Since 2008 the Customer Service Committee has saluted our talented members by selecting a Kentucky and Tennessee awardee. Each spring the section sends a notice of our award. The committee reviews each nomination and awards the most deserving utility employee or consultant from each state.

The 2015 Water Professionals Conference (WPC) in Covington, KY was an exciting event. Aside from the technical sessions, exhibit hall, young professional event, ice cream bar and tapping contest; we were able to explore two cities: Cincinnati and Covington. That was a real treat for the members. The conference facility and staff were prepared to take care of our 1,000 plus members. Tuesday night’s member celebration night at the Reds Stadium in Cincinnati was AMAZING. From the moment we loaded the transportation buses and approached the stadium, we could tell this was going to be a memorable experience. After all; it had been a while since most of us were in a ball park for a night of pure fun. We had a buffet fit for a king with Cincinnati’s famous chili and good eats. We could not keep our bodies still after being seriated with 70’s music. Watching Hal Balthrop and his beautiful wife burn up the dance floor encouraged most of us to jump in and cut a rug. Some of the more daring members like myself signed up for the batting cage. As we signed the waiver my stomach got queasy. I was afraid of the pitcher I would face. When it was our turn, Rusty and I reluctantly approached the elevator descending to the bullpen. We were relieved to see a gentle seasoned volunteer. Luckily we made contact with most of the balls. So we left the bullpen feeling like we had accomplished something. After all, not many people can say they hit a ball in the Reds ball park. Charlene Easter, another committee member, also enjoyed the park’s festivities with a co-worker that evening.

During the conference we were honored to have Brenda Lennox, an AWWA Officer, visit our customer relations sessions. She acknowledged the value and quality of information shared by our speakers. She also applauded our giveaway basket and appreciated the warmth that this annual themed basket gives our attendees. At the end of our track, Rusty Collinsworth and myself (Sharon Seibert) presented the “all things Tennessee and Kentucky” basket to Mark Iverson from Bowling Green KY.

Overall our track was well attended. It added value to our attendees that desired to improve their communication skills and platforms as well as their quality of service. Our committee is now in the planning phase for next year’s WPC in Knoxville, TN. We are excited about our “customer relations” theme. Our track will be filled with topics designed to share best practices, educate and empower our members.