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WHERE THE PUCK IS GOING: OFFSHORE WIND ENERGY & WEEDING ROBOTS

For all of you looking for a way to help climate efforts, perhaps look at where you are investing; does your mutual fund or ETF currently have you invested in fracking and pipeline companies instead of wind farm companies? Have you thought about the downside risk that might be lurking in your investments? Type your fund in www.fossilfreefunds.org and find out; great listing and ranking of fossil-free funds, as well.



Some Exxon investors particularly wish that they had invested somewhere else. A trial was started in New York City this past week in which the New York attorney general alleges that investors were misled by Exxon as to the risks and costs of climate change while Exxon maintained a separate set of books where the true costs were known to the company. “From 2010, Exxon told the public it had assigned a price to carbon to account for how government regulation would affect its business. However, it privately used a much lower figure, allowing it to make carbon-heavy investments such as in the tar sands of Alberta, Canada, that would appear much less profitable otherwise... ‘As a result of Exxon’s fraud, the company was exposed to far greater risk from climate-change regulations than investors were led to believe’”.

Looking for where the puck is going in clean-tech-sector businesses? This past week the International Energy Agency published a report, **Offshore Wind Outlook 2019**, where their “detailed study of the world’s coastlines has found that offshore windfarms alone could provide more electricity than the world needs... If windfarms were built across all useable sites, which are no further than 37 miles off the coast, and where coastal waters are no deeper than 60 meters, they could generate 36,000 terawatts of power... The study predicts offshore wind generation will grow 15-fold to emerge as a \$1 trillion industry in the next 20 years and will prove to be the next great energy revolution.”

Apparently, offshore wind can provide more consistent generation with less intermittency. “Offshore wind output varies according to the strength of the wind, but its hourly variability is lower than that of solar PV. Offshore wind typically fluctuates within a narrower band, up to 20% from hour-to-hour, than is the case for solar PV, up to 40% from hour-to-hour... At these levels, offshore wind matches the capacity factors of efficient gas-fired power plants, coal-fired power plants in some regions, exceeds those of onshore wind and is about double those of solar PV”.

On another positive note, meet a weed-picking robot powered by solar panels that, in addition to direct weed picking, can really cut down on the amount of herbicides and pesticides sprayed with targeted micro doses. There is a great video of it in action at www.ecorobotix.com/en/. Given the news out of Parma, Idaho, where field workers fell sick after being sprayed by a crop duster, the faster we can switch to targeted micro doses, the better. The Idaho Statesman took the additional step of reprinting their article in Spanish. Here’s the link. www.idahostatesman.com/news/local/investigations/article236501373.html.

I would imagine that farms also would find considerable savings in using less product. It is often the case that ‘doing good’ for the planet and people enables investors to ‘do well’ financially.

¹ www.theguardian.com/business/2019/oct/22/exxonmobil-trial-climate-crisis-allegations-misleading-investors-

² I am not a financial advisor and this is not financial advice
³ www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/oct/24/offshore-windfarms-can-provide-more-electricity-than-the-world-needs

⁴ www.iea.org/offshorewind2019/

⁵ www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/farmworkers-fell-ill-after-alleged-pesticide-exposure-its-going-to-keep-happening/ar-AA-J4rBJ



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THE WEEKLY SUN | CALENDAR

EVENT FEATURE



Presented by the Sun Valley Center for the Arts, the four-piece string band Che Apalache will play for one night at the Liberty Theatre in Hailey. Photo credit: Sun Valley Center for the Arts

CHE APALACHE TO UPSWING LATINGRASS

Performing Arts Series to continue at Liberty

BY DANA DUGAN

The Sun Valley Center show is nearly sold out; the much anticipated performance of Che Apalache will be held at the Liberty Theatre in Hailey, on Friday, Nov. 2. The four-man string band, Che Apalache—whose name loosely means Appalachian homeboy—hails from Argentina where they met and formed. Band leader Joe Troop is originally from South Carolina and “moved to Buenos Aires, intent on being a musician,” he said. “But other than that, I didn’t have much of a plan.”

His bandmates include Argentina natives Franco Martino and Martin Bobrik, and Mexico native Pau Barjau. They began playing together one at a time.

“I was a banjo teacher first when I met Pau in 2011, and Franco in 2012, and Martin in 2015,” Troop said. “We began in 2016 as a small group of bluegrass players in Buenos Aires. We were an anomaly.”

“We only played traditional bluegrass, but I had been exploring fusions since 2010 with a bassist in a duo. But we had synergy. Combining Appalachian and Latin sounds was an experiment.”

They now call their musical style Latingrass—also the name of their debut album—an authentic blend mix of South American music and bluegrass, and their repertoire ranges from Latin rhythms to a cappella mountain gospel songs sung in tight four-part harmony. Their sound utilizes musical street sounds and the unique rhythms of cumbia, tango, and candombe.

“We play our instruments percussively,” Troop said. “We beat the hell out of them. They’re wood instruments, so it works perfectly. A banjo is like a snare, and the mandolin has all kinds of tap-dancing sounds, and quirky percussive things that work. It works and it’s really fun.”

In 2017, the band got a couple of grants for a cultural immersion in the U.S. and is now in the U.S. more frequently. They released another album recently, “Rearrange My Heart,” produced by fellow South Carolina bluegrass legend Bela Fleck.

“It’s a big eclectic mix of diff soundscapes; global music through bluegrass, very new old school,” Troop said.



According to Che Apalache, in Buenos Aires, bluegrass is considered a little exotic but the band wishes people would get up and dance. Photo credit: Sun Valley Center for the Arts

In fact, Che Apalache sounds like a trippy day on a mountaintop while drinking Malbec and mate.

“This group is so unique that I thought they’d be absolutely perfect for our Performing Arts Series,” said Kristine Bretall, director of Performing Arts at The Center. “Che Apalache made a deep impression on me, with their blending of Spanish and English, a cappella and songs with instrumentals, South American sounds and Appalachian roots. They are truly a group unlike any other. In addition, they are a great match to work with high school students while here, and we’ll have a full house with over 240 students coming to the Liberty Theatre in the afternoon for a special free performance. Playing at the Liberty in Hailey will also be a treat. It’s such an intimate venue.”

Che Apalache will also perform in local schools as a part of The Center’s ongoing commitment to arts education.

The band has been on tour since July, playing at festivals, clubs and arts centers.

“Latin American music is huge now so it works in our favor,” Troop said. “We’re a traveling band of friends, connected by musical passion.”

Tickets for Che Apalache and other events in The Center’s Performing Arts Series can be purchased online at sunvalleycenter.org, by calling (208) 726-9491 or in person at The Center box office at 191 Fifth Street East in Ketchum.