

A CHANGED EARTH

By Andrew Wheat

I have seen many days go by and have watched as many changes have happen on our earth. Long ago the sun almost never shone, hidden by the thick, smoggy clouds. I watched as many cars and trucks passed by emitting dark fumes into the atmosphere. That was long ago. Now, in the year 2050, things have changed. Today, the sun shows bright as white, puffy clouds float through the horizon. Laws have banned transportation by car if the destination is less than five miles and have also banned cars using fossil fuels, leaving only solar and wind powered cars on the highways. Scientists have also created machines that they sent into the atmosphere, taking air pollution and turning it into energy to keep themselves functioning. Laws have been passed requiring one to plant ten trees for every one tree that is cut down.

Now the highways are not packed with cars, but with bikers and walkers. Everyone seems to have become much happier since the city took action. It might be the ample amount of birds now arriving to live in the prolific quantity of trees. Or it could be the sweet smelling, brisk air with the magnificent sunsets. It could also be the clear, cool waters that show your reflection instead of just dismal, glaucous waters showing only algae that has risen to the surface. It is also quite possible that all of these changes have had an effect on the amount of time we put into keeping our earth pure and unpolluted. Now the wastelands dispersed with tree stumps have morphed into lush grasslands and abounding forests teaming with tall, brightly colored trees. Instead of using ships that burn fuel for transportation, solar powered speed boats and sail boats are used. Also, solar powered airplanes take off using a large slingshot like object which can catapult them into flight. Volunteers often spend their weekend planting many manmade forests in which the lumber from them is use or things like making furniture. The same rule of planting ten trees for every one that is cut down is still relevant to these forests making our air at least ten times cleaner every day!

Since so many steps forward have been taken to make our earth a cleaner place, many people have felt empowered to help in their own way. As I walk down the streets of Lake Oswego I see many rain barrels, solar panels, compost bins and gardens. As I walk down those streets the actions taken by the people living on them never cease to amaze me. I am always impressed by how many people have decided to help out and make their community a better place. Everywhere I go, I see an improvement to what I saw the last time I was there. Some changes are even as big as a grocery store deciding not to use plastic bags and instead trying to get customers to use reusable bags.

As we have decreased the amount of air pollution we emit, many animal populations that were going extinct have thrived. Now that the plants that they eat have gotten bigger and more abundant, the animals' populations have been skyrocketing. Animals that were once dying out have come back better than ever! People seem to have gotten healthier for two main reasons. First, the beef production has decreased making diets healthier. Second, the good weather has made many people more motivated to go outside and relish their surroundings.

Not just improvements for the environment have been made though. Only seven car accidents have occurred in the last three years now that self driving cars are the only ones on the highway. The amount of people on the highways has also had some effect on the decline because there is never traffic. Since the rule of only 300 cars on the road per day took place, the roads seem empty. As you drive by you see many farms with chickens, pigs, and sheep grazing in the fields, along with ducks bobbing up and down in the water as people on horses cross the street. Only organic locally owned grocery stores are permitted and there aren't many of them, mostly people have started their own farms or at least gardens.

So many people have decided to help out in any way possible, like thinking of ideas on how to save water, or using solar panels and wind to make electricity. All of the solutions people have made have made are just making our planet a better place. Before people had always been saying "someday we'll have to live somewhere else besides Earth because here, it will be too polluted." Once people started realizing that this might actually happen in their lifetime, they decided to help in as many ways as they could. It's funny how people don't seem to mind problems, unless they have to fix them in their lifetime.

People also used to talk about how the future would be so amazing, and here we are, in that future, and they were right! Our world, and our small town of Lake Oswego have become absolutely perfect places to live, even though our town is small, it feels anything but that. Since we were the first town to have every single person working towards making Lake Oswego a better place, many people have seen the changes and decided to make their community the same.

The best engineers and scientists from around the world have come together and are brainstorming ideas on how to make our planet the best they can. our entire Earth has started engaging in helping to make our planet better, and will always be scavenging for new ways to climb higher.

Great things have happened on our Earth and I'm sure they'll keep on happening. As long as people keep trying and striving to reach new goals, our world will become something unthinkable! That we can't even picture in our heads let alone wrap our minds around!

Andrew Wheat is 11 years old and a 5th grader at River Grove Elementary in Lake Oswego. He has lived in Lake Oswego for almost 5 years. He enjoys sports like soccer and skateboarding and also loves to draw.