

Serving the People of Klickitat County

KPUD honors Kip Graves for 35 years of continued dedication to the community

By Lori Froehlich

It was December 1979 when Kip Graves began his first day of work as a groundman at Klickitat PUD in White Salmon. Kip graduated from Lyle High School and worked in the logging, construction, carpentry and landscaping industries before coming to the utility.

After almost a year as a groundman, Kip applied for an open apprentice lineman position. In his cover letter he stated, "In my time employed here as a groundman, I have found the trade to be very interesting and challenging, and I would appreciate the opportunity to further my education and skills in this field."

This proved to be an extremely beneficial choice for both Kip and the utility during the next three decades.

Kip was accepted into the apprenticeship that year at the same time as co-worker Ron Ihrig (see page 32). It takes three years to complete an apprenticeship. Both men passed their journeyman lineman exams in November 1983.

On May 7, 2008, Kip filled the open position of White Salmon crew foreman, his current position. Kip also served as shop steward for a number of years on behalf of IBEW Local #125 for the White Salmon district.

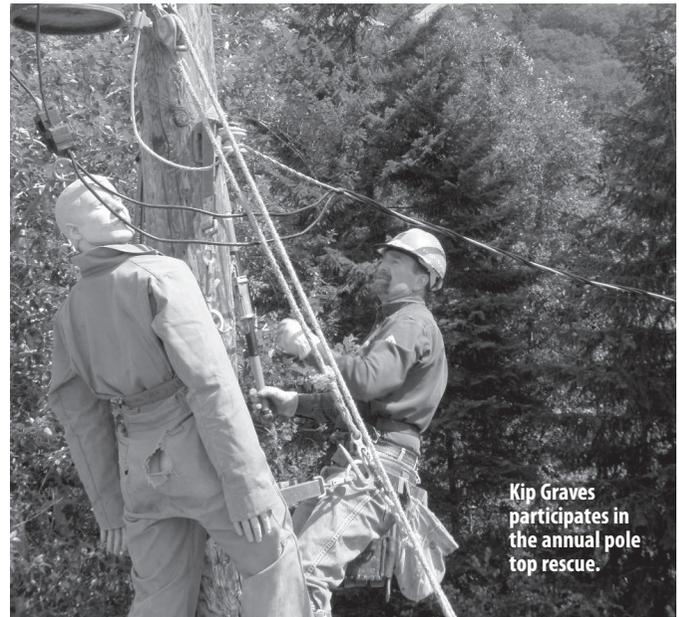
Through the years, numerous members of the community thanked Kip for his hard work, his professional manner and his willingness to serve his community.

In 1993, a letter to the editor spoke of Kip's commitment to the customers of Klickitat County: "The White Salmon Valley School District would like to extend a very special thank you to Kip Graves for all the time and labor he put into replacing and upgrading the lights on the athletic field at Columbia High School. He gave up several weekends to complete the project. It is volunteer help like his that enables us to make improvements in our schools on our limited budget. Good job, Kip!"

Kip has made an impression on his fellow employees as well. In his career he has seen a lot of changes in the utility, and worked for many different managers. However, his professionalism and level of production have never faltered.

Former Distribution Service Manager Bob Havig spoke of Kip's ability and work ethic.

"During the month of July 1999, KPUD line crews completed a job in Bingen on Humboldt Street," Bob said. "This job consisted of replacing several poles and re-conductoring



several spans. This was a complicated job, which required significant planning to keep planned outage times to a minimum. A significant amount of hot work was also involved in the job. Then, during the first week of August 1999, a KPUD line crew replaced three 69-kV transmission poles on the Husum to Gilmer line with the line remaining energized.

"Kip was the working foreman and foreman on these jobs. Both jobs were completed in an efficient, safe and professional manner. In his role as working foreman and foreman, Kip's leadership and planning abilities were instrumental in the successful completion of these jobs."

Rob Rising was a fellow journeyman lineman and a pupil of Kip's.

"Growing up at the utility, I had the great fortune to finish my apprenticeship under Kip," Rob said. "I worked through the next years witnessing his leadership as well as his approach to safety and production as a member on his crew. There were these two memorable days Kip and I spent as bucket partners cutting a double dead end in hot on the 69-kV transmission in Goldendale. Kip's level head and positive outlook made even the toughest jobs safe and more enjoyable."

Thirty-five years is what he has dedicated to all the customers and employees of KPUD. This includes outages of every shape and size in every kind of weather, new installations, never-ending maintenance and mountains of paperwork. We all have benefited from his hard work, experience and knowledge through the years. Thank you for your service, Kip! ■