

Now's the time for resolutions

by BRIAN LOCKHART

I've never understood the hoopla about celebrating the new year.

The start of a new year could really be any arbitrary date on the calendar. It just means we are back at the same spot in the solar system that we were one year ago, and that happens every single day.

Prior to 1752, New Year's was March 25 in North America and some other countries.

The switch to the Gregorian calendar in that year moved the date to Jan. 1.

That being so, it has become custom to celebrate the fact that you have to buy a new calendar to hang on the wall.

The pandemic squashed most parties, especially the big ones, for the last couple of years, but I would imagine things were full throttle again this year.

The problem with New Year's Eve parties is you have to wait until midnight until you can yell 'happy new year', kiss the person you're with, and sing Auld Lang Syne. Although I'm sure singing the song isn't in much fashion these days because no one seems to know the words past the first two lines.

If you have to wait until midnight, you've got to fill the time leading up to the noisemakers, bells, and fireworks.

This year we went bowling. It never even occurred to me to spend New Year's Eve trying to replicate a scene from the movie King Pin, but a friend of mine had the idea and she booked a lane for 9 p.m.

To my surprise, the bowling alley was packed with people having a fun night out as they waited for midnight.

Our group had a lot of fun. I haven't bowled in years, and for one woman in our group, it was her first time in a bowling alley. We had quite a few gutter balls before we got some momentum going.

Every time someone bowled a strike or spare, we blew noise makers. Since we were all rookies, that quickly became blowing a noisemaker if someone managed to knock down more than one pin.

The entire bowling alley was filled with a sense of revelry and some rather dazzling outfits. It was a good time.

The other tradition that comes with the New Year, is the making of resolutions. Good luck with that.

You can make a resolution any time of year, but for some reason, Jan. 1, is the traditional time to change your life's habits.

According to surveys, there is a consistent Top 10 list of resolutions people make every year.

Exercise more is a big one. The gyms love this one. It means every year a new group of people arrive and pay a fee to get fit.

It usually starts well, but then you put it off one day, then two days, then you realize you haven't been to the gym in a month, but they still have your money.

Along with exercise, losing weight is popular on the list. That is of course, achievable, but it takes determination and discipline.

Many people decide to learn a new skill or hobby. This is definitely achievable if you can find something that you really take an interest in and enjoy doing.

Saving more money is always on the list. With the current rate of inflation, this is going to be a tough one to do this year. Maybe keeping an eye out for sales and not spending money on frivolous things might be a better option.

Many people list living life to the fullest as a goal for the new year. This is an admirable goal.

However, if you find yourself watching the same TV show every week at the same time, you're probably slipping back into the same routine, and are not achieving that goal.

Quitting smoking, travelling more, and reading more, also make the Top 10.

If you're going to make a resolution, you probably will benefit by setting realistic goals.

In one report, 35 per cent of people admitted they had unrealistic goals when making a plan.

Around the same number admitted they did not keep track of their progress, and around 23 per cent said they simply forgot about their goals.

Ten per cent of respondents said they simply made too many resolutions to keep up with them all.

If you decide to make some changes in your life for the new year, good for you. It's just a matter of determination and carrying through to achieve your goals.

Have a happy and prosperous new year.