

# Wishing A Fond Farewell

*Klickitat PUD employee  
Wanita Gordon retires  
after 17 years*



**Wanita Gordon showcases one of the many custom quilts she has made for retiring Klickitat PUD co-workers the past 17 years.**

**By Beth Schroder**

Coincidence? Fortuity? Fate? Whatever you want to call it, from all accounts, hiring Wanita Gordon for Klickitat PUD's White Salmon office in 2002 worked out perfectly.

The end of March marks the final days of Wanita's tenure as customer service representative. She has served KPUD's west end customers for the past 17 years.

Born in White Salmon just six blocks from KPUD's office, Wanita attended school in Husum and Trout Lake. She graduated from Columbia High School in White Salmon and attended Clark College in Vancouver.

"Growing up, I was in 4-H for many

years," Wanita says. "I used to barrel race and ride horses."

She also served as rodeo queen and won Homemaker of the Year at the Klickitat County Fair many times.

Wanita's career did not begin with KPUD. After high school, she worked for United Telephone Co.—now CenturyLink. She then worked 30 years in the banking industry—first at Rainier Bank in Goldendale and finally at Sterling Bank in White Salmon.

In addition to time spent in White Salmon, Wanita and her family lived in Alaska for 19 years and spent two years in Hawaii. She returned to White Salmon in 1999.

Three years later, Wanita was working across the street from the Klickitat PUD



**Wanita works at the Klickitat PUD information booth during one of the community events held in White Salmon.**

office when a customer service position opened. She stopped in and chatted with Billing Clerk Lori Fakesch, who was filling in from the KPUD Goldendale office.

“She encouraged me to apply, but I waited too long and they had already selected the candidates they were going to interview,” Wanita says.

On the day of the interviews, however, Wanita received a phone call saying one of the interviewees hadn’t shown up.

“They called me and here I still am,” she says. “Best career move ever.”

This sentiment is shared by employees throughout KPUD.

Lori was part of the committee that interviewed Wanita.

“She could do 10-key faster than anyone I’ve ever seen,” Lori says. “She was the perfect fit for the White Salmon office.”

Customer Service Supervisor Brandy Myers really got to know Wanita after

becoming her supervisor.

“Her role is special because it’s not just customer service,” Brandy says. “She’s the caretaker of the White Salmon office, and we know everyone and everything is in good hands. She wears so many hats and doesn’t complain. She just rolls with it.”

If there is one thing people can say about Wanita, it is that she is dependable.

“I have only had to have unplanned coverage twice in 17 years,” Wanita says.

In addition to her work at Klickitat PUD, Wanita enjoys reading, painting—walls, not pictures—traveling and sewing. Numerous KPUD employees have received a piece of her handiwork in the form of a custom quilt when they retired.

Wanita’s sewing skills have also been shared with others throughout the years.

“She made me the most amazing tote bag for Christmas,” Lori says. “She is so good at putting things together. We always hoped she would draw our names at Christmas because she would make such unique gifts for us.”

Wanita looks forward to spending more time on her hobbies after retirement. She and her husband, Dan, have several summer trips already planned.

“We enjoy the Oregon Coast and the Joseph area in Eastern Oregon,” Wanita says. “I’m sure we will make good use of the fifth-wheel.”

Wanita plans to open an online Etsy shop as an outlet for her creativity. She also looks forward to spending time with her family, which includes son Ryan, daughter Carrie, seven grandchildren, a great-grandson, her 91-year-old mother and her siblings.

Wanita’s official retirement date is March 29. Stop in to Klickitat PUD’s White Salmon office that day to say goodbye and wish her well at an open house. Additional information will be available as her retirement date nears. All of us at Klickitat PUD wish Wanita an exceptional retirement full of all the things she loves. ■

## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

### MARCH

**5**—Portland Mardi Gras Parade, 6 to 9 p.m., Mississippi Avenue, Portland

**6-10**—Spring RV Show, Wednesday to Friday, 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Sunday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Portland Expo Center

**8-9**—Vintage at the Ridge shopping event, Friday, noon to 7 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Southridge Sports and Events Complex, Kennewick

**9**—Second Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Western Antique Aeroplane & Automobile Museum, Hood River

**9**—Second Saturday Contra Dance, 7 to 9:30 p.m., Rockford Grange, Hood River

**9**—Oregon Distillers Guild TOAST, 5 to 9 p.m., Tiffany Center, Portland

**12**—KPUD Commission meeting, 2 p.m., Goldendale

**12**—CBC Choral and Orchestra Concert, 7 p.m., Columbia Basin College Theatre, Pasco

**14**—CBC Jazz Ensemble and FreeForm Concert, 7 p.m., Columbia Basin College Theatre, Pasco

**15**—Maryhill Museum of Art opening day, 10 a.m., Goldendale

**15-16**—Shamrock Fitness Fair, Friday, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Oregon Convention Center, Portland

**15-17**—Portland Roadster Show, Friday, noon to 9 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Sunday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Portland Expo Center

**17**—Shamrock Run, 8 a.m., near Waterfront Park, Portland

**16**—St. Patrick’s Day Foot Race & Leprechaun Dash, 10 a.m., Columbia Center North, Richland

**22-23**—Northwest Quilters Festival of Quilts, Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Portland Expo Center

**22-24**—Custer’s Spring Arts & Crafts Show, Friday, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Sunday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., TRAC Center, Pasco

**22-24**—Northwest Horse Fair and Expo, Friday, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Sunday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Linn County Fair & Expo Center, Albany, OR

**23**—Aristeia Trio, 7:30 p.m., Columbia Basin College Performing Arts Theatre, Pasco

**23**—Three Rivers Contra Dance, 7 to 9 p.m., Trinity Church, Richland

**26**—KPUD Commission meeting, 2 p.m., Goldendale

**27**—Mid-Columbia Symphony, 7:30 to 9:30 p.m., Richland High School Auditorium

**29-30**—Badger Mountain Challenge ultramarathon, 7 a.m., Trailhead Park, Richland

**29-30**—Tri-City Quilter’s Guild Quilt Show, Friday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Three Rivers Convention Center, Kennewick