raised first flew over the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C. The flag was auctioned to raise funds for training scholarships. The highest bidder went one step further and donated the flag to this amazing crew of women.

This year's "Sustainability in the Green Economy Summit" was held at the Satsop Development Park in Elma. The event was hosted by the Centralia College Center for Excellence in Energy Technology, one of 11 specialized centers at Washington community colleges designed to provide training and support for key industries. The summit was co-sponsored by Renton Technical College.

The summit offered workshops on energy efficiency, economic development, green jobs, grants and other topics.

The Satsop Development Park is at the site of an incomplete nuclear power plant for the Washington Public Power Supply System (WPPSS). Its cooling towers are a notable landmark on the drive between Olympia and Aberdeen. In 1983, WPPSS defaulted on \$2.25 billion in bonds after construction on two of its nuclear power plants was halted. The agency was renamed Energy Northwest in 1998.

The Satsop Development Park is using green methods to rehabilitate the buildings for new uses. ■



A ceremonial line crew raises the United States flag. City Light's Shannon Fitch is at the top; Cecile Rieder is third from the top. Photo courtesy of Matt Hins.

NetWork online

Look for pictures of this year's crop of SCL graduates online at <http://sclweb/publications/network/nw090701/grad/grad.asp> ■

