

Volunteers Give Back in a Big Way

KPUD employees help make communities across Klickitat County a better place to live

“Volunteers do not necessarily have the time, they just have the heart.” — Elizabeth Andrew

By Lori K. Froehlich

Volunteer participation is a commitment to community that Klickitat PUD and its employees take very seriously. “Owned by those it serves” is more than a motto and applies to more than just being your electricity, water and sewer provider.

Employees at KPUD also are ratepayers and members of your communities. It is important to them that these Klickitat County communities thrive.

As a utility, a lot of local contributions are made for the communities. KPUD attends various parades, fairs and community events throughout the county, including the Huckleberry Festival in Bingen and the Klickitat County Fair in Goldendale.

KPUD employees attend these events and bring knowledge about your utility, ongoing or upcoming projects, energy conservation, as well as hand-outs and giveaways.

The PUD also makes an effort to attend the HUGS Fair, which is held annually in White Salmon. It provides an opportunity for families to gather information on a variety of topics that relate to the health and safety of children through fun, hands-on activities.

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

Special projects seem to arise throughout the year, and the utility responds to these requests as much as it is able.

The White Salmon School District needed to mark its traffic safety corridor. KPUD employee Bernie Predeek helped keep students safe by installing poles for the traffic control devices.

Another project, at Centerville School, enlisted the help of employee Tim Garrigus to carry on the tradition of putting graduating eighth-graders’ names on the 35-foot chimney at the school.

Each year, Klickitat PUD presents “The Power of Youth Award” 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 area youths for being committed to their community encourages them to continue with a lifetime of volunteerism.



Klickitat PUD Engineering Manager Ron Schultz holds down the KPUD booth at the HUGS fair.

If you have donated blood lately, you might have noticed KPUD partnered with the American Red Cross and has helped sponsor blood drives. KPUD employees donated 42 pints of lifesaving blood in 2010. The Red Cross sends a sincere “thank you” from every person who will be able to have surgery, survive a serious accident or lengthen their life because of blood that was collected.

If you would like to sign up to donate blood, please call KPUD at (800) 548-8357 or (509) 773-5891. The next scheduled drive is March 23.

Employees are encouraged to take an active part and interest in civic and community activities on their own time. Here are some examples of how KPUD employees give back:



Above, Harley Clever was the 2009 Power of Youth Award winner. Left, KPUD crews help install and remove holiday decorations every year.

- **Eva France** donated time by parking cars for the “Fiddling under the Stars” event, and also for Dr. James Ogden’s concert by driving wheelchairs for residents of the assisted living facility. She donated time at the Klickitat County Fair and Rodeo, taking tickets at the admissions gate and driving people to the event by limo for Ogden’s Mopar Service.

- **Judy Woody** served on Thanksgiving Day at the Goldendale community dinner and donated her time to help at the Glenwood Rodeo.

- **Howard Sinor** volunteered time at the Glenwood Rodeo. He loves to participate every year.

- **Wanita Gordon** volunteers through the Columbia Gorge Community College Gorge Literacy Program and tutors students who are learning to read and write English.

- A number of volunteer coaches who work at KPUD. **Jeff Speelman** and **Greg Watson** donated their time as soccer coaches for American Youth Soccer Organization. **Tim McMurrin** coached girls softball.

- **Jim Smith** volunteered at the Goldendale swimming pool. He helped uncover the pool for the summer and cover it for the winter. He also spent many days as head timer at swim meets.

- **Jim and Ron Ihrig** donated numerous hours at the Klickitat County Fair and Rodeo admission gate.

- **Lori Fakesch** is a member of the Klickitat School board and spends time attending meetings. She stays extremely involved in school activities. She also donates many hours to scheduling the entertainment at the Klickitat County Fair. She was awarded “2008 Volunteer of the Year” by the Klickitat County Fair board for her outstanding dedication and commitment and continues to be committed to the fair’s success. She is also an avid participant in planning Klickitat Canyon Days and volunteering at the Glenwood Rodeo.

- **Brandon Walter** is a reserve police officer for the city of Goldendale. He helps keep the town safe and protected with his

volunteer hours on patrol, and by keeping current on certifications and training for the job.

- **Lawrence Browning** has been a volunteer firefighter and part of emergency rescue for 41 years. He continues to serve his community and donate many hours to the Rural 7 Fire and Rescue Department.

- **Miquette Ihrig** and **Russ Patton** have donated many hours to public service through Klickitat County Search and Rescue. They participated in numerous searches in 2010, attended meetings and trainings, and spent time keeping their certifications current.

Thank you to all the of volunteers who keep all of the communities alive and kicking across Klickitat County. Without these volunteers—the named and the unnamed—many programs, events and necessary functions would be left by the wayside. ■



Klickitat PUD Energy Services Specialist Sharon Ohnstad receives encouragement from Deuce at the KPUD booth at the Huckleberry Festival in Bingen.