

The season of good intentions



You can't beat a system you can't understand

By Sam Bari

January is a special month. It is a month of hope, promise, and fulfillment of dreams. It is that time of year when success is just around the corner, and people are confident that failure has abandoned their vocabularies.

This year is an inauguration year, making it extra special. Promises made will be synonymous with promises kept, and all will be well with the world in the very near future.

Yes, resolutions have been made, and the season of good intentions is off to an auspicious beginning.

Those who vowed to stop smoking, drinking, cursing at bad drivers and eating fatty foods are enjoying resounding success. Obesity, bad diet, inappropriate behavior and poisoning the world with unnecessary pollutants are all things of the past. After all, those who made and announced their resolutions so the entire world knows their good intentions, have stuck to their promises for . . . Hmmm . . . seven days. Amazing, don'tcha think?

If week number one of the New Year were used as a yardstick, Lane Bryant and Big Shops for Men will be hitting the skids in about three months. The tobacco companies will be seeking bailout money along with the sugar industry, baking industry and every fast food franchise on the planet.

People will be courteous while driving. Road rage will be non-existent. More people will smile and raise their index finger instead of . . . you know . . . that other one, when small insignificant occurrences cause them minor inconvenience.

I have not resolved to do anything to improve my life on New Year's Day for several decades. Making promises that are close to impossible to keep does not make

sense. I see no reason to put myself through that much guilt.

People committed to changing their lives for the better do not pick New Year's Day to start. Whenever they find something out of order they just do something about it. Those who have that kind of emotional fortitude and perseverance at the core of their personalities do not have to make a big deal about changing course when the need arises. They are disciplined, and they just do it.

I believe most would agree with me. People like that are disturbed. They are not normal. I actually know two people who are like that, and believe me, they are not happy.

Think about it for a minute. A person who is not overweight, does not smoke, does not drink or drinks in moderation, exercises daily, and does not get upset about petty annoyances, has nothing to look forward to. Every day is the same to them. They must be bored to the max.

Life will never get better for them. These unfortunate people have reached their peak and are maintaining the status quo for the remainder of their natural lives. How sad.

People who have all of that annoying discipline inadvertently set examples for those around them and quietly drive everyone in their lives crazy. They tool around in their fuel-efficient cars, floss af-

ter every meal, eat to live instead of the other way around, and they are generally dedicated to their careers. I would think they are so perfect that finding a mate to match all of those qualities must be difficult. Besides, everybody they know just wants to slap them.

Could you imagine what life would be like if we did not have the diet industry? If you think we're in a recession now, without the calorie counting companies, millions more would be out of work.

I think attempts at drastically changing our lives are not particularly good for our psyche, our self-esteem, and are probably harmful to the economy.

I look forward to bake sales, pie eating contests, visiting with friends at the local tavern, barbecues in the summer time, and birthday parties with ice cream and cake. In about four months, when all of those people who made resolutions are pressed by their doubting friends to account for their successes, some explaining is going to be required.

Everyone who did not succeed will come crashing down big time and the good intentions from the beginning of the year will be quickly forgotten. It happens every April. Those who made resolutions must come to terms with their failures.

A feeding frenzy will consume those who had every intention of losing weight. The nicotine fanatics will be smoking up a storm, and those who swore to be more tolerant of others will just lose it.

The point is, since we all live in this crazy system that we don't understand, we may as well enjoy it. If you want a make a resolution, resolve to do whatever it takes to be happy.

Sapsucker and a Snow Goose. The most abundant species were the American Robin and Canada Goose.

Species also in significant numbers included Bufflehead, Mallard, and Herring Gull. Birds seen within the bird count week but not on the actual count day were Great horned Owl, Kildeer, Belted Kingfisher and Fox Sparrow.

Field observers were Wayne

Munns, Dick Boening, Evelyn Rhodes, Ed Long, Brian Halloran, Candy and Chris Powell. Reporting from home were Gail Chase and Tom Weaver.

Please report interesting winter bird sightings to Candy Powell at 423-1492, or Evelyn Rhodes at 423-1254. Please note there will be a Spring Bird Count in May.

