

COMMENTARY

New Quad-ear's Resolutions for the day after Election Day



In America, the calendar is not really 365 days long, nor does it begin on Jan. 1 — not always.

The other calendar begins on Nov. 5, New Quad-ear's Day. Quad-ear is a contraction of "quadruple" and "year," the four-year period between one presidential election and the next.

Just as we do each New Year, I think it's important to make some resolutions for the New Quad-ear.

Here's what I recommend, no matter who you are or how you voted.

► **ONE: PEP TALK.** Buck up. Get over it. Quit sniffing or trembling or cursing or grinning or drooling or screaming. The election is over. If you keep that up, somebody will Baker Act your ass. (For those of you offended by mild anatomical vulgarities, buck up. Get over it. Et cetera).

Also, drop the pretension of moving to Canada or Mexico or Pago Pago. Costa Rica is not an option. Look in the mirror and tell yourself, "Pay no attention to that man behind the curtain in the oval office. This is America, after all. It's built to withstand any fool intent on spending more than a couple hours in the White House, touring with the kids."

► **TWO:** Now that your pep talk is out of the way, it's time to CELEBRATE LIFE. Here's how:

A. Go buy a couple pounds of stone crab claws and a couple pounds of Gulf shrimp. (You're helping to support local commercial fishermen, and we need all of them we can get.)

B. Get a bottle of bubbly, probably a light-stepping Italian Prosecco. It's described variously as "sexy" and an "illusive effervescent wonder," a joy-packer that leaves little suffering in its wake. (You're helping to support our Italian friends, and we need all the friends we can get.) Kick in a bottle for every exhausted voter celebrating with you.

C. Put out the claws, boil the shrimp, prepare the butter and lemon and mustard sauce. Slice some fresh, locally grown tomatoes, then add a touch of lemon and salt (you're helping to support a local farmer, and we need all of them we can get). Platter some locally grown vegetables. The squashes, bite sized or cut in sticks, will do.

D. If you live in the country like I do, build a good wood fire outside, preferably of dry pine or dead live oak. (That's a paradox for you: "dead live oak." Like saying, "happy Republican" or "satisfied Democrat," it doesn't make any sense. But never mind that now. Buck up. Get over it. Et cetera.)

E. Begin feasting under an open sky, which is both symbolic and literal — the possibilities out there remain endless. Drink only from the bottle, eat only with your hands. Let the spirits run down your chin. Gaze at the world around you. Could anything be more glorious? Ask yourself that question until you get the answer right. The answer is, NO. South-

west Florida is a subtropical paradise, according to the chamber of commerce.

F. If you're a Christian or a pagan or a heathen or an agnostic or an atheist or anything else except a Jew, shout: "LIFE!" or "LIFE, DUDE!" or even, "IT'S ALL IN A LIFE!" And don't just shout it, ROAR IT OUT!

If you're a Jew, shout (roar) "L'CHAIM!"

Celebratory Amendment 1: If you're an Episcopalian or some other deeply inhibited Protestant, and you're white, Anglo-Saxon and liberal, you're allowed to just say "Life," politely, instead of roaring it out, as if you were mildly constipated. Which you probably are. Then you should also say, "L'Chaim" politely so you won't be viewed as elitist. And don't forget to add "Din" (pronounced *deen*), which is Arabic for "Way of Life" — it's a Muslim thing, which any self-respecting liberal ought to know.

If you're a conservative WASP on the other hand, you can merely grimace in disgust and mutter, "Life, damnit." For you, I think that's appropriate for the New Quad-ear, don't you? Then shut up about the rest of it, and drink the Prosecco. Also for you, a second bottle might be necessary.

Amendment 2: If you don't drink alcohol, you're allowed to drink water —but it has to be Italian mineral water, San Benedetto will do, or even San Pellegrino, which is owned by Nestle, if that doesn't bother you.

Just as you would the Prosecco, you have to drink it right from the bottle so it runs down your chin.

Amendment 3. If you drive a pickup truck, you're allowed to substitute beer for the Prosecco — a dumb move, but if the bottle fits, drink it. It cannot be Budweiser, Busch, Coors or any other cheap domestic brew. It has to be Peroni, because that's Italian, like Prosecco.

► **THREE.** And finally, MAKE LOVE. Yes, I'm talking about the physical act of love, not merely fornication, arguably the most substantial celebration a human being can undertake. Do it more than once, today.

If you're a liberal, a pinko, a hippie or a lefty, you can chant, "Make love, not war," repeatedly, as you begin. If you're a family-planning liberal woman, this might be a nice time for a commemorative pregnancy. Consider naming your firstborn Obama or Michelle.

If you're a conservative, a warmonger, a bootstrapper or a religious fundy, you're allowed to just growl, "Make love." You can worry about war, work or your favorite prescribed religious suffering, later. (Note: You're not allowed to drill for oil as a substitute for making love. Drilling is drilling and loving is loving, similar though they may seem to you.)

And no matter who you are, when you get up the next morning, don't fret. Take no thought for the White House, for the White House shall take thought for the things of itself.

Remember, the "holiday season" is coming.

If you're a Catholic or a WASP, you can call it Christmas. If you're not, call it any damn thing you want.

This is America, after all. ■

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