

Committed to Those KPUD Serves

By Lori Froehlich

Volunteer participation is a commitment to the community that Klickitat PUD and its employees take seriously.

“Owned by those it serves” is more than a motto, and it applies to more than being your electricity, water and sewer provider. Employees at Klickitat PUD are also ratepayers and members of communities all across the county. It is important to them that these communities thrive.

Klickitat PUD attends parades, fairs and community events throughout the county, including the Huckleberry Festival in Bingen, the Spring Festival in White Salmon and the Klickitat County Fair in Goldendale.

KPUD employees attend these events and talk about ongoing or upcoming projects, energy conservation and rebates.

The PUD also attends the HUGS Fair, held annually in White Salmon, providing an opportunity for families to gather information on topics that relate to the

health and safety of children through fun, hands-on activities. **Ron Schultz** is an avid supporter of the fair and tries to attend every year.

Throughout the year, Klickitat PUD contributes employees’ time, equipment and vehicles to put up and take down holiday decorations, banners and replace lights at ball fields throughout the county.

The utility responds to requests to help with special projects as much as possible.

Bernie Predeek, serviceman in KPUD’s White Salmon office, attended the White Salmon Valley Community Library preschool story time. The kids were reading stories about big trucks. With Bernie’s help, they got a chance to see one up close.

Goldendale serviceman **Tim Garrigus** helped the Centerville School carry on its tradition of putting the names of graduating eighth-graders on the school’s 35-foot chimney.

Each year, Klickitat PUD sponsors “The Power of Youth Award,” which is presented to a member of the Klickitat

County 4-H Program. The award is based on the young person’s community involvement, volunteer activities and leadership skills. Rewarding the youth for being committed to their community encourages them to continue with a lifetime of service and volunteerism.

Employees are encouraged to take an active interest in civic and community activities on their own time. Here are examples of how PUD employees have given back the past couple of years.

Lori Fakesch is a Klickitat School Board member. She attends meetings and is involved in school activities. She also helps plan Klickitat Canyon Days, and works at the Glenwood Rodeo and the Glenwood Grange every year.

Brandon Walter is a reserve police officer for the Goldendale City Police. He helps keep the town safe with his volunteer hours and spends time keeping his certifications and training current.

Miquette Ihrig and **Russ Patton** have dedicated many hours to Klickitat County Search and Rescue. The non-profit organization is dedicated to helping others, finding lost people and rescuing the injured. They have been involved in numerous searches, attended meetings and trainings, and invested time to keep their certifications current.

Ed Lexa and his wife, Brenda, donate hours every year to making the Huckleberry Festival in Bingen a success. He also is a member of the White Salmon Jazz Band, which participates in fundraisers for schools.

Sharon Blodgett has been involved with the Goldendale Community Garden, Chores for Seniors and Pine Springs Resort’s Annual Blues Bash.

Judy Woody serves Thanksgiving Day at the Goldendale community dinner and donates helps at the Glenwood Rodeo.

Howard Sinor also volunteers at the Glenwood Rodeo and is involved with



Danner Greenwood, Jace Greenwood and Logan Predeek prepare to get into the bucket of the truck driven in the Spring Festival parade.



Left, Tim Garrigus puts the eighth-grade graduate names on Centerville School's chimney.

the Department of Corrections, volunteering to supervise people attaining their community service hours.

Ron Schultz is a volunteer examiner for the American Radio Relay League, administering ham radio exams. He and his wife, Joyce, also work at the Hood River Warming Shelter during the winter.

Jim Smith volunteers at the Goldendale swimming pool, is a Red Cross water safety instructor, and leads the team that uncovers the pool for the summer and covers it for the winter. He also was head timer and coach at swim meets.

A number of employees coach youth sports. **Jeff Speelman, Jeff Thayer,**

Greg Watson, Mike DeMott and Jim Smith have coached soccer for AYSO in Goldendale. **Tim McMurrin** coaches girls' softball. **Justen Greenwood** and **Ed Lexa** both coach Little League in White Salmon. **Brandon Walter** coached Babe Ruth baseball in Goldendale.

Ron Ihrig volunteers on the Klickitat County Board of Adjustment, is a past hospital board member and Klickitat County commissioner.

Jim Brokaw and **Russ Patton** are dedicated leaders in the Boy Scouts of America, participating in weekly scout meetings, derbies, training and campouts.

Mike DeMott is a Parks and Recreation

commissioner, Chamber of Commerce member and was instrumental in establishing the inaugural Goldenman Triathlon this past year.

Martin Taylor has been involved with 4-H for years. He was chosen 2009 4-H Leader of the Year for Klickitat County and has mentored many 4-H members, including his daughter Tatiana, who was chosen for the PUD's 2007 4-H Power of Youth Award. He has been 4-H livestock program leader, and has served as 4-H Leaders' Council treasurer and secretary.

The Klickitat County Fair and Rodeo has been an annual tradition at the end of August for 130 years. Many PUD employees volunteer their time each year.

Skip Mulrony is a longtime supporter of the rodeo, with 20-plus years of service as rodeo committee chairman. He has served on the fair board as president, vice president and past-president.

Lori Fakesch donates many hours to scheduling the entertainment for the fair. She was named 2008 Volunteer of the Year by the Klickitat County Fair Board for her dedication and commitment to the fair's success.

Judy Woody, Jeff Thayer, Ron Ihrig, Jim Smith, Sharon Blodgett and many others volunteer to help with admission at the fair gates. **Jeff Thayer** works at the stock gates during the rodeo. **Shannon Crocker** has served as fair board treasurer and **Kathy Loveland** and her husband, Joe, make sure the PUD is well represented with a creative float in the parade and a matching booth at the fair.

All of this shows how small communities really operate: through volunteers.

These are just some of the ways your PUD employees are involved. Without these people—the named and the unnamed—many programs, events and functions would not be done.

Thank you to all the volunteers who keep all the communities alive and kicking across Klickitat County. ■