

THE IDLE AMERICAN

Another New Year....

Commentary by Dr. Don Newbury

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Relax. This is NOT going to be another one of those “promise pieces” about helpful resolutions that might elevate life for me in 2025. I leave that to others.

In fact, were I to make a New Year’s resolution, it would be the determination to avoid making annual resolutions in the future.

My aged Uncle Mort also sneers at the many absurdities committed by millions of people each year. Most resolutions are broken quickly, the majority before the arrival of January 31....

“I’ll follow my usual protocol, committing to maintain an exercise regimen for yet another year,” he claimed.

Regrettably, I failed to change the subject, so he rambled on about muscle development in his fingers, wrist and arm. Unthinkingly, I then asked him why he’s limiting attention to a small part of his body.

“Glad you asked, Nephew,” he chortled. “Merely lifting my cup of coffee every morning requires 14 muscles in these appendages. So, if I want to double my exercise, I have a second cup of coffee. Then, if there’s a cup left in the pot for the afternoon, I may even have three exercise sessions.”

Good measure, pressed down, Mort and I are blessed by our occasional phone conversations, and we do have much in common.

For example, we both hope for the best in conversations with others, but often grow weary of hearing about what most folks are falsely promising. At this time of year, we yawn at boasts made by a few folks who reach the top of their resolution ladder and the wails of others stumbling in efforts to reach the second rung.

Ending his comments, Mort said he doesn’t want others to think that his exercise is limited to lifting coffee cups. “I never jog, but get full-body exercise serving as a pallbearer for my friends who jog.”

A segue is welcome, so let’s change the subject. How about considering the ups and downs of the coaching carousel?

The most prominent these days is the search owner Jerry Jones has mounted to find the Cowboys’ tenth coach during his almost 40 years of ownership.

He’s likely to milk the media cow dry, and speculation is wild, ranging from the sublime to the ridiculous. My only observation is that fans who are most vocal about his insistence to

remain general manager could just as well spend their time whistling toward the fiercest wind ever blown in from the north.....

Metroplex observations of fans from Ohio State University for the NCAA semi-final game against the University of Texas at AT&T Stadium included high marks for their friendly comportment.

Cynics, however, say that their friendliness came easy for them, since they seemed certain that they were going to take the measure of UT. (Though the Longhorns had a chance to tie or go ahead toward game's end, even UT fans generally agree that the Buckeyes deserved to win.)

Laughing among themselves that schools, government offices and several other entities shut down during what they considered mild winter weather, the Ohioans even offered to drive UT fans to and from the game. (I don't know the stats about how many such offers were actually made, or how many accepted.)....

I do wish to make one observation to begin the new year, and that's my appreciation for *Texas Monthly*, a magazine like none other. Featuring great writing, it artfully combines current news topics with you're-not-going-to-believe-stories of both the unusual and unknown.

At this writing, I'll deal with the latter, admitting that had I learned in time, I would have been sure to glance skyward at least once during the two recent weeks to see a new comet discovered in April of 2024. Called Comet ATLAS (C/2024 G3), it'll surely miss my gaze when it next appears.

Texas Monthly claims that it is visible to the naked eye every 80,000 years....

Dr. Newbury, longtime university president, continues to speak and write. The Idle American, begun in 2003, is one of the longest-running syndicated columns. Contact: 817-447-3872. Email: newbury@speakerdoc.com. Website: www.speakerdoc.com.