

# The End of New Year's Resolutions

by Vic Berecz

Another new year! Here's how one pundit recently described the resolutions that typically come at this time of the year: "You know, the typical things like the gym memberships, lose weight, quit smoking, reduce debt, go back to church, read more, travel more, eat out less, eat out more, spend more time with family, etc." Here's how I put it a few years ago, after accomplishing the seemingly impossible ... under 200 lbs on the big scale at the *Publix* supermarket. From my private blog of:



**Friday, December 31, 2004: NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS.** Is there still a place for New Year's Resolutions in 2004 ... about to be 2005? Yes, I think so, as long as you are reasonable about it, and don't take the process too seriously. So here goes.

(1) I feel like I need to write. It helps me to clarify my positions and get distressing issues off my mind. So, I hope to do a BLOG entry daily. Knowing I will fail at that ... since we'll be traveling the first three days of 2005 ... let's say I resolve to make at least three meaningful BLOG entries each week. And, for a change, I will deal much more freely with controversial issues. These BLOGs will be for me alone (and maybe those who survive me). They will not be posted on the Internet (so are they really BLOGs?) ... though occasionally I may e-mail an entry to someone who has a special interest in the topic.

(2) I need to resuscitate my "getting in shape" efforts. They've "gone to pot" during the last few weeks. Therefore, in Florida I resolve to walk, swim, and bike daily and work-out in the gym regularly. I resolve to eat and drink less. Hopefully these efforts will result in better focus on the tasks at hand, and significant weight loss. My goal is to get below 180 lbs by the end of February.

If I manage that, I resolve to do something outrageous. Just for the fun of it, I will enter the "Hot Body" contest at the *Junkanoo*. Who knows, some of the old broads who hang around there may appreciate an old fart with enough balls to get involved in something like that!

Now tell me, are my resolutions for 2005 reasonable? Am I taking the resolution process too seriously? Hell no! -- now which question was that an answer to?

Needless to say I didn't write regularly ... needless to say I never got anywhere near 180 lbs ... needless to say I didn't enter the *Hot Body* contest (where the heck did I ever get that idea from?) ... needless to say, I've regained all that weight and more! So what's a guy to do?

The answer is easy – forget New Year's Resolutions. And, I have ever since ... and often before. I recall making a New Year's Resolution to give up smoking for five consecutive years. Once I made it into March, most years the effort failed in January. Actually, I haven't smoked in about 40 years, but it was not a resolution, rather another incentive that succeeded ... my cute, blonde, six-year-old daughter said, "Daddy, I don't want you to die." That kind of appeal works so much better than New Year's Resolutions.

So, I ... like most people ... am not very good about resolutions. But, what got me to write this piece? A couple of months ago I read an article in the *Wall Street Journal* about "To-Do Lists" -- that close-relative of resolutions. That article got my BS-sensors going because it contained essentially a to-do list of suggestions on how to succeed in clearing your to-do list! Yes, that circular concept left my head spinning and deserves an exclamation point.

BTW -- I'm never been very good at to-do lists either. A to-do list of needed household repairs and/or chores was a staple in our household ... probably yours too. But, ultimately my wife ... who usually identified items to be added to my to-do list ... decided to forget the whole idea after "clean dryer vent" was on the to-do list for fifteen years. No, fortunately, there was no fire. One day I explained to her the two basic types of lists we used in computing: FIFO (first-in-first-out) and LIFO (last-in-first-out) and that my to-do list was a LIFO list ... meaning that "clean dryer vent" would likely stay forever at the bottom of that *push-down stack*. That was too much for her, but it meant no more to-do lists for me. Success, sort of.

Now add Rob Reiner's 2007 movie *The Bucket List* to the mix. With Jack Nicholson and Morgan Freeman, it had to be good. And it was very entertaining. But, isn't the bucket list concept just another kissin' cousin of resolutions and to-do lists? The obvious candidates for a bucket list are things you've never done and want to do before you die. Well, I can't think of anything I never done that I still urgently want to do. But, I can think of several things that I've done and enjoyed and now, unfortunately, seem to be history. Should I fill my bucket list with a whole host of these ideas? Then what if I succeed and get to do them again? Does that mean I should be ready to die?

Wow, we're getting into really scary stuff here ... and I wanted to categorize this piece as *Just for Fun*. Maybe its best to just forget resolutions, to-do lists, and bucket lists. Maybe it's time to simply live one day at a time ... where did I hear that before?