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For Immediate Release

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Florence Apprentice Lineman Wins Trophy in Regional Competition Memorial Event Honors Washington Lineman Killed On the Job

Central Lincoln Apprentice Lineman Tyler Foster was honored for his skill in replacing connections to homes at the 2010 Andrew York Memorial Lineman Rodeo in Wenatchee, Washington. Foster won the “Mystery Event—Secondary Spool Clevis Change-Out” which was sprung on competitors as the competition began. Linemen need to be highly skilled in a wide variety of disciplines, and thus each mystery event tests a different line skill. A “secondary spool clevis change-out” is the safe, skillful and rapid replacement of a porcelain or ceramic spool clevis after climbing a 35 foot pole and using a rope sling to hold disconnected wire. The clevis connects an electric utility’s service to customers’ homes.

Foster is based at Central Lincoln’s Florence office, and he beat 29 apprentice linemen from Washington, Oregon, Missouri, and Canada in the Lineman Rodeo. “We are very proud Tyler won this regional competition,” said Central Lincoln’s general manager Paul Davies. “This would not have happened without a great deal of work, attention to detail, and without support and training from our crews. It’s important to our customers that we have linemen who work safely, quickly, and accurately, and Tyler’s award strongly reflects those qualities.” Foster is a second-generation lineman—his father Randy is a journeyman lineman with a consumer-owned electric utility serving Oregon’s south coast.

Tyler Foster is a “sixth-step” lineman apprentice, meaning he has moved from ground work to safely working with progressively greater voltages in progressively more complex overhead and underground installations. There are seven steps of apprenticeship that apprentice linemen must reach, plus they must complete 500 hours of classwork and tests, in order to become linemen.

The purpose of linemen rodeos is to offer linemen opportunities to competitively sharpen their skills and to earn hours of work-related training in an industry in which workers must be highly-skilled and constantly vigilant, as electric power ranks as one of the top ten most dangerous career fields in the United States.

The Wenatchee lineman competition is held in honor of Andrew York, a lineman who died on the job after being hit by a drunk driver in 2000. This year, 16 teams and 30 apprentices competed in safety, work practice, and skill competitions.

Tyler Foster, a seven year veteran with Central Lincoln, lives in Reedsport with his wife Amber, and children Gabe and Jayde.

The Central Lincoln People’s Utility District is Oregon’s fourth-largest electric utility, serving some 700 square miles and more than 80,000 people in portions of Douglas, Coos, Lane, and Lincoln counties. Central Lincoln is not-for-profit, and is publicly-owned; it was created in 1940 by voters to serve the public.

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