

DIETMAR – 2021 – HEIDI

YEAR OF THE PANDEMIC – YEAR OF DEMOCRATIC RENEWAL – YEAR OF FAKE NEWS

Off to new shores in 2022. This should be a heartfelt wish of many of us. The year 2021 really demanded a lot from us in terms of tolerance, patience, perseverance, and acceptance of irrational ideas based on false statements. The term fake news became ubiquitous and strategies to deal with it are surfacing.

Still, we seem to have made it. Despite the pandemic, we are still alive, and the regular democratic renewal was exemplary in Germany and America. In the USA, however, it had a bitter aftertaste due to the farewell coup attempt by a criminal liar that we had to tolerate in the White House for four years. What amazed us most is the fact that many democratically elected representatives of the venerable Lincoln Party seem to support this behavior leaving the democratic platform that had been envied by other nations. Dishonest Neo Republicans seem not to differ from stupid and demagogically seduced complainers such as the anti-vaccination opponents.

This divides Republicans today - analogously to the historical model of the Whigs Party split in 1857. The trigger was the ruling of the Supreme Court in the case of "Dred Scott versus Sandford". Chief Justice Roger B. Taney ruled that African Americans were fundamentally barred from civil rights in the United States, which leads us to question the democratic value of the US-Supreme Court. Consequently, a new Republican party was formed that then elected Abraham Lincoln as president. He failed, however, in mediating quarreling sides. The American Civil War began with the attack on Fort Sumter. About 750.000 were killed in the American Civil War e.g., 504 per day.



In practical application, the constitution only allows two parties, which leads to an extreme irreconcilable polarization and prompted the "free" citizens to use violence to convince each other

Today the situation is similar: there are practically only two parties. Both are not very cooperative and hardly willing to compromise. Then there are the demagogic seduction tools of our new digital world, which is shamelessly abused. Conspiracy theories steal the thinking ability of many guarantors. In the background, lurking new rulings from a supreme court that could stir up hostility in the camps - just as it did before the civil war. The constitution has arms ready.

In contrast, today's takeover of government by three parties in Germany is an extremely pleasant experience. Germany also had to contend with constitutional problems, The German Constitution only succeeded after three desperately failed attempts. The modern version, however, is now robust and could be a guideline for a new US constitution that considers the historical lessons.

But enough of the political consideration. There is not much that is personal, however, as the pandemic determined our lives this year and mostly slowed it down. It started with the fact that we could not carry out the planned family cruise this year either. Maybe we will succeed in 2023. Hopefully after two Moderna and one BioNTech vaccination we both have enough antibodies against Covid-19 to make it.



After Christmas we mainly enjoyed nature on our island and the mainland. On the left is a picture of Laurel Park, on the right of our beach. And in no time, we saw ourselves painting the Easter eggs




We celebrated Heidi's 80th birthday with friends at Roessler's enjoying fine food. Of course, Mark came with his four ladies to celebrate. In memory of Brigitte, we show a picture of the Moiks from Graz. Brigitte died of melanoma that summer.




In July, Mark sent us away because he wanted to clear out my model railroad area and junk yard. See the two containers full of many things that I couldn't separate on my own. In order not to disturb him during the clearing out, we flew to visit friends in Wisconsin and stayed there with Don and Diane in the beautiful log house in Mukwonago. Tom and Helena also came to visit us. It was very nice, and we enjoyed the exchange with friends a lot.



This year Nils was the only visitor to visit us over Thanksgiving. In addition to the intracoastal boat trip, we also planned to rent an airplane. Nils is currently getting his own airplane pilot's license. Such tours, however, are currently only possible if you are a US citizen. Mohamed Ata, who just learned to fly here, spoiled the fun - 20 years after 9/11 -!!!! Despite Corona, we managed to celebrate with friends because Millie got her US immigrant visa and can now live with her Roger after many months of separation. The most important event of the year, however, happened far away from us in New Zealand, where we were not even allowed to visit. Annemarei became Chairperson of the department for internal medicine and neurology and gave her inaugural lecture for the "full" professor on August 17th. in this year, Dietmar, Heidi and Mark, we are all so proud of Anna and her participating family and congratulate again,






UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO
WELLINGTON

You are cordially invited to the
Inaugural Professorial Lecture of:

Professor Anna Ranta

Do different folks have different strokes? An unexpected journey

Tuesday 17 August 2021, 5:30pm
Refreshments will be provided following the lecture
Nordmeyer Lecture Theatre, University of Otago, Wellington
23a Mein Street, Newtown, Wellington
RSVP to: wellington-events@otago.ac.nz
otago.ac.nz/wellington/events



Sailing time with the Rantas

And here are a few more pictures from our little family's past: In Bavaria in 1983 and south Sweden in 1985. Mark is investigating a rocky white strip from Swedish Shares.



Good Luck to all of you for 2022 from Heidi and Dietmar