



# ORCAS POWER & LIGHT COOPERATIVE

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## **Six Candidates Running for OPALCO Board of Directors in May 16<sup>th</sup> Election**

Orcas Power & Light Cooperative (OPALCO) is a member-owned cooperative and on May 16<sup>th</sup>, the member-owners will exercise their right to elect their Board of Directors. Who is a member of OPALCO? Anyone who receives an OPALCO power bill in their name is a member. In this year's election, there are six candidates running including two incumbents: Roger Crosby and Chris Thomerson; three nominated by committee: Winnie Adams, Joan Pedrick and Jeff Struthers; and one nominated by petition: Moriah Armstrong. [Please see attached for complete candidate bios.]

OPALCO's governing board consists of seven directors who are elected for three-year terms, with the elections staggered by district. Candidates are typically nominated by a committee appointed by the Board, but any member may seek nomination by petition with the signatures of at least fifteen voting members of their district. Each director is elected by a vote of OPALCO members and all members may vote in every election, regardless of their home district. Each member household gets one ballot regardless of how many meters or accounts they may have.

Present directors are David Hylton and George Mulligan—District 1 (San Juan, Brown, Henry, Pearl and Spieden Islands); Roger Crosby and Chris Thomerson—District 2 (Orcas, Armitage, Big Double, Blakely, Fawn, Little Double, and Obstruction Islands); Jim Lett and Bob Myhr—District 3 (Lopez, Decatur, Center and Charles Islands); John Bogert—District 4 (Shaw, Bell, Canoe and Crane Islands). District 2 directors are up for election this year.

Absentee ballots are enclosed with OPALCO's annual report, which will be arriving in mailboxes the first week of May. Absentee ballots must be received at the Eastsound OPALCO office no later than Friday, May 15<sup>th</sup> at noon. Ballots can also be cast at the annual meeting on the ferry, Saturday, May 16<sup>th</sup> where the election results will be announced. A quorum of at least 100 members is required at the annual meeting for the election to be held.

OPALCO's 72<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting will be held on the ferry on Saturday, May 16<sup>th</sup>. Members from San Juan Island will board the ferry at 8:25 am (or ride the Mystic Sea *by reservation only*); Orcas Island at 10:20 am; Shaw Island at 10:35 am; and Lopez Island at 11:00 am. For the full travel schedule, please go to [www.opalco.com](http://www.opalco.com). Members and their families who attend the annual meeting will be treated to a healthy and delicious sack lunch, free gifts and the chance to win one of more than fifty fabulous door prizes such as power and garden tools, Mariner tickets, generous gift certificates, kitchen tools and appliances, camping and sporting equipment, OPALCO bill credits, art and merchandise from local businesses. Every member who attends will receive a \$5 credit on their next bill. Get on the ferry and ride!

OPALCO is a member-owned cooperative electrical utility serving more than 14,000 accounts 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 and is one of 900 electric co-ops in the United States today.

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## **Orcas Power & Light Cooperative 2009 Board of Director Candidates**

### **WINNIE ADAMS**

Winnie Adams graduated from Stanford School of Education with a Masters degree. After several years of classroom teaching, and two summers working as a white water raft guide, she joined the environmental education staff of the Yosemite Institute.

In 1977, she moved to Waldron where she built a small house powered by solar energy. Initially she could power only lights. As technology developed she has been able to add to the system. For example, Winnie and her husband Bob Gamble now pump their well, do their washing, and recharge power tools by alternative energy.

In 1990 Winnie and Bob moved to Orcas and began living part time on the grid. She has now lived on two islands and worked on three. Winnie has kayaked and sailed the area and knows this county: the topography, the micro-climates and the disparate human community and the need for community process.

“I have a sense of OPALCO's history, a deep commitment to the co-op model, a unique experience informed by the dual perspective of living on and off a power grid, and decades of informing myself about power generation and conservation,” said Adams. “OPALCO is a shining star among the small rural electrical cooperatives providing us a long history of excellent management, service and low rates. Because we are small we are more agile than many co-ops are in these times of change. As a board member I intend to build on the legacy of strong financial footing and excellent service while considering a wide horizon of conservation and power sources.”

### **MORIAH ARMSTRONG**

A property owner and Orcas Power & Light Cooperative member since 1980, Moriah Armstrong has lived on Orcas Island with her husband Daniel since 1977 and raised four children here. Moriah graduated Magna Cum Laude with a BA from Whitman College and earned a Masters in Education in School Counseling from Western Washington University. She has been committed to serving children, families and the community of Orcas Island as a volunteer and professionally for the past 30 years.

Her work experience includes: founder and director of Orcas Montessori Preschool, Director of the Children's House Family Resource Center, Executive Director of Orcas Island Prevention Partnership and the Program Coordinator for the Orcas Island Readiness to Learn Program. Retiring in June 2009, Moriah will have the time and energy necessary for the responsibilities of a director.

With a strong background in collaboration and teamwork, Moriah would bring an important community perspective to the current OPALCO Board of Directors. She understands budgets, sound fiscal management and the needs of our community for affordable and reliable electricity. As a life-long organic gardener, she strongly believes in protecting the environment and supports OPALCO's commitment to conservation and energy efficiency. She is committed to OPALCO's mission to provide efficient and economical electrical service to its members and appreciates the coop's proactive leadership to ensure our community's current and future energy needs.

