

Rural Route 4 Resolutions



Phillip Burgess

Fifty percent. Ten percent. Fifty percent of Americans have made new year's resolutions in the last few days. Only ten percent of that group will keep them beyond a few months. Count me among the 90 percent who won't keep their resolutions.

It's the black-eyed peas and hog jowl, right? Give me a bellyful of those staples and I'm agreeable to about anything. But once the new year's routine gets underway, those solemn vows fall by the wayside faster than you can say, "I didn't mean it."

Who started this tradition? And why? I don't think it was a politician who thought it would be a clever idea for folks to make vows they won't keep. But it's a good guess given that's what most politicians do. Nor was it a drunken reveler whose alcohol intake prompted him to stand on the bar and make decrees that he won't remember after his hangover disappears. No, a quick search on the internet (so it's got to be true, right?) reveals there's no single historical origin, but a popular belief that resolutions may have started a long time ago. A long, long time ago, as in 4,000 years.

Back in those ancient days the lives of folks in Mesopotamia centered around agriculture. The beginning of the calendar started in the March/April timeframe, when the crops started to grow. This symbolized a new beginning and was paired with a Babylonian festival. Citizens would make promises to the gods for the new year and used this as a moment to return borrowed tools, supplies and equipment. If you kept your promise to the gods, it was said that good fortune would fall upon you.

Fast forward to today. We don't return tools that a neighbor borrowed, but we do fixate on our weight. In fact, the internet again tells us the most popular resolutions last year were: Live healthier; Be happier; Lose weight; Find a career; Improve finances; Improve relationships; Travel more; Exercise more; Quit smoking; and Reduce drinking. Any of those sound familiar? Without a doubt some resonate with us. But I have other, more personal, resolutions. In 2023, I want to divorce Little Debbie snack cakes.

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Online Bill Pay

Did you know that you can find easy step-by-step instructions to pay your utility bill online?

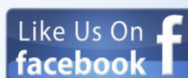
Just visit the TUA website at www.tullahomautilities.com and click the "Pay Your Bill" button at the top of the page. You will be directed to our trusted third-party automated payment partner, Nexbillpay.

You will then be prompted to enter your account number to view your information and utility charges.



We want to hear from you! Rate your TUA service online.

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Watts Happening

(Continued from front)

We've been together for a long time, but it's time for me to find another confectionary girlfriend. Ditto for Blue Bell Homemade Vanilla ice cream. Sadly, there's not a Blue Bell Anonymous group near me that could help with my addiction, so I will have to quit cold turkey.

I want to quit watching so many news programs. I've grown weary of the depression that follows, which may have led to my Blue Bell addiction as a means of coping. I want to stop inserting my big nose into social media arguments. I read something that sounds stupid and here I go. My keyboard starts smoking as I craft witty replies.

I want to be more assertive when it comes to ownership of the television remote. I vow to put up a fight (I'll probably lose) when my wife hoards it and changes the channel to the Hallmark Channel for a Christmas movie in July.

I want to limit my trips to Walmart to only five times per week. It should be easier when I cut Little Debbie snack cakes and Blue Bell Homemade Vanilla from my grocery list.

I want to accept the fact that I'm a senior citizen, and there are things I can no longer do. As much as I like climbing ladders and getting on top of the house, I will remember the fall eight years ago and a second two years ago that rearranged my neck, shoulder, and arm.

But seriously, folks, whatever your new year's resolutions, may your new year be the greatest ever! And may you keep your resolutions until at least April!

Philip Burgess' book, "Rural Route 4, The Good 'Ol Days Were Never Better," is available on Amazon.

Cold and Hot: Winter Safety Tips

Winter weather can cause potentially dangerous situations. Stay safe with these tips:

Electric and heating:

- *Get your heating unit ready with a tune-up and new air filters for maximum efficiency.
- *Make sure wood or coal stoves are properly installed with a chimney or flue, and keep a fire extinguisher handy.
- *Use fuel-burning heaters as directed with proper ventilation. They can produce carbon monoxide and can cause suffocation.

Want to use a portable generator?

- *Have it installed and inspected by licensed electricians.
- *Never connect a generator to your home's main wiring circuit. Disconnect your home from the power system before hooking up a generator. If you don't, electricity may flow backward into power

lines, endangering you, your neighbors, and linemen working to restore power.

- *Don't exceed recommended generator wattage.

Water pipes and freezing:

- *Disconnect hoses and consider covering outside faucets to prevent freezing.
- *During below-freezing temperatures, let indoor faucets drip, and open any cabinet under sinks.
- *Shut water off immediately if pipes freeze. Open faucets completely to relieve water pressure and prevent a rupture.
- *Use a hair dryer to thaw pipes, not an open flame.
- *Operate your water shut-off valve to be sure it works.
- *Winterize irrigation systems, and remove backflow prevention devices to prevent damage.

Stay away from downed power lines. Note the location and call TUA immediately at 455-4515.