

Ashlanders Make New Year's Resolutions

BY LES CLARK,
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

January first is the day we put the past year, with whatever it