



## Union members assist vets restoring PT boat

Volunteers from Iron Workers Local 29 rebuilt a hoist used by a group of volunteers restoring PT-658, the only surviving operational PT boat in the world.

Local 29 member Thad "Sonny" Curtis came up with the design for the hoist, and ironworker Angela Couture did all the fab work and painting.

On Aug. 30, a crew of ironworkers set up the hoist at the Naval Reserve/Coast Guard base at 6735 N. Basin

Ave., at Portland's Swan Island, where PT-658 is berthed. Helping place the hoist were Apprenticeship Coordinator Keith Kordenat, Jacob Morton, David "Tex" Davilla, Jason Fussell, O'Neil "Bud" Rawl, Robert Camarillo and Curtis. (See photo above right.)

The boat has been exactly restored by former PT boat veterans and volunteers for the nonprofit Save the PT Boat, Inc. for the past 18 years. Earlier this month it was listed in the Na-



tional Register of Historic Places.

The authenticity and accuracy of its restoration are exemplary, according to its National Register nomination. Only two other PT boats are listed in the National Register, but neither is operating.

PT-658 makes regular runs on the Willamette River under power from its original Packard V-12 engines.

Boats like the PT-658 were developed in the early 20th century by the European navy as part of their coastal defenses. These small, wooden boats were an inexpensive way to quickly deliver torpedoes which could destroy

ships as heavy as battleships.

The United States began manufacturing PT boats in 1941 shortly before entering World War II. The PT boats carried more armament for their size than any other naval vessel, but were considered expendable.

PT-658 was built near the end of the war in New Orleans and never saw any action. Save the PT Boat Inc. acquired it and moved it to Portland in 1994.

Several years ago the group built a boathouse (photo top left) so that it would be easier to work during inclement weather. EC Electric and sev-

eral members of IBEW Local 48 donated time and material for wiring. Currently, marine electricians are working to restore the radios to full functionality. Save The PT Boat, Inc. has accomplished quite a lot, but isn't finished. They want to build a viewing platform at the boathouse, and they're currently raising funds for a museum.

Contributions of cash or equipment are tax deductible. The foundation's IRS tax number is 93-1162295.

For more information or to donate, go online at [www.savetheptboatinc.com](http://www.savetheptboatinc.com).



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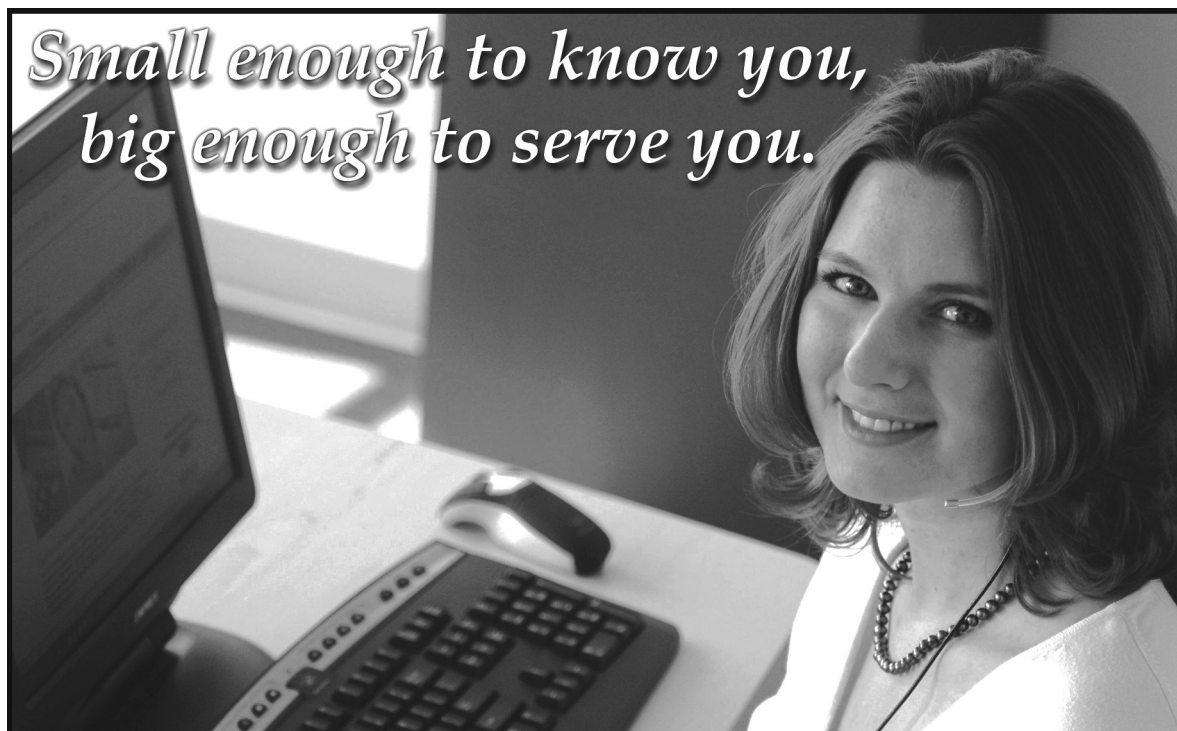
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