



ORCAS POWER & LIGHT COOPERATIVE

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Action Packed OPALCO Annual Meeting! George Mulligan and Vince Dauciunas Elected to Board

The WSF Elwha was chock-full of energy superheroes on Saturday: 325 people attended the 74th Annual Meeting of Orcas Power & Light Cooperative (OPALCO). It was an action-packed morning of good friends, good food and good fun punctuated with the unveiling of several new programs to benefit OPALCO members including: the **Together We Save** energy efficiency campaign, which puts information, DIY resources and tools into members hands; the first annual **Nourdine Jensen Cooperative Youth Scholarship Program** awards; the new Islander's Bank **Get Connected** Small Home Improvement Loan Program to finance energy efficiency measures in members homes; and a new way to develop and support **MORE (Member Owned Renewable Energy) Local Power**.

Voter turn-out was robust with a total of 1300 ballots cast for two board positions in District 1 (San Juan, Brown, Henry, Pearl and Spieden Islands); 1165 absentee ballots were submitted in advance. The two successful candidates were incumbent **George Mulligan** and **Vince Dauciunas**, who was nominated by petition. The final vote counts were: Mulligan – 689; Dauciunas – 654; Hylton – 592; Zee – 334 and Madsen – 308. Board officers elected were: Chris Thomerson for President, Jim Lett as Vice President and John Bogert in the position of Secretary/Treasurer.

OPALCO members were treated to a hearty and gourmet brunch by The Bay Cafe. More than 50 members took home door prizes that included local goods, energy efficiency tools, a 55-watt solar panel set-up, gift certificates, power tools, fun gift baskets, 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 are: Richard Hobbs, Gertrude Ahbel-Dallas, Ross Brown, Paul Chiles, Betty Bostrom and the Hull Family LLC.

Three local students received the first annual **Nourdine Jensen Cooperative Youth Scholarship Program** awards, including a \$500 scholarship check and a week at the Youth Rally leadership camp at the College of Idaho this summer. The students awarded are: Susanne Mietzner (Orcas High School), Connor Smith (Friday Harbor High School) and Samantha Swanson (Spring Street International School). Nourdine Jensen served on the OPALCO board for 37 years. Jensen's daughter, Jerri Ahrenius presented the students with their certificates.

General Manager Randy Cornelius spoke about OPALCO's long-range energy plan including rates, energy efficiency and load management. He said "The more each member practices energy efficiency and conservation, the more we can manage our load as a Co-op and forestall future higher market rates." Cornelius explained the difference between Tier I and Tier II rates: "Tier I rates are what we are used to: relatively low rates for our current fuel mix that is mostly clean,

renewable hydro-power. Tier II rates are at the market rate—whatever fuel source BPA can purchase at the time it is needed and at the market price. Tier II rates will begin when we reach a certain level of load growth.” Cornelius predicted that with OPALCO’s relatively slow (approximately 1%) annual load growth, that we are not likely to get into Tier II ‘market’ rates until 2014—and, he emphasized, “with greater energy efficiency, conservation and MORE local renewable power, we can likely delay that even further out.”

In answering a member’s question about OPALCO’s current rate structure, Cornelius explained that the rate structure has three components: fixed costs, capacity costs and energy costs. The base charge of \$25.50 is designed to cover OPALCO’s fixed costs, the demand charge covers the capacity costs and the kilowatt-hour charge covers the energy costs. He also mentioned that the Board of Directors will be working on rate structures beginning in 2012—and board meetings are open to the public.

Cornelius encouraged members to help develop and support MORE local renewable power in the islands through OPALCO’s new program: MORE (Member Owned Renewable Energy). He applauded the group of seven members who worked over the past year to develop the new program which is set up for members to participate by buying blocks of local member-produced green power on their monthly bills. “It’s much like the green power program that’s been in place since 1998,” Cornelius explained. “The difference is: now all of your donations are going to support local renewable energy generated by fellow co-op members right here at home.” You can sign up to support MORE local power by calling 376-3500.

Touchstone Energy Cooperative’s energy superhero CFL Charlie was onboard to help launch the **Together We Save** campaign and encourage members to become energy superheroes in their own homes. Thanks to Orcas High School super Key Club members Seabern Gieger and Jamison Rose who were the CFL Charlie team. CFL Charlie will be touring the islands for the next two weeks promoting the Together We Save Energy Efficiency contest that runs from June 1st – July 1st. The contest invites OPALCO members to download a quiz from www.opalco.com and correctly answer questions about energy efficiency and conservation. The winner will be drawn from all correct, complete entries and will be awarded an **Apple iPad2**. Check OPALCO’s website starting June 1st to download a quiz and enter the Together We Save Energy Efficiency Contest.

OPALCO’s certified Building Performance Analysts Tim Hance, Doug Poole and Dave Meiland were onboard talking to members about the Home Snapshot Energy Assessment Program. At the meeting, the new **Get Connected Small Home Improvement Loan Program** through Islanders Bank was unveiled to help OPALCO members with energy efficiency improvements to their homes. Islanders Bank’s **Get Connected Program** offers low-interest loans of \$2,000 - \$10,000 to qualifying households in San Juan County for targeted home improvement projects. To learn more, contact your local Islander’s Bank branch.

There is a lot going on at OPALCO and with energy issues nationwide. The best way to stay on top of the latest information and resources is to keep in touch with our website: www.opalco.com and subscribe to OPALCO’s energy services blog: Sharing the Load.

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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