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WA-18

# Remember to Be Thankful

I want to talk this month about something not related to the PUD or the work we do. I want to talk about something that is really important: family.

Why? Because I believe family is what life is really all about.

Communities are often based on the values displayed by those families. Organizations such as the PUD exist to support the notion of communities to help support the people and families who live in them.

Many of you may know I am Canadian. When I met Jennifer and we decided to marry, we determined that small-town USA was where we wanted to live. We were lucky enough to end up in Klickitat County, in Goldendale. This has been a wonderful community in which to start a family and raise our kids. One of them is now off to university and the other two are still at home. As good as life is, sometimes things happen that make you step back and re-evaluate what is important.

That happened for me last week when a bus carrying a junior hockey team crashed on the Canadian prairies of Saskatchewan and the story hit the news. Sixteen of those on the bus lost their lives. We are talking about kids ranging in age from 16 to 21 years old.

When Jennifer and I came to Goldendale, I was 32 years old and had played hockey for 27 of those years. This was an accident that hit me harder than I ever could have imagined. The ensuing reaction from the community where the kids lived and played was one of trying to support those who were grieving and trying to be remembered for not just the tragedy, but for their positive reaction to it.

My point here is not to be a reporter. That is best done by people who write for a living and is done in an exemplary fashion in the following article, which I encourage you all to read: [www.si.com/nhl/2018/04/13/humboldt-broncos-crash-junior-hockey-saskatchewan/](http://www.si.com/nhl/2018/04/13/humboldt-broncos-crash-junior-hockey-saskatchewan/).

I am trying to say we all should try and find something that makes us stop and consider the things we have, and we should be thankful for them—whether that is families, friends, careers, hobbies or the communities in which we live and grow.

I am so saddened by the events that happened that night and the ongoing impacts on those involved. However, at least I can say that it made me stop and think about what is important. Work matters, and our day-to-day lives matter. Those we love matter more.

**Jim Smith**  
**General Manager**