

B&W Y-12 and 14 Years in Oak Ridge, part 2

We continue to look at the past 14 years of B&W Y-12's tenure as management and operating contractor for the Y-12 National Security Complex. Several more significant achievements at Y-12 have been made during those years.

Construction of the Purification Facility, the first major production facility to be built at Y-12 in more than 30 years, was completed in 2003. The Jack Case Center and the New Hope Center were completed in 2007 using private financing and lease agreements that continue to provide property taxes to the city of Oak Ridge. The Highly Enriched Uranium Materials Facility construction was completed in 2008; added security features were installed and the facility was fully loaded and occupied by 2010.

These new facilities centralized operations and replaced aging structures. The new building sites were created by demolishing 1.3 million square feet of aging facilities. Also under the management of B&W Y-12, the site cleaned up a seven-acre scrap yard, requiring the removal of 21 million pounds of waste.

We have provided nuclear and radiological training to participants across the nation and served as the uranium experts through our work as the Uranium Center of Excellence and the Uranium Materials Archive, which supports the nation's forensic analysis capabilities. Y-12 is also a National Prototype Center.

Y-12 completed three major utility projects that were funded through NNSA's Facility Infrastructure and Recapitalization Program. These facilities replaced the 1950s-era coal-fired steam plant, provided a new potable water supply system and upgraded the vital compressed air systems. Y-12 began using the new steam plant and the pair of two-million-gallon water tanks atop the 250-foot towers on the north ridge in 2010.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provided \$292 million in funding for Y-12 to demolish four buildings of the Biology Complex, clean up legacy material from Alpha 5 (Building 9201-5) and Beta 4 (Building 9204-4), clean up the West End Mercury Area storm sewers that contained soil contaminated with mercury, and clear and remediate the above mentioned seven-acre Old Scrap Yard.

Through mission work and site transformation, Y-12 has remained committed to creating a safe and healthy workplace. Major recognition of our safety success came when we received the U.S. Department of Energy Voluntary Protection Program Star status. Being named a DOE VPP site was achieved thanks to the partnership between B&W Y-12 management and three labor unions — the Atomic Trades and Labor Council, the Knoxville Building and Construction Trades Council and the United Steelworkers.

Management and labor have also been committed partners to creating the skilled work force that will ensure Y-12's future. Perhaps the most significant achievement in this regard has been the Apprenticeship Program, which was re-established at Y-12 in 2008 after an almost 30-year hiatus. Interest in this program was so great that more than 2,600 people applied for the initial 50 openings. Each skilled crafts apprentice is trained to union specifications and meets national standards for journey worker status upon completion of the program. Since the program was restarted, we have celebrated three graduating classes. The program has a remaining 55 participants who will graduate in the coming years, taking their place in the world-class skilled labor force at Y-12.

Dave Richardson, President and General Manager of B&W Y-12, said to the employees of Y-12, "None of this could have been accomplished without the overwhelming support we received from the more than 4,800 Y-12 employees, the Oak Ridge community, and the entire East Tennessee region. The level of

talent among employees at Y-12 is truly exceptional. It is because of their collective commitment and dedication to NNSA's national security mission that B&W Y-12 was successful, and I am confident they will provide this same level of dedication to the new contractor."

Richardson also said of the community, "We are also appreciative of the many local leaders and elected officials who have supported B&W Y-12. Their dedication to seeing Y-12 prosper is commendable and vital to the mission of the Y-12 site. It was our good fortune to work alongside such a steadfast, engaged and supportive community."

As Consolidated Nuclear Security takes over the management and operating contract for the Y-12 National Security Complex, as well as the Pantex contract, effective July 1, 2014, those of us who have been Y-12'ers for years welcome the new leaders. We are anxious to continue the improvements required to ensure Y-12 remains the nation's Uranium Center of Excellence, holds safety in a high regard as evidenced by retaining all aspects of safety required to stay at the VPP Star status level of accomplishment, continues as one of the nation's National Prototype Centers and meets all requirements of Y-12 missions both to the nation and to the local Oak Ridge and East Tennessee communities.

The necessary actions required to make a complex contract transition such as this one have all been completed, some 3,000 of them. Some 5,000 procedures for running both Pantex and Y-12 have been reviewed and approved. Over 400 facilities have been inspected and over 7,800 employees transferred to the new contract.

Additionally, community leaders, elected officials and representatives of many groups within the two communities where the sites are located have been contacted and initial interactions begun. It is obvious that CNS plans to be engaged in the communities.

The Bechtel-led Consolidated Nuclear Security team, which also consists of Lockheed Martin, ATK and security contractor SOC, has spent the past four months in transition and is now taking the helm of Y-12 to move toward the future. These are exciting times at Y-12 because the past two years have been unusually frustrating, and the work force is ready for a renewed sense of steady and stable leadership and a return to longer-range thinking.

It is just a fact of such contract transitions that disruptions to regular and routine activities can and usually do occur. With all that behind us, Y-12 is again poised for great accomplishments and we who have made it our life's work, along with our new leadership—I am convinced—are anxious to get on with meeting any and all challenges that come with being the nation's sole uranium machine shop plus a number of other singular duties Y-12 routinely performs.