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Welcome to this month's issue of ***Solar Newsbriefs***, brought to you by the Washington State University Energy Program. Please feel free to forward this issue to those of your colleagues interested in solar energy. For archives of past *Solar Newsbriefs*, visit

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Oregon News

Jefferson County's First Utility

The first utility-scale solar arrays in Jefferson County are operational, and the developer has estimated the combined value of the property at \$37 million. "That's a good chunk of change for our tax rolls," said Janet Brown, Jefferson County manager at Economic Development for Central Oregon. "We were getting \$280 a year off of each property," she said. "It's rangeland. There's no irrigation, poor soil." Jefferson County approved five-year tax abatements for the two solar projects, Adams Solar Center and Elbe Solar Center, Brown said." – Read more at the *Bulletin*, July 20, 2018:

<https://www.bendbulletin.com/business/6393316-151/jefferson-countys-first-utility-scale-solar-project-goes-live>

New Bethlehem Inn Shelter Powered by Clean Energy

BEND, Ore. – Last Friday, the Bethlehem Inn celebrated the opening celebration of its newly constructed 18,000-square-foot mixed-use building. The energy-efficiency measures include a number of upgrades to building envelop and mechanical equipment, as well as installation of solar electric system that is expected to offset over 60% of the facility's electricity usage. The 91.6 kW solar photovoltaic system is comprised of 316 photovoltaic modules that cover the building's two roofs. The system is expected to produce around 119,000 kWh annually, which is enough to offset an estimated 131,500 lbs. of CO2 emissions, or the equivalent of planting 10 acres of trees – KTVZ News, July 19, 2018

<https://www.ktvz.com/news/new-bethlehem-inn-shelter-powered-by-clean-energy/770516941>

Tax on Big Retailers, for Renewable Energy, makes Portland Ballot

A tax on big retailers that would fund clean energy projects and jobs training — especially in underserved communities — has qualified for the November Portland ballot. A review and sampling of submitted petitions determined that backers had gathered "approximately 39,755 valid City of Portland

registered voter signatures,” the city said late Friday. They needed 34,156 – Read more in Pete Danko’s article in the *Portland Business Journal*, July 30, 2018:

<https://www.bizjournals.com/portland/news/2018/07/30/tax-on-big-retailers-for-renewable-energy-makes.html>

Solar Array is Taking Shape

PENDLETON, Oregon – The solar array on Airport Hill in Pendleton is becoming a reality. The agreement to lease the land from the city was inked four years ago, but at that time, there were several regulatory hurdles that had to be cleared before the installation of the panels could begin. Pendleton Economic Development Director Steve Chrisman says the news of the lease may not have been noticed, but people are noticing now. “My goodness, (it’s) 58 acres of solar,” he said. “That’s six megawatts. That’s enough to run the entire city of Pendleton, so it’s going to be pretty awesome. It’s about a \$15 million project” — *My Columbia Basin*, July 5, 2018: <http://www.mycolumbiabasin.com/2018/07/05/solar-array-is-taking-shape/>

Facebook Helps bring More Solar to Oregon

On Wednesday, Facebook joined Oregon officials and Pacific Power to announce that Facebook’s Prineville, Ore., data center will be supported by 100% renewable energy from new solar developments. According to the partners, this collaboration helps fuel Prineville’s growing data center industry, supports the city’s economic growth, brings new cost-effective resources onto Pacific Power’s system and fulfills Facebook’s long-term sustainability goals. The Pacific Power and Facebook partnership will result in 437 MW of new solar developments, including two projects totaling 100 MW in the Prineville area – by Betsy Lillian, *Solar Industry*, July 19, 2018:

<https://solarindustrymag.com/facebook-helps-bring-more-solar-to-oregon/>

Grant Provides Health Dept. Solar Energy

Hood River County, in partnership with Sustainable Northwest, Pacific Power, and the Oregon Clean Power Cooperative, welcomes the public to the Hood River County Health Department building, 1109 June St., on July 31 at 11 a.m. for the ribbon-cutting event for a new 24-kilowatt rooftop solar array. The \$70,000 project, which was funded by Pacific Power’s Blue Sky customers, will reduce energy costs and increase county resilience by providing clean energy generation and storage – *Hood River News*, July 24, 2018:

<http://www.hoodrivernews.com/news/2018/jul/25/grant-provides-health-dept-solar-energy/>

Washington News

OPALCO’s Community Solar Project is Up and Running on Decatur Island

OPALCO’s first big community solar project is complete and energized. On July 31, the 504KW-DC array began producing power. The 272 OPALCO members who invested in the project will begin to see credits on their September bill for the energy produced to date. Member participation ranged from one unit to as many as 160 solar units. OPALCO pre-certified its project with the Washington State Renewable Energy System Incentive Program, assuring members a greater return on investment – *The Islands’ Sounder*, August 7, 2018: <https://www.islandssounder.com/news/opalcos-community-solar-project-is-up-and-running-on-decatur-island/>

Editorial: Solar Farms Could Heat Up Economy in the Yakima Valley

We have land, lots of it. We have sun, in spades. What we don't have is a single solar farm in Yakima County to harness this plentiful energy source and help heat up our economy in the process. It has been a missed opportunity, but one that can be rectified, if certain concerns are addressed. The Department of Natural Resources is considering opening two parcels of land, about 15 miles east of Moxee, to lease for solar energy production. Pacific Power, too, has looked at developing a solar farm in the county, but as yet has no firm plans. At last, Yakima's sunny reputation – all that "Palm Springs of Washington" stuff – may make the area a hot commodity in the fast-growing renewable energy sector – *Yakima Herald*, July 28, 2018:

http://www.yakimaherald.com/opinion/editorial-solar-farms-could-heat-up-economy-in-the-yakima/article_34b6bde8-91c5-11e8-acf6-cba125b44416.html

