

Because ...

A HEALTHY COMMUNITY **Needs AFFORDABLE PLACES to Live**

● **Get Connected:**

Go to www.opalclt.org

to sign up to receive OPAL's newsletter and blog.

● **Volunteer:**

Call 376-3191 to help with office projects, special events and ongoing activities.

● **Come and Celebrate:**

Saturday, May 17

25th Birthday Picnic

Weather will decide the location. The night before, check www.opalclt.org and look at "NEWS." Party begins at noon, rain or shine!

Saturday, July 5

4th of July Parade, Eastsound

Saturday, September 20

OPAL's Annual Gala Dinner

● **Show Your Support:**

Donate \$25 in honor of OPAL's first **25** years.

Online: Go to www.opalclt.org and click on "Donate."

Mail: Send to OPAL Community Land Trust, P.O. Box 1133, Eastsound, WA 98245

Enclosed is my donation of

\$25 ___ \$50 ___ \$100 ___ \$250 ___ Surprise us! _____

in support of affordable housing on Orcas Island.

___ Check, enclosed, payable to OPAL CLT.

Visa/MasterCard Number _____

Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/ZIP _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

OPAL Community Land Trust is a registered 501(c)3 corporation. Contributions are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.

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TIME TO CELEBRATE OPAL'S FIRST 25 YEARS

406 MOMS, DADS, KIDS, SINGLES, SENIORS AND DISABLED HOUSED

100 PERMANENTLY AFFORDABLE HOUSES CREATED

29 AFFORDABLE APARTMENTS OWNED AND MANAGED

50+ ACRES OF LAND UNDER STEWARDSHIP

AND \$26.4 MILLION ADDED TO THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Our Report to YOU

25 YEARS OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

In 1989, few of us on Orcas Island had heard of a "community land trust."

Now, 25 years later, it's hard to imagine what our community would be like without the stable supply of affordable housing created through OPAL (which, incidentally, stands for "Of People And Land") Community Land Trust.

Thanks to the vision of OPAL's founders, the encouragement and ongoing generosity of Orcas residents, and many years of hard work by many hands, a thriving island resource has been created that benefits all of us. And because the housing that's created is *permanently affordable*, the benefits to the community are immediate and lasting.

OPAL's original goal still drives its efforts today: To sustain a healthy community with a mix of people earning a broad range of incomes. *How?* By making sure that Orcas has a permanent supply of housing that folks who earn island wages can afford – so they can put down roots, work, play, raise their families and grow old here – generation after generation.



Affordable Homes + Healthy Community

And that's good for you and every other islander.

Work that is essential to the island gets done. Children grow up in stable neighborhoods. Employers have a reliable labor pool. Local businesses prosper. And the island's unique culture and way of life are preserved.

“What OPAL has done for the island is immeasurable. They showed intelligent planning right from the start.”



Jan Koltun-Titus, Orcas native and former Senior Services Coordinator. Her family's land became OPAL's first neighborhood.

“OPAL homeowners are shopkeepers, employees, shoppers, taxpayers ... OPAL is good for the local economy.”

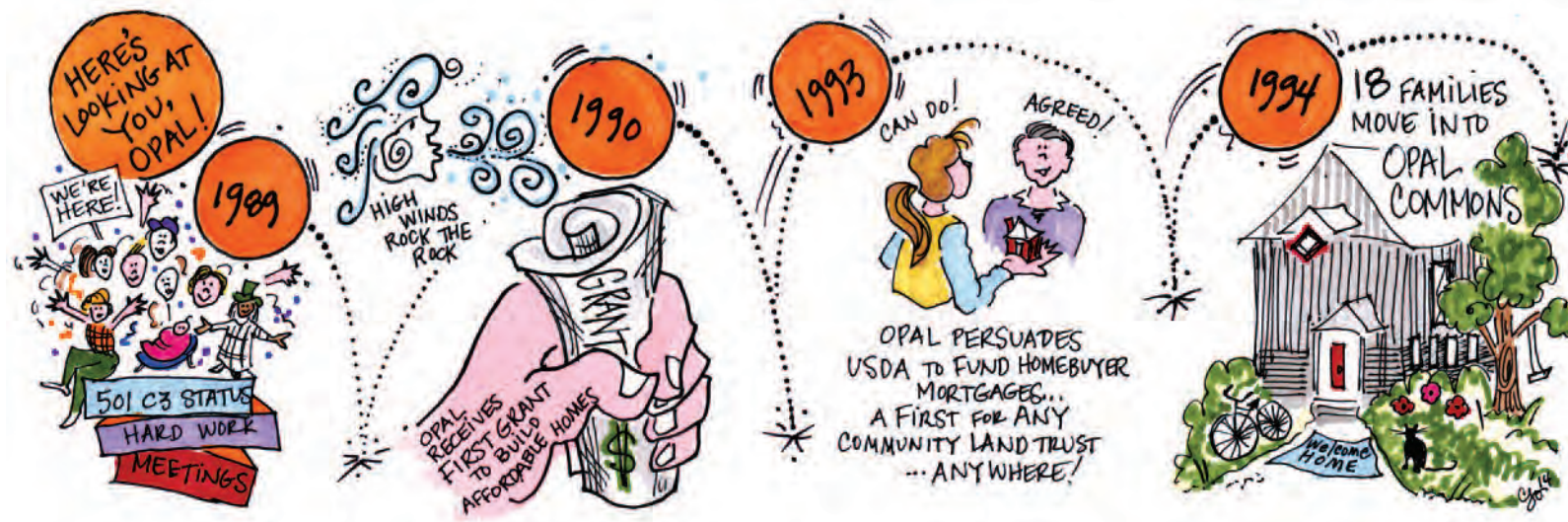


Lance Evans, Orcas Island Chamber of Commerce Executive Director, enthusiastic island booster and active community volunteer.

“OPAL contributes to the lifeblood of this community by making it possible for people earning island incomes to thrive.”



Mary Riveland, Orcas resident and volunteer, who helped lead the effort to preserve Turtleback. She directed four state agencies, including the Department of Ecology.



A Few Facts That May Surprise YOU

- ▶ **OPAL's work on Orcas is recognized nationally.** OPAL is a leader in its field, introducing innovations that have been adopted around the country. OPAL staff are respected mentors and teachers for other community land trusts.
- ▶ In its first **25** years, OPAL projects have attracted **\$8,115,000** in state and federal funds, bolstering the island economy, providing jobs and supporting local businesses.
- ▶ Annually, OPAL neighborhoods and apartments are home to **10 to 15 percent** of Orcas school-age children. Local schools have graduated **61 OPAL students** in the past **25** years.
- ▶ Last year OPAL homeowners paid **\$109,288** in real estate taxes.
- ▶ **337 islanders** currently live in OPAL houses and apartments. Ages range from **6 months to 94 years**. Length of residency on Orcas for the adults: **3 to 44 years**.
- ▶ Housing in San Juan County is consistently the *least affordable* in the state. Last year, first-time homebuyers countywide had **only 48.8 percent** of the income needed to buy a house.
- ▶ Median price of a house on Orcas: **\$380,000**. Price of a typical OPAL house: **\$159,500**. Income of a typical OPAL homebuyer: **\$31,000**. A typical monthly mortgage payment is **\$550**.
- ▶ On average, **17 percent** of the cost of an OPAL project is paid for with **private donations**. The balance is paid for with homeowner mortgages (**63 percent**) and government grants (**21 percent**).



"I applaud the vision, heart and caring that OPAL has brought to the island. I know many of us wouldn't be here without the affordable housing that OPAL offers."

"Families with kids, the small business owner, the carpenter who repaired your roof and the guy who fixed your car ... we're all the same and all want that same American dream ... homeownership. Without OPAL we simply wouldn't be able to afford that dream, much less the dream of living in this amazing community we call home."



AFFORDABLE HOUSING Matters to YOU and to All of Us

- 1. Island demographics are changing (and it's a little scary).** With each new decade, there are more and more older people on Orcas and fewer and fewer younger people. And that puts the island at risk. To remain a viable, vital community we need a mix of ages, of incomes, of abilities.

Here's one striking set of facts on median age:

 - ▶ **37.3** – Everyone living in Washington State
 - ▶ **55.3** – Folks living on Orcas
 - ▶ **31.1** – Those living in OPAL houses and apartments

Affordable housing clearly helps offset our island's aging demographics. OPAL's work promotes age and income diversity, and diversity is key to the long-term health and sustainability of our community.
- 2. We all need the people who live in OPAL houses and apartments to support and enrich our lives.** They perform essential services – services all of us depend on every day. OPAL residents are nurses and healthcare providers, builders, restaurant staff, grocery store employees, shopkeepers, teachers, office staff, home maintenance folks and small business owners. Our island community can't operate – and wouldn't be the same – without them.
- 3. It keeps us whole.** San Juan County consistently has the *lowest wages* and the *highest housing costs* in the state. This disparity makes it extremely difficult for working families to put down roots. OPAL Community Land Trust is a grassroots, homegrown answer – by islanders, for islanders – to the persistent problem of affordability. Having access to affordable housing is what makes it possible for families to stay and be part of this remarkable community.

