



Montclair Local's Robin's Nest: Resolve to have FUN in 2018



Tap dancing class at Iowa State College, 1942. WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

By ROBIN WOODS

For Montclair Local



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It's time to look ahead to the New Year 2018. Don't put pressure on yourself with New Year's resolutions, as they're hard to keep and stress you out. You want to lose weight? You look great just the way you are. As the saying goes, "You're not fat, you're fluffy." Planning on running out and joining a gym so you can exercise every day? No, you won't. It's too darn cold out there, and you have no nice workout clothes in your closet.

Here are some suggestions for things to try and places to go once the wrapping paper is cleaned up and all of the Christmas tree needles are swept away:

1. Take tap dance lessons at DanceWorks Studios. Make some time for yourself to tap away. It's so old, it's new again. If that's not your thing, there's always jazz, modern and hip hop classes. Consider it exercise and coordination training in their most palatable forms. Director Kathy Costa-McKeown opened the studio twenty years ago. In honor of their anniversary, DanceWorks will hold fund-raisers to support St. Josephs Children's Hospital, donating 100 percent of what they raise. Look out for the beautifully decorated tile with brochure for ArtWare for Good at the front desk, with the theme "Love, Community and Dance." Adults can attend a Wine & Arts party on Friday, Jan. 12 from 7:30 to 9 p.m. A little Prosecco could turn you into a

Picasso.

2. Too much of a schlep to get to the Rockefeller Center Skating Rink? We have a gem of a place right here in town, Clary Anderson Arena. Staff member Meghan McManamey was put on skates when she was just 18 months old, and she told me that you don't have to be fabulously coordinated to learn how to skate. Lessons are available but not required. Klutzes like me can just hold on to someone and think about the delicious hot chocolate you'll drink when it's all over. Check their schedule for days and times you can make believe you're an Olympic skater.

3. Eat more chocolate. It's good for you. Although Montclair's Susan Fine no longer has a brick and mortar The Chocolate Path store, she still sells the most scrumptious and interesting confections from all over the world. I recently chatted with Susan at the MHS Holiday Bazaar, and had my trusty 8-year-old quality control assistant do some chocolate taste testing. He voted for the chocolate bar with chili, jalapeno and cinnamon, which wasn't as spicy as expected; rich and very chocolate-y. He wanted to try the ultimate spicy ghost pepper and habanero bar, but we weren't sure whether his head would burst into flames afterward. Perhaps we'll buy that one for Valentine's Day. Susan's often around town selling chocolates, caramels and hot chocolate mixes at Montclair pop-up shops and events throughout the year.

4. Want to make the New Year sweeter? Get some local honey from EssexGirl Honey, made from hives right near Edgemont Memorial Park. I met and had a long talk with Oliver Stordahl, one of the proprietors. This very charming and knowledgeable young man explained why it's called Essex Girl Honey: All worker bees are girls. Light honey comes from all the spring flowers, making it very fragrant. The dark honey is harvested in autumn when the bees are eating only one plant, Japanese Knotweed. It gives the honey its distinctive color and taste. The honey is never heated, but filtered and bottled as quickly as possible. Drop by and see Oliver when you have a chance.

There are more fun things try and new things to do coming up soon. It's going to be a very long winter. Get out your flasks and security blankets.

In this article:

DanceWorks Studios

127 Grove St.

Danceworkstudios.com, 973-655-9558

Clary Anderson Arena

41 Chestnut St.

Claryandersonarena.com, 973-744-6088

The Chocolate Path

chocolatepath.com

973-655-8022

EssexGirl Honey

essexgirlhoney.com

973-744-0701