### **ROGER CROSBY**

Roger Crosby has been a member of the board of OPALCO since 1988. In his working life he was a board member of nine companies, including a telephone company and two banks. He has been an Arbitrator for courts and a member of the American Arbitration Association. Crosby was a member of an advisory board to the Seattle school district, a church deacon and a ship fitter.

His last position before retiring was Vice-President and General Counsel of the holding company of Burlington Northern. "Thirty years in the transportation and utility fields have provided me with knowledge and expertise which has proven to be beneficial to OPALCO. When I came on the board of OPALCO there were frequent power outages. One remedy I worked hard for was a massive five-year undergrounding program. I also made the motion and argued for the present BPA power rate contract which extends through 2011."

"I believe that cooperatives should be guided by their members for the benefit of the membership as a whole. My continuing goal for OPALCO is to provide reliable service at a reasonable cost. I see the two most challenging issues presently facing directors as (1) maintaining Bonneville Power Administration as the controller of power transmission to OPALCO and (2) holding down rates in these turbulent times."

### **JOAN PEDRICK**

Joan Pedrick has enjoyed island life for over a decade. She brings a personal dedication to working cooperatively to promote a better life for islanders and a commitment to alternative energy and green power solutions.

She is an attorney and mediator, a university instructor and director of a local non-profit agency. Her education includes degrees in Philosophy and Rhetoric from Bates College, a JurisDoctorate from Northwestern School of Law at Lewis and Clark; and an LL.M. postgraduate degree from the University of Edinburgh. Joan also has significant life experiences with exposure to experts, research, conferences, forums and legislation relating to power production. While on OPAL Community Land Trust's board of trustees, she lobbied for "green" products and alternative energy solutions.

“I believe in collaborative and responsive government. Our infrastructure is vital to the well being of all our citizens and in these challenging times, it is essential that we explore and employ affordable and environmentally sustainable methods to generate energy. There are diverse forms of sustainable energy production that are exciting and viable alternatives to fossil fuel consumption, on scales both small and large. Having lived off the grid for many years, I recognize the importance and the hurdles of power generation and have a deep appreciation for the need for energy conservation. I have also been privileged to work with people from all walks of life. In short, I would be honored to represent the voice of the islands and members of our unique form of a cooperative utility.”

### **JEFF STRUTHERS**

Jeff and his late wife Judith joined the Orcas community full-time in 1998. Since then, Jeff has founded a home-based software business, served on the Finance Committee of the Orcas Center, and been the President of the local chapter of an association for aviation enthusiasts. Currently, Jeff is personally constructing a highly efficient house of his own design using numerous novel technologies.

Before Orcas, Jeff was an executive in a private equity company, evaluating and structuring investments, crafting and negotiating contracts, securing intellectual property, and managing the founder’s family trusts. Earlier, Jeff was a career executive with U.S. Office of Management & Budget (OMB), leading a team of technical and fiscal experts to advise three administrations concerning proposals totaling some \$9.5 billion annually. Jeff also represented OMB on various interagency panels and taught seminars on the budget process.

Jeff was OMB’s expert for renewable energy and conservation technology during the last energy crisis, helping to define a Presidential Solar Energy initiative and to negotiate renewable energy legislation. Jeff also served as an Air Force Engineering Officer, managing a portfolio of engineering projects for a network of satellite tracking stations. Jeff holds a degree in Electrical Engineering and an MBA from Harvard. He is a registered Professional Electrical Engineer (PE).

“I will work closely with Management and other Board members to:

- ensure OPALCO remains a safe, healthy and efficient organization;
- seek paths for cooperative action with other organizations that best serve and protect our member’s interests;
- encourage affordable and convenient measures for further enhancing energy efficiency; and,
- secure the cheapest, greenest, long-term supply of energy that will well cover our members’ future needs while protecting our unique culture and environment.”

## **CHRIS THOMERSON**

Chris Thomerson, currently serving as Board president, sees OPALCO as a crucial part of island livability and is committed to combining reliable service with exemplary resource stewardship at low cost.

Also president of the Washington Rural Electric Cooperative Association, Chris actively encourages collaboration between non-profit Rural Electric Cooperatives in Washington State and throughout the Pacific Northwest.

He brings technical experience and perspective to ensure we meet the challenges ahead, including technologies to efficiently manage our power distribution network; and encourage members to adopt sensible money-saving energy efficiency measures.

Chris' degree in Electrical Engineering from the University of Manchester in England was sponsored by a scholarship from the Eastern Electricity Board. He trained as a field engineer in the distribution system in north London, including training in field operations and generation technology.

After sailing in this area for many years, Chris and his wife Lynn moved here from Eugene, Oregon, where Lynn worked as an Elementary School Librarian.

His business provided management training for major northwest companies. He spent the best part of a year training BPA groups ranging from the top executives to field groups on the outskirts of their operations.

Chris wants OPALCO to be a leader in deploying appropriate cost-effective technologies to increase reliability, safety and energy efficiency while protecting our uniquely beautiful and sensitive environment.

His priorities for OPALCO to achieve this continue to be:

- Harness appropriate technologies
- Work safely and efficiently
- Collaborate in crafting effective legislation
- Promote energy efficiency

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