



ORCAS POWER & LIGHT COOPERATIVE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OPALCO Co-op Members Re-Elect Orcas District Directors; Record Number of Ballots Cast

More than twice as many ballots were cast in this election than in last year's (1,349 compared to 620 in 2008) and 420 people attended the 72nd Annual Meeting of the members of Orcas Power & Light Cooperative (OPALCO). The annual meeting took place Saturday, May 16th on the ferry.

Incumbents Chris Thomerson and Roger Crosby, both of Deer Harbor, were re-elected for District 2 (Orcas, Armitage, Big Double, Blakely, Fawn, Little Double and Obstruction Islands) and will serve additional three-year terms. Thomerson was first elected to the board in 2006 and Crosby has served since 1988. Board officers for 2009 were also elected. Thomerson will continue to serve as President, Dave Hylton as Vice President and John Bogert will assume the position of Secretary/Treasurer.

OPALCO members were treated to lunch catered by Heart of a Child. OPALCO staff members were on hand to talk about energy-efficient practices, automated metering, eBill+AutoPay and Project PAL. More than 45 members took home door prizes that included local goods, a solar-electric generator kit, Mariners tickets, gift certificates, power tools, fun gift baskets, camping gear, kitchen tools and gardening sets. Six members who sent in their absentee ballots were drawn for \$50 credits on their next OPALCO bills. The six lucky winners were: Dennis Bonner & Candace Verbrugghen; Steven Rubey; Raymond Lund; Cal & Clarena McLachlan; James & Ruth McBride; and Glenn Prestwich. Special thanks to the Yale alumni who served as volunteers for the event as a community service project.

In attendance were Stuart Clarke, OPALCO's senior account executive from BPA's Power Business Line and Melanie Jackson, Transmission Account Executive, BPA Transmission Business Line. Clarke explained to the group how BPA rates are set and predicted that the rate increase scheduled for October 2009 will be lower than the original estimate of 10-20%. BPA is currently involved in a rate case. General Manager Randy Cornelius announced that OPALCO conducted a cost of service study and concluded that residential rates will remain unchanged in 2009 while the board will consider a commercial rate adjustment at their June meeting.

OPALCO is a member-owned cooperative electrical utility serving more than 11,000 members on 20 islands in San Juan County. OPALCO provides electricity that is 97% greenhouse-gas free and is predominately generated by hydro-electric plants. OPALCO was founded in 1937 to bring electricity to rural islanders.

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