

The art of selecting New Year's resolutions worth keeping

By Robert Schimmel

I am not given to making New Year's resolutions because they are usually too intimidating to fulfill and therefore create a failure mentality or become a joke. Taking stock along the way, making small adjustments inch by inch keeps me closer to the path I've chosen and less frustrated.

On the other hand I like the annual "big picture" review and assessment that Jan 1 inspires because there is hope and creative brainstorming that ensues. Therefore, gazing at 2011 in the arts' rearview mirror and into the looking glass of 2012, I'd like to offer a few thoughts.



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Kudos: Lakeview Commons had its problems, but is evolving into just what the South Shore needs to bookend and complement the diverse attractions of the Bijou to Ski Run area and the downtown casino corridor. The finishing touches and opening events in 2012 should gestate new visions for what can and should be done to individualize this extraordinary Lake and landscape we're given. The Tahoe Arts and Design Academy at STHS is a fabulous addition broadening the creative panorama that our kids can investigate and our community utilize. On

the Run at Ski Run continues to appropriate its personality and persevere to upgrade its look and uniqueness. All arts volunteer and membership organizations need to be congratulated and supported.

Challenges: With all the struggles South Tahoe has had developing new venues during the past five years specifically, I'd like to see our city and all affiliated bodies in process (like Caltrans, TRPA, etc.) wake up to the need for loosening the stranglehold of regulations that impede small business growth and "outside the box" creativity that is ultimately the only way it can distinguish itself from just another town. Letting go of the power trips and embracing what our community can do on its own will ultimately make the jobs of our now reduced city staff much easier and more productive. If the arts can't make and flaunt the arts, then what chance do we have of improving our national image? Old case in point is the failed convention center mural for Amgen. Regardless of the event's cancellation here, had the honest approach to this been to beautify the city by turning the arts community loose and supporting it, we and our visitors would have been enjoying some amazing artwork for at least the last 10 months at a pittance instead of a broken down gray wooden "wall". I know if the powers that be want something, it happens, like SnowGlobe, so let's use the same influence to encourage longer lasting, more community friendly economic endeavors, like other performance based fine art, year-round outdoor shows, a regional or national arts expo and/or plein air event, live/work studios (in vacant spaces?), more graffiti artists work, etc.

Personally: I will finally and anxiously be joining the iPhone generation courtesy of my daughter's hand-me-down 3G, my clutter will likely continue but with more organizational elements to make it more efficacious (if that makes any sense!), painting is once again on my "to do" list as is a new website, red wine and dark chocolate aren't going anywhere but

“in and down”, and aging seems to be at the root of all my needed improvements, so I’m eliminating it.

Most of the successes I see come from sincere collaborations that aren’t burdened with mountainous regulations, suffocating bureaucracies or personal agendas. Hopefully, this year the developing Lake Tahoe Basin Prosperity Plan will become a new paradigm for just such large scale planning and implementation that unites passions and coalesces energy into successful actions for sustaining economic prosperity. Even on an individual level, each of us usually needs help at some point in any endeavor, so if we initiate and engage honestly those who can assist us and, in return, give back to them generously, all productivity and end results will be magnified appropriately.

On that note, having left out reams of roughage to cleanse the 2012 trough, may I leave you with the most difficult and important resolution of all: to let peace and loving faith reign and abide in your hearts and actions each and every day of 2012.

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