

The Three R's: Relocating, Recycling, Renovating

It may have been serendipity that brought OPAL its first recycled house but, in doing so,



Recycled House Averages

Square Feet:	966
Year Built (oldest is 1910):	1953
Nautical Miles Traveled:	62
Square Feet of Insulation Installed:	999
Square Feet of Windows Installed:	55

Recycled Items

Purchased for Renovation:

Propane heat stoves (3), windows, doors, slate for hearth, countertops and cabinets.

Items Sold or Donated in

Renovation: Windows, doors, cook stoves, counter tops, refrigerator, sinks, flooring.

OPAL found a good fit for its locally grown and somewhat scrappy and self-sufficient island culture. We now have eight relocated houses in our family of community land trust homes and the organization is mastering the craftsmanship of reworking recycled houses into healthy and sustainable homes. The logic and savings of recycling a house doesn't stop with the arrival of the barge and the careful tucking of the building onto its new foundation.

In making each house an island home, OPAL and its contractors have become very resourceful in finding local materials, repurposing materials and using online platforms such as Orcas Buy-Sell-

Trade (BST) to keep goods and materials cycling in – and out – of our homes. In a house on Seaview Street, for example, the propane stove came from BST, some doors and windows from the Skagit ReUse/ReBuild Store and the wool carpet is repurposed from a San Juan Island home.

Not everything is recycled, however. “There are certain things we won't compromise on in our homes for the sake of health, quality of life and lasting value,” said Jeanne Beck, project manager. “Hardwood floors, wool carpet and marmoleum (when we can afford it) are on our list. We are always looking for cool stuff that we can recycle locally – and that gives us more room in the budget for those ‘extra mile’ projects we would really like to do to make each home shine.”

The mandatories in each recycled home include insulation, Convector heaters and often windows to ensure the home is warm and affordable to heat in the winter. OPALCO's rebate program helps to keep these essentials cost effective.

A Who's Who of New Trustees

Interesting recent books they have read: Virginia enjoyed Jodi Picoult's *Leaving Time*, "a novel that featured the emotional lives and grieving patterns of elephants." Margaret read Stacy Shiff's *Cleopatra, a Life*, "which makes our politics look a little less toxic." Tim read Ken Follett's *The Edge of Eternity*, a historical novel. Kurt found Susan Cain's *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking* intriguing.

Tim once worked for a detective agency; **Virginia** drove a nut truck; **Kurt** was a bellman at the Grand Budapest Hotel and **Margaret** is developing her woodworking and stained glass making skills.

Board of Trustees

Helen Bee, President
Vicki Brems
Douglas Ellis, Treasurer
Virginia Erhardt
Tim Fuller
Bob Gamble, Vice President
Kurt Hunt
Margaret Mills
Suzanne Olson
Rollie Sauer, Secretary
Penny Sharp Sky
Allen Smith
Ian Van Gelder

Staff

Lisa Byers, Executive Director
Jeanne Beck, Project Manager
Julie Brunner, Housing Manager
Elaine Shiozawa, Office Manager
Judy Whiting, Publications and Outreach

A Wealth of New Talent Joins the OPAL Board: Anthropologist, Architect, Fire Chief, Psychologist



From left, new OPAL trustees Tim Fuller, Virginia Erhardt, Margaret Mills and Kurt Hunt bring an abundance of knowledge and experience. See the first column for some fun factoids about them.

Architect Kurt Hunt, anthropologist Margaret Mills, former fire chief Tim Fuller and retired psychologist Virginia Erhardt have recently joined the OPAL Board of Trustees. You can find their formal bios at www.opalclt.org. Kurt and Virginia are OPAL homeowners.

Tim claims that karma brought him to Orcas. "After my wife and I moved from Minnesota to Seattle, a colleague suggested visiting Orcas Island. After being on Orcas for all of about an hour, we decided this was 'the' place. We put an offer on our current home two days later. I want to serve OPAL because I feel strongly that we need to provide people in service industries the opportunity to make Orcas their home."

Kurt remembers interviewing for jobs. "While I had scarcely heard of the San Juan Islands, I was hooked the moment I disembarked the seaplane. Once I discovered how

amazing people are here, I knew this was home. I have friends who have lived in very difficult situations just to stay on Orcas. OPAL has given so much to this community that I want to give back in some way."

Virginia reports, "The first time my partner and I visited Orcas, 25 years ago, we felt so drawn to the beauty of the island, the friendliness of residents and the sense of community we observed. It took us 20 years to make our dream come true. Investing time in OPAL feels like a way of giving back and helping the whole island to thrive."