South Sound Solar Helps People and Businesses like Providence Go Green

South Sound Solar is located on a quiet, rural road in northwest Olympia. It is evident upon arrival that the owners of Thurston County's premier solar company practice what they preach. Cows, chickens and a stout pair of pigs roam the property where Kirk and Ceuson Haffner, owners of South Sound Solar live and work. They collect rainwater for their agriculture and the property even boasts a solar heated swimming pool. The entire business operation is "net zero" meaning that the solar power generated by the installed panels powers their office and shop year-round ... *Thurston Talk*, by Carrie Bell, August 7, 2018:

<http://www.thurstontalk.com/2018/08/06/south-sound-solar-helps-people-and-businesses-like-providence-go-green/>

Front & Center: Transition part of Eco Depot Solar Business over Nearly Two Decades

One might picture solar-energy pioneers as aging hippies clad in beads and tie-dye. Bruce Gage fits the part, with his unruly goatee and T-shirt that reads "PEACE, LOVE, REVOLUTION." But his sister and business partner, Eco Depot President Nadine Sullivan, could be mistaken for a museum docent. "Some people are surprised I can answer most of their questions," Sullivan said. "But I don't think my appearance has ever worked against me." Since 1999, Eco Depot has installed more than 1 million watts of solar power – the equivalent of more than 3,000 rooftop photovoltaic panels. The company also sells building materials, including recycled paint. During a recent interview, Sullivan discussed batteries, Budapest and buffalo nickels – Continue reading Michael Guilfoil's interview in the *Spokesman-Review*, July 15, 2018:

<http://www.spokesman.com/stories/2018/jul/15/front-center-transition-part-of-eco-depot-solar-bu/>

Workforce Development

Careers for Women In Solar — Potential In A Growth Industry

According to the 2017 Solar Jobs Census from The Solar Foundation, solar labor increased by 168% in the past 7 years, from about 93,000 jobs in 2010 to more than 250,000 jobs in 2017. Yet women in solar make up just 27% of the workforce. Women have a considerable opportunity to make careers in solar energy and join in on the highly skilled, well-paying solar jobs. C'mon, gals — join in! – by Carolyn Fortuna, *Clean Technica*, July 31, 2018: <https://cleantechnica.com/2018/07/31/careers-for-women-in-solar-potential-in-a-growth-industry/>

Avista Provides Energy Pathways for Students to Explore Career in Energy Industry

SPOKANE, Wash. – Eighteen Spokane area high school juniors and seniors are spending July discovering if a career in the energy field could be their pathway to a successful future. Through Avista's inaugural Energy Pathways student career experience, the students are in classroom sessions with Avista experts from various technical and skilled trade fields, then the students are putting their learning into practice with hands-on activities including designing, planning and performing actual utility tasks – by Danny Palmoba, KXLY.com, July 17, 2018:

<https://www.kxly.com/news/avista-provides-energy-pathways-for-students-to-explore-career-in-energy-industry/769431769>

New Developments

And Then There was (more) Light: Researchers Boost Performance Quality of Perovskites

Solar cells need to slim down. Solar cells are devices that absorb photons from sunlight and convert their energy to move electrons – enabling the production of clean energy and providing a dependable route to help combat climate change. But most solar cells used widely today are thick, fragile and stiff, which limits their application to flat surfaces and increases the cost to make the solar cell. "Thin-film solar cells" could be 1/100th the thickness of a piece of paper and flexible enough to festoon surfaces ranging from an aerodynamically sleek car to clothing – by James Urton, *UW News*, July 25, 2018:

<https://www.washington.edu/news/2018/07/25/and-then-there-was-more-light-researchers-boost-performance-quality-of-perovskites/>

Can Solar Energy Save the Bees?

In response to the population decline of pollinating insects, such as wild bees and monarch butterflies, researchers at the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Argonne National Laboratory are investigating ways to use "pollinator-friendly solar power." By studying solar energy facilities with pollinator habitats on site, researchers hope to rehabilitate pollinator populations that play a crucial role in the national and global agricultural industries. Loss of such species could devastate crop production, costs and nutrition on a global scale – *Argonne National Laboratory*, by Greer Russell, August 5, 2018. Read more and connect to report at:

<http://www.anl.gov/articles/can-solar-energy-save-bees>

Conferences and Webinars

Solar PV Recycling: Issues and Considerations for State Decision-Makers, August 23, 2018, 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM ET

What happens to solar photovoltaic (PV) panels when they come to the end of their useful lifetime? Garvin Heath, a senior analyst at NREL, will share lessons learned and key insights from his research to inform state-level efforts to develop effective, efficient, and affordable PV module recycling and recovery strategies – For more information and to register link to the *Clean Energy States Alliance*:

<https://www.cesa.org/webinars/solar-pv-recycling-issues-and-considerations-for-state-decision-makers/?date=2018-08-23>.

Community Solar Program Design and Implementation for Low-and Moderate-Income Customers, August 30, 2018, 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM ET

Guest speakers from NREL will discuss their new report, which reviews existing and emerging LMI community solar programs, discusses key questions related to program design, outlines how states can leverage incentives and finance structures to lower the cost of LMI community solar, and examines marketing and outreach considerations For more information and to register link to the *Clean Energy States Alliance*:

<https://www.cesa.org/webinars/community-solar-program-design-and-implementation-for-low-and-moderate-income-customers/?date=2018-08-30>

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