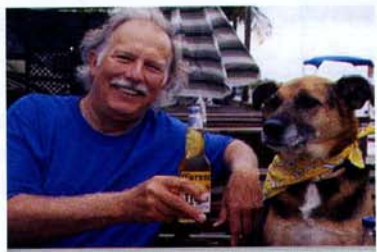


ramblin' with richard

I RESOLVE... by Richard Huss



It's that time of year, and I've made my resolution. Yes, that's singular ... one as opposed to several. Years past, it was a plural situation, but I've finally learned. Now, I've got it down to one: a single resolution.

For my column I thought I'd talk with people I randomly met as I went about my business in the tri-cities. I asked the question, "Have you made any resolutions for the New Year?" to maybe 20 people—friends and strangers—I was surprised at the answers. Responses included: I don't make resolutions; I don't need resolutions any more; I make resolutions whenever I want to; I don't need a new year to make resolutions; I keep my resolutions to myself; and of course, the plain and simple, No.

I wondered what had happened to the tradition of making New Year's resolutions? Is it a lost art? As we age, do we think we don't need them? Are we tired of breaking them and feeling guilty? Have we moved beyond having to resolve anything? Or, are we just too worn out with the complexities of life to care?

Then I thought my sample might be skewed because I was asking folks wandering around the tri-cities during the day. Most likely, these are the people no longer working or raising families. So I set out to talk with those appearing to be 30 and under to see what I could find. Mostly they just looked at me as if I were speaking in tongues. The common response went something like this: Nah, I don't make resolutions; if I want to change something, I change it; New Year's doesn't matter ... except to party.

So here I am celebrating the start of 2009. But this year, I'm without my usual list of resolutions:

- Lose those 20 pounds;
- Remember to call close friends, and especially my kids, on their birthdays;
- Learn how to download the photos from my digital camera;
- Cut way back on my carb intake and say goodbye to pasta and bread;
- Ride my bike and exercise daily.

This was the usual list that was sure to produce guilt in me by January 31st. The list haunted me when the server placed fresh, fragrant, warm bread on my table with infused dipping oil. Or the rainy morning I woke up early so I could ride my bike. Or how did I miss so-and-so's birthday? I thought it was in February ... not January.

Historically, I could hold out for a month before I broke my first "I resolve to." Beyond that, it was just a matter of time until all my resolutions were conveniently forgotten.

Though my informal surveys are hardly scientific, I've been thinking about the information gathered. Like a good wine, maybe I can get better as I age. Maybe I can learn a little from my life experiences. Maybe I don't need to wait until New Year's to try to be a better person.

It does make sense to change when change needs to be made.

So, my resolution this year, 2009, is to make my resolutions as I go through the year. Maybe it's all about resolving on this day, as this day dawns. Refuse the bread ... today. Bypass the pasta ... today. Check my calendar for birthdays ... today. Ride my bike ... today. Read the download instructions for my digital camera ... today (If I can find them!).

So, it's Happy New Year to all of you. And may you resolve to live a wonder-filled 2009 ... one day at a time.



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