

**Clint Richardson**  
**By: Brooke Mattox**

Originally from Nickerson, Kansas, Clint Richardson, has pursued a life of community service.

A Parkland Light & Water Company (PL&W Co.) board member since 1991, Clint, served in WWII, worked his way up the teaching ranks of Franklin Pierce School District to become deputy superintendent and served on the Pierce County Council for four years. Most of his life has been spent in Parkland. He resides in the home he and his family built 51-years ago.

Clint was influenced by his entrepreneurial father and grandfather, a Southern Baptist minister. In 1939, Clint and his family sold everything and moved to Tacoma in search of a plentiful life with lumbering and fishing opportunities in Washington state. He says Kansas wasn't a fruitful place to live during that time.

Little did he know he left one important treasure in Kansas – his future wife, Florence.

“We dated during eighth and ninth grade,” says Clint.

Years later, Clint reconnected with Florence around the time he enlisted in the navy in 1942 after graduating from high school. Florence was working at Madigan Army Medical Center. They rekindled their love and eventually married. During their 62-year marriage, Florence and Clint had three children: Robert, Mary Alice and John. Since Florence's death in June of 2007, Clint gets through each day by staying busy.

For the past 35-years, Clint has devoted time to his church, Parkway Presbyterian, by serving on committees and helping with other tasks. He rarely misses Sunday service.

This past October, Clint gathered in Lake Tahoe with 57 other WWII veterans for an annual reunion. He has served as Chaplain and has prepared memorial services since 1998.

With a good-natured laugh, Clint tells a story about one of his Navy buddies at the reunion getting seasick from a boat excursion. He's not sure how his past crewmate survived three years aboard ship.

The 58 men at the reunion once lived aboard the same ship during WWII. The ship, USS Indiana BB-58, manned a crew of 2,109.

“Our job was to protect the carriers,” says, Clint.

Along with the others, he lived on the 680-foot ship for three years and visited home twice. Always preparing for war, they'd work four hours, have four hours off, work again, and off again, work again, off again. This cycle would repeat each day. Often

traveling at 27 knots (31 miles per hour), they'd be at sea for months before arriving at destination points.

"It was a great experience – but, I wouldn't do it again," says Clint.

While in the navy, Clint partook in the following operations and engagements: Marcus Island, Gilbert Islands, Marshall Islands, Ponape Raid, Marianas Operation, Palau Islands, Iwo Jima, Okinawa and Kamaishi Hamamatsu. He says Okinawa was the bloodiest.

"There was nothing like Vietnam," says Clint. "We had camaraderie and love for each other."

The most stressful time was when the crew was informed of an enemy torpedo making way toward the ship. They'd hunker down with wonderment of what may happen next.

"The wait seemed like forever," he says.

Clint often met with other marines to hear of their troubles back home. He'd listen to the details and write a letter for them to send to a disgruntle spouse that often wanted to separate. Clint says these personal meetings hold vivid memories because he always wanted to help people.

Pointing to a picture of the USS Indiana BB-58 taken underneath the Golden Gate Bridge after WWII, he boasts it was the first ship to bombard the mainland of Japan and the first one to return to the United States after the war ended. This ship traveled nearly 235,000 miles while at sea.

"We had confidence," says Clint. "We had a job to do – and, we did it."

Shortly after his service ended in March of 1946, he returned to school to obtain a masters degree at Pacific Lutheran University.

After graduation, he accepted his first teaching position at Franklin Pierce School District. During his 30-year career with the district, he taught ninth grade science, coached baseball and football, was vice principal of Franklin Pierce High School and was deputy superintendent for seven years.

"I have a passion for education," says Clint. "This is why I've pushed my grandkids to go to school."

When not bowling, at church, reuniting with past Navy crewmates, or spending time with his three children, their spouses and three grandchildren, Clint, joins other PL&W Co. board members to discuss how the utility can best serve its members. He has been a board member for 17-years. The priority of the board is customer service and building relationships with members. Clint's current role is secretary. He has held each position a

few times. Past board member, Fritz Beitz, encouraged him to become active within the member-owned utility.

Reflecting on his life accomplishments, Clint says, “I’ve done it all.”