Candy Powell
Jamestown

Letters

Continued from previous page

51 species sighted in winter bird count

The annual Conanicut Island Bird Count was held on Saturday, Jan. 3.

Participation was down, as were the birds, most likely due to the cold, windy weather (25-35 degrees with winds gusting to 40 mph).

The total species tally was 51. Notable sightings included an American Pipit, a Yellow-bellied

WHAT'S COOKING?



350 RECIPES FROM LAND AND SEA

Nautical Impressions

GIFTS FOR SAILORS AND LANDLUBBERS ALIKE

16 West Main Street • Wickford
(401) 295-5303



Midnight Sun on the Wharf

50% OFF

everything in the store!

85 Brown St. Wickford • 295-1601 • Open 7 Days

Brighten Up Your Winter with Flowers and Blooming Plants!

Stop by for our Winter Weekly Flower Special



The Secret Garden

NEW WINTER HOURS
Monday - Saturday
10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

12 Southwest Ave. • 423-0050

History

Continued from previous page

merce Oil Refining Corp. and the Gulf Oil Corp. had been terminated.

From the Newport Daily News, January 5, 1959

The Commerce Oil Refining Corp. was permanently restrained by a federal court today from building its multi-million dollar refinery in Jamestown. . . . Commerce appeared so certain that the refinery would be constructed that it purchased about 700 acres in Jamestown, plus fresh water rights in North Kingstown. Total land cost to the corporation is understood to have been about \$1,000,000.

From the Newport Daily News, January 6, 1959

(headline) Refinery Opponents Hail Judge's Decision; Commerce Official Says Appeal Planned

25 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, January 1, 1984

The temperature hovered at above 30 degrees as about 200 Penguins went to Mackerel Cove Beach in Jamestown at noon on New Year's Day.

From the Newport Daily News, January 5, 1984

Voters Wednesday night at a special financial town meeting voted 128 to 101 to buy into the regional landfill facility at Rose Hill in South Kingstown.

From the Newport Daily News, January 9, 1959

Two residents believe that last week's special financial town meeting, where voters decided to participate in the South Kingstown landfill, was conducted improperly. (They will speak at the next town council meeting.) . . . Each town resident using the landfill will have to pay a \$1 user fee.

From the Newport Daily News, January 10, 1984

"One Hundred Years on Narragansett Avenue" will be this year's theme of the Jamestown Appreciation Day Committee's celebration on May 5.

15 years ago

From the Jamestown Press, January 7, 1994

The School Committee in a special meeting Wednesday voted 4-0 to approve a 1994-95 budget that is projected to raise spending by an unofficial figure of 11 percent over the current \$4.1 million.

The temporary pipeline that will bring drinking water to the island from North Kingstown will be operational by the middle of next week.

(The three top stories of 1993 were the water crisis; construction of the \$23 million cross-island highway which got into full swing, it had been halted by a federal judge when a coalition of environmental groups made claims about federal laws; and a lawsuit that temporarily stopped the town from building a ball field at the corner of Eldred Avenue and East Shore Road.)

An estimated 450 hardy individuals participated in the 18th annual Penguin Plunge to greet the New Year and benefit the Rhode Island Special Olympics.

10 years ago

From the Jamestown Press, January 7, 1999

(The school superintendent) said that the spending plan for 1999-2000 will total \$6.2 million. Some 47 percent of it is in salaries, 14 percent is in benefits and 35 percent is in purchase services like the bus contract and high school tuition.

Try your luck at



CHUCK-A-PUCK

Wednesday Nights in January
at the

Sovereign Bank Family Skating Center

COME DOWN TO THE RINK ON AMICA FAMILY FUN Nights during the month of January and take part in the AMICA Coat Drive to benefit the Martin Luther King Center - Your donation of one coat gets your one puck and one chance to win! Line up, take aim, and chuck... Fabulous prizes await!

Visit SkateNewport.com for daily skating schedules, weather, and other rink happenings!



Downtown Newport • 401.846.3018 • SkateNewport.com