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www.klickpud.com

Goldendale Office
1313 S. Columbus Ave.
(509) 773-5891
(800) 548-8357

White Salmon Office
110 NE Estes Ave. • P.O. Box 187
(509) 493-2255
(800) 548-8358

A Salute to Harold Hill's Service to Your PUD

Klickitat PUD is celebrating Harold W. Hill's service to Klickitat County and your PUD, with his retirement effective the end of December.

Inside you will find an article describing Harold's accomplishments and service. Here at the PUD we are planning a celebration following Harold's last board meeting. Everyone is invited to attend.

An open house is scheduled for 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the Goldendale PUD meeting room on Tuesday, December 28. You can enjoy cake and punch while you listen to stories about one of Washington's best-known and most admired public power leaders.

Harold was not a spring chicken when, 30 years ago, he was encouraged to run for the PUD commissioner position being vacated by the retiring Henry Miller. Henry was a farmer like Harold, who had waited out his youth for electricity to be brought to the farm.

I am not sure Harold envisioned the lengthy and distinguished career that awaited him. He was at the forefront of most of the power issues during a time when certainty in the power industry was a thing of the past. Harold saw the end of unlimited hydropower from the Columbia River, to when energy crises and unpredictability are the rule of the day.

Harold, along with his other two commissioners, reasoned the only way out of this circle was to take hold of our own generation. Through vision and perseverance, this idea has grown from a seed to a reality that now makes Klickitat PUD one of the regional leaders in development and operation of renewable generation projects.

Harold's easygoing, jocular personality belies his keen business sense and ability to take risks when the end result warrants action. Harold jokingly refers to himself as the ABS of the PUD Commission—the Automatic Breaking System.

Harold was the first to realize the giant potential of the Last Mile Electric Co-op and what its plans for a public power wind farm could bring to Klickitat County. Mark my words, this will most likely become the largest and most influential generation project for our county, not just for the ability to take firm hold of our energy future, but also the economic engine it will bring to our area.

Please join me in thanking this selfless public servant in letting Harold know we all appreciate everything he has done, and for the legacy he has left us.

Tom Svendsen, General Manager

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