Margaret was raised in Seattle. "The San Juans were the exotic far-off destination for my family's little sail boat. There were hills and not too many tourists. Serving OPAL seems natural to me. My parents were from farming families. They believed in land ownership and stewardship and so do I."

OPAL's Legacy Circle

Ensuring OPAL's Future

With the help of hundreds of islanders – LIKE YOU – OPAL has created (and is *still creating*) a remarkable asset for our community: **permanently affordable homes**.

Generations from now, those homes will still be affordable to new families ~ families who will be an essential part of the fabric of life on Orcas. And generations from now, OPAL will still need to exist to steward all that you have helped us create.

To keep OPAL flourishing, we need a Stewardship Endowment

of at least \$3 million. It is a big number, but we CAN reach it with the help of many people. Our first step in reaching this number has been to create the **OPAL Legacy Circle** to celebrate those who make a commitment to leave a legacy gift to OPAL in their will.

We invite you to join these 30 islanders who have already become part of the OPAL Legacy Circle. With a legacy to OPAL written into your will, you can be sure that something you value – OPAL's work and its impact on the Orcas community – can continue long after you are gone.

“Housing is not just for the rich and it never should be! Everyone deserves a warm home.”

“Here on Orcas Island we are relatively immune from many of the problems of the mainland, but we are even more dependent upon each other simply because we are a small and relatively isolated community. OPAL fills a vital need in providing affordable housing to many of our island residents who would otherwise

not be able to be here. These are valuable members of the community, providing much of the labor that we depend on, enriching our lives with their talents, and volunteering their time and effort to our institutions. Investing in OPAL is something that we can be proud of. We are all islanders! ☺☺

– Paul Losleben & Merry Bush, residents of Doe Bay and long time OPAL supporters

IN THIS ISSUE

Writing and Editing: Helen Bee, Vicki Brems, Lisa Byers, Virginia Erhardt, Suzanne Olson
Design: Mary Ann Sircely, Sircely Marketing & Design; Layout and Images: Judy Whiting



Charter Members of the OPAL Legacy Circle

Anonymous (multiple)

Winnie Adams

Rosemarie Altberg

Marilyn Anderson

Helen Bee

Mary Blackstone

Merry Bush

Elisabeth Byers

Joe Cohen

James Connell

Catherine Ellis

Douglas Ellis

Virginia Erhardt

Martha Farish

Peter Fisher

Mary Gallo

Bob Gamble

Steve Jung

Paul Losleben

Susan McBain

Gabriel Olmsted

Jeanne Olmsted

Linda Sacks

Douglas Schliebus

Judith Schliebus

OPAL has been honored by the following departed members of its Legacy Circle:

Cristine Chandler

Mary Ellen Gaylord

Bob Henigson

Larry Sacks



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Org.
US POSTAGE
PAID
Eastsound, WA
98245
Permit No. 5

Physical Location: 286 Enchanted Forest Road
PO Box 1133
Eastsound, WA 98245
(360) 376-3191
opalclt@opalclt.org
www.opalclt.org

Annual Report

The 2014 OPAL Annual Report is available online at <http://www.opalclt.org/annual-report/> - you may wish to review it before the April 29 annual meeting.

Save the Date

The OPAL Annual Meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 29. Tour the recycled houses on Mountain View and Seaview streets - an open house from 5 to 5:45. Then meet at the Episcopal Church Parish Hall for a **brief business meeting and update** beginning at 6. The evening will close with a **potluck** dinner. All OPAL supporters, please come!

Community Loan Fund Update

OPAL staff and volunteers continue making progress toward launching a community loan fund for the island. Our goal is to help sustain the island's economic diversity using a nonprofit loan fund through which local investors will lend money to individuals for home loans and possibly small business loans. Borrowers would be people who are a sound credit risk, but are not yet able to obtain a bank loan, or who are interested in properties that are not adequately developed to qualify for bank financing. For the past 20 years this need has been partially met

by islander Michael Brennan, who has made loans - mostly for real estate - to more than 230 individuals and businesses. What would Orcas be like today without the people who bought homes or ran businesses by borrowing from Michael? Michael will retire one day and we want his work to continue. Analysis to date indicates that a loan fund is viable. The next step is to develop a full business plan, and to find partners who will collaborate to support the loan fund. If you are interested in participating or learning more, call Lisa Byers at (360) 376-3191.

Visit us online at www.opalclt.org