



Unresolutions: The New Year is your wake-up call



*Dark chocolate surfaces as a running theme for a Positive Good to keep.
COURTESY MONIKA GRABKOWSKA ON UNSPLASH*

It's a new year. But let's not go overboard. The new number is cheery but we all know Jan. 1 is smack in the middle of everything that makes a year a year: the school season, the sports season, the arts season. Resolutions are all well and good, but dark January isn't really the optimal time to turn over new leaves.

Trees, after all, aren't turning any.

But think of it as a wake-up call. The season is half over.

What will you continue or finish, that you started last year or the year before?

What do you refuse to stop?

We polled our staff and stringers and some folks in the community too, but we'd love to hear from you! Send your answers to culture@montclairlocal.news and we'll run in print or online.

— compiled by Gwen Orel

MONTCLAIR LOCAL STAFF AND STRINGERS

Adam Anik, photographer: I promise myself to finish my photography website. I will continue to avoid cleaning the cat litter!

Andrew Garda, sports reporter: This year I intend to finish the book I've been working on during 2018. One thing I refuse to do is to decrease my intake of dark chocolate. Somebody has to eat it all. Might as well be me.

Elizabeth Oguss, local listings editor: Many quilters have UFOs (unfinished objects) nagging at their consciences. This year, I'm going to finish more than one quilt in progress, including one called Duvoisin, which may be my favorite of all my 80-plus quilts. It's named for Roger Duvoisin, author and illustrator of the children's book "The House of Four Seasons." I started it years ago but set it aside when a number of relatives and friends had babies (a baby quilt isn't something you can put off). But 2019 is the year for Duvoisin, and now that I've said it in the paper, I have no choice! As for what I won't change, I'm keeping up my dark chocolate habit, which I consider a critical component of my mental health regimen. Three squares a day, with a cup of coffee, right after lunch. I feel calmer just writing that.

Gwen Orel, culture editor: I am going to by god get to the end of that YA ghost story at a summer camp with Irish sidhe that two agents want to see more of, and write a play that a bestselling author and a knighted playwright both said was a really good idea. I've been talking about volunteering for awhile and this year I will. I just wrote it down so I have to. Won't change: staying up too late when I've found a bingeable show. Just one more episode. Trudging to bed at 5 a.m. I'm looking at you "Dickensian." Best I can do is try not to start on a school night. But I can't promise.

Erin Roll, reporter: Will continue or complete: Go on more hikes and kayaking trips, and maybe a horseback ride. Get my novel(s) and short stories ready to present to an agent or publisher. Keep going with music practice. Clear a few dungeons in "Legend of Zelda: Link to the Past" (I just bought myself an SNES Classic console.) Won't change: Eat dark chocolate. Sleep late on a weekend. Keep buying new books when I have at least a dozen at home I still need to read.

Deborah Ann Tripoldi, editorial assistant: I will continue to cut out products with artificial ingredients and I will not cut out coffee and various other beverages.

Lisa Annitti, stringer: I will continue to immerse myself in writing. I was fortunate enough to have another two pieces selected for a festival in Feb 2019 in Rahway. Will not change: My obsession with 80s music, 80s hair bands and going to local restaurants and bars to see 80s bands!

Patricia Conover, stringer: Last year I began walking in Verona Park or Brookdale Park at least three times a week. It's a wonderful way to clear your head. I don't wear headphones. That way, my mind can wander and (sometimes) come up with new ideas. I will never stop watching Masterpiece Theatre, no matter how much my family complains! Even the cat hides when she hears the signature theme music.

Steven DeSalvo, “Montclair Eats” and “Recipe of the Month:” I will continue to cook in my off time, it’s all about finding the time for it! I could eat and drink a little less well but I’m not going to!

Jose German, “Gardening for Life:” I will continue My environment and community activism that is now more than 20 years old. I will not change my accent!

Loyla Louvis, “Mother Matters:” I have been writing more in 2018 and hope to double up my efforts this new year. I see a book in the near future. I don’t think I will ever give up enjoying chocolate, wine, and coffee. Sometimes all at the same time!!

Allison Task, was “Ask Task,” now stringer: New book proposal. Also, “The Americans,” final series. Dear God, this was quite an investment of my leisure time and I’m glad it’s coming to conclusion. Won’t change: Drinking coffee at a coffee shop every morning. Girl’s gotta have SOME sorta vice.

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Grace Williams, stringer: My resolutions are equal parts exciting and blah. Here’s the Instagram version: The biggest one: continuing to prioritize family first. Up next, my agent and I are going to sell my book proposal once I complete one final tweak. In addition to my awesome client roster, I’m working on a few other potential writing/journalism gigs that I’m excited about. I started taking aerial fitness classes and not only do I love it, I’d like to improve upon it greatly. I only standup paddle boarded once this summer, but it’s become one of those things I also want to further develop, I also want to get a stronger handstand in yoga. Things I could change but I won’t: my box subscription addiction, spending a whole lotta girlfriend time, my questionable time management because the roses can’t smell themselves, pedicures.

Robin Woods, “Robin’s Nest:” I will finally replace the wall-to-wall carpet with wood flooring in my master bedroom, and install new butcher block countertops in the kitchen. It’s not a big deal. I know what I want, but I have a hard time with things being out of place, even for just a day or two. I lived through having the tile redone in two bathrooms last month, so this probably won’t drive me insane. I am like a delicate flower. I have ideas and draft notes for an important writing assignment due in March that I will complete in January. This will be easy for me to do, as it doesn’t make a mess.”Not change: have been thinking a lot about calling people out when they are unnecessarily rude to, or inappropriate with me. In my heart of hearts I know that this is an exercise in futility, since the poor behavior totally reflects on them, not me. One of my core values is not behaving inappropriately in public, even when I want to lose control and let someone have it. This might call for to drink more Pinot Grigio, even when I’m not at a party, and enjoy eating toasted bread of all kinds. My middle name really should be Bagel or Focaccia.

MONTCLAIR FRIENDS

Eric Alter, executive producer, Apricot Sky productions; director and owner, Deron School: I want to finish a TV pilot I am writing and finish two full length plays I am working on. I also want to eat more chocolate and Mallomars.

Clark Scott Carmichael, actor, member, Dreamcatcher Rep: I hope to complete a writing project and I hope (and pray) that they will complete the replacement of the collapsing stairs at the high school. I refuse to stop mowing (and raking) my own yard. One less lawn service to ruin the quiet.

Casey Carpenter, Chair, public relations committee, African American cultural committee, Montclair Art Museum: I will ramp up the working out since I realized I gain weight if I don't get to the Montclair Y. I also will continue to function (rather well!) without cable TV! I will not change reading online mags to keep up with the Kardashians (I know!) and the royals. Miley and Liam got married? Khloe wore plaid boots that look like crushed Christmas packages? (Yes, they are fugly.) Who cares? I care! I love reading that stuff.

Maria Gilmartin, Upper School music director, Montclair Kimberley Academy: I look forward to having new experiences working on music in 2019, and on a lighter note, I will read all of the Harry Potter books again. I will not change having two cups of coffee everyday and doing my YouTube cardio workout in place of the gym most days.

Michael Guerriero, owner, Gelotti: This year we put the USA on the map for gelato, but In 2019 we will head to Italy to make the case we don't just belong on the map, we deserve to be in the conversation as a gelato capital! I will never grow up! When you think like your customers, you tend to make things because they even knew they wanted them!

Rich McMahon, Councilman at large: I try not to make New Year resolutions and have successfully avoided same for as long as I can remember. I hope to continue my tradition for the foreseeable future. I will continue to refuse to post or re-post any request or challenge to prove "friendship" or anything else on Facebook or other social media. Conversely, I will continue to enjoy my friends, family and grandchildren on social media simply for the joy in that and without any reciprocal pressure.

Elaine Molinaro, artistic director, Culture Connection Theater, president, Montclair Arts Alliance: In the past year, Culture Connection Theater has begun work on a translation, a new play, and a playwriting workshop. We are working on moving these projects forward in the New Year. Won't give up: being an addicted Francophile. I consider it a vice. One woman in "The Tidings Brought to Mary" said when she heard I was directing Duras and Sarraute, "I'm tired of all the French stuff." And yes, the next play I am directing is a French farce.

Helen Paxton, press relations, Oratorio Society of New Jersey: I will continue my love affair with Brookdale Park for all season walks, but make effort to explore different New Jersey parks and natural areas. Spend more focused time on my own writing projects (a continual problem because there are no hard

deadlines). Practice piano more, improve singing sight reading! I will not change: spending time on my phone with the Google news feed (sort of creepy but fascinating how they know what you are interested in....and even stuff you didn't think you were interested in but they think you might be and then as it turns out the story draws you in....!!)

Robert Russo, councilman at large: I will continue the habit of reading three books simultaneously, which I started on since they were given to me this past birthday in October: "The Revolution of Robert Kennedy;" "The Red and the Blue;" and "The Browns of California," about my long time friend, retiring Governor Jerry Brown & his family....just can't put these books down! I will continue to consume lots of dark chocolate, hot fudge sundaes, & Brinley Shipwreck Coconut Rum...from our Montclair neighbors, the Brinley family! (still keeping for special occasions that bottle of Don Q rum from my relatives in Puerto Rico!)

Kate Swan, artistic director, 4th Wall Theatre: I will continue to keep going! I could change all my passwords (and probably should), but the likelihood that I won't is extremely high!

Jeree Wade, actor, "On Kentucky Avenue:" As a multi tasker and a workaholic I will continue my resolution from the last three years to walk, slower, pay attention and smell the roses....and to stop multitasking.....good luck to me with that! lol.

— *Compiled by Gwen Orel*