

## **Bill Ritter – June 2014**

I was born in Berthoud, but grew up in Loveland. I lived in a one room apartment with my mother, sister, and brother. I went to Washington grade school and I remember the track and field days that all grade schools competed against each other. Colors for Washington were green and white, Garfield were red and white, Lincoln were black and orange, and Big Thompson were blue and white. I made a lot of close friends in grade school some of which were Tim Velasquez, Arlan Schaffer, and Delbert (Beezer) Cruise. For a short period of time my mother moved to South Dakota and I lived with Beezer's family. When I was 10 years old I got my Social Security card because I needed to help support my mother at home. I worked delivering papers starting in grade school and throughout junior high. I worked for D & F Supermarket throughout high school. I worked for 7 years at Hewlett-Packard in Loveland. I started my own electric business, Ritter Electric, for 20 years. I then became an electrical inspector for the state of Colorado. I became an electrical, building, plumbing and mechanical inspector for Colorado Inspection Agency in Windsor for 5 years. I ended my career as an electrical, building, plumbing and mechanical inspector for Weld County. Now I have been retired for 5 years.

Ellen (Weickum -class of 65) and I have been married 47 years, 48 in November. We have an 80 acre irrigated farm in Berthoud. We still have horses and Ellen continues to compete in barrel racing in Colorado. We have two children. Will, graduated from the University of Wyoming in accounting. He is an accounting manager at Sports Authority at the corporate office. He has two children, Liam 10, and Lexi 8. He lives in south Brighton across from the Buffalo Run golf course. Jennifer, graduated from CSU in business. She is a commodity manager at Hach Chemical. She has 1 child, Jordan 9. She lives in north Loveland.

One thing that stands out to me in high school is that I took 2 years of metal shop because I was afraid of going into Walt Clark's wood shop because he was tough on his students. When I got up the nerve to take his class little did I know that he was more than a wood shop teacher, but also a teacher of valuable life lessons. He was a great mentor to me and an awesome man. He had a list of 21 rules that you had to pass or you couldn't work on any power equipment. If I remember correctly rule 21 was no horseplay in the shop. If you violated that rule or any rule you had to stand up in front of the class and they voted if you had to bend over and get the paddle from him. Of course everyone always voted yes.

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