

Canyon Views

Facing the challenges of climate change



ARLENE M. WEBB

In December 2015's Global Climate Summit held in Paris, 195 signatory nations and the EU agreed to the earth-wide goal of preventing a two-degree increase in Earth's temperature above pre-industrial temperature.

Two degrees sounds like a small amount, but as we are already witnessing, in terms of global temperature, these small rises have significant effects in our weather patterns and the vitality of our seas and lands.

The most current science indicates that, in order to prevent a two-degree rise in Earth's temperature, we must reduce our carbon emissions to

ZERO by the year 2050. If we fail to reach that goal, we will experience global climate change effects that will be both devastating and irreversible.

To put that time frame into perspective, I think about people I love. In 2050, my children will be 64, 63, and 58. My grandson will turn 40. To say that we live in times that are unprecedented, urgent, and epochal can in no way be considered an overstatement.

To help us grasp the feasibility of this challenge, we can harken to the "moonshot" of the Kennedy era. At the start of the 1960's, the idea of putting "man on the moon" was as big a leap in our collective psyches as is our present mind shift of creating a non-carbon-emitting world. We are a species that has demonstrated an ability to meet

challenges and even surpass the musings of dreamers.

The existential dilemma with which each of us must wrestle is that of determining where we will stand in the midst of this global re-orientation. For we are called – called by the glories of our past, called by the hopes our future generations, and called by the eternity of our Creator God – to make this enormous energy transition in conjunction with a reinvigorated pursuit of justice and peace. The currently reigning twin artifices of 'haves vs. have-nots' and 'peace through war' have no place in the coming global transition.

Do you see the doorway through which we must travel?

Through the rich and beautiful Judeo-Christian tradition, we have re-

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ceived God's dream for our lives here on earth. A serious devotion to our faith imbues us with God's gift of the image of God's Kingdom. The Lord has been known to deal severely with us when that approach is what we need. Simultaneously, God's grace and forgiveness are what enable us to proceed forward - moving beyond the excesses of ego which are a hallmark of humanity's walk here on earth.

In the era of the Great Exodus, God frankly declared to Moses that God was fed up with the arrogance and waywardness of God's people. But we remember that Moses reminded God of God's

promises to the people – promises to always be with them and to help them. And God responded by setting aside pining and wrath in order to deal with the people mercifully so that they might continue to move forward toward God's dream.

Friends, can we not help but imagine that God must surely now sometimes pine for a new beginning, for a fresh start with this project that we call humanity? But we know both from our own personal experiences and from the stories of our rich, rich tradition that God's love and mercy are stronger and longer lasting than God's wrath.

God's love and concern for us is from everlasting to everlasting.

Will you now help God? Will you allow yourself to envision with God a bright and beautiful future for this amazing assortment of life here on Planet Earth? Will you veer neither to the left nor to the right, but move resolutely toward the pathway of our future – to the dream of God?

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Lucas Rue lifts Christy Anderson, ballroom-style.

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Dance

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them – Matt Bauman and Nick Wavra – are local boys who danced at Oktoberfest as children.

The three married couples that founded the group still form its core. They are Matt and Sarah Bauman, Andy and Liz Schaecher and Nick and Imelda Wavra. Later, brothers Jesse and Lucas Rue joined the group, along with Jesse's wife, Leah, and, now, Lucas' fiancée, Christy Anderson.

This season, they're dancing to songs such as "Rock Mi" by Alpenrebelen, "Du Hast" by Rammstein, and "Timber" by Pitbull. Like their music, they combine German and American dance forms, pumping youth and excitement into a tradition that's hundreds of years old.

"Performing Saturday night in the Alpinegarten can't be beat. We have so much fun," Nick said.

The group's unique blend of old and new is more than a crazy idea now; it's a tried-and-true recipe for entertainment that crowds expect at Oktoberfest.

"The standing goal is for people to have fun watching us," Sarah said. "We want to be surprising enough that we're fun to watch again and again."

She credits a trio of Oktoberfest organizers for the chance to perform. Liz Schmidt, John Gooley and Jerry Lauzon "believed in us before we had anything to believe in," she said.

Since that first outdoor performance six Oktoberfests ago, the Kleinstädtler have grown up together. Between having babies and holding down jobs, they practice together every week, year 'round. The commitment is real, especially now that there are 10 children in the mix.

"It hasn't been easy, not by a long shot," Sarah said. "But when we're out



Choreographer Sarah Bauman explains the newest dance.

there performing, and the crowd's enjoying it, it's worth it."

There are other reasons the dancers are willing to put in the work. Performance weekends are paid date nights, said Liz. Dancing keeps you in shape, said Leah, adding, "It's good for couples to have to listen to each other and move as a couple. We've come a long way since our first year."

If dancing ever ceases to be fun, "we'll stop," Sarah said. Over the years, the group has rehearsed in her driveway, in school gyms and in a hay barn. They lean hard on grandparents during performances, but they typical-

ly bring their kids to practices.

That's the case at tonight's practice. As the evening wears on, Kleinstädtler-chen keep the mood light, if their parents weren't already succeeding. All around the 16,000-square-foot Festhalle, the kids romp and play, ride bikes and run as their parents dance.

In a moment of silence between sets, tiny Lincoln Rue snags the keys to his dad's King Ranch pickup, sets off the alarm, and comes tearing back to get it silenced. The grownups just laugh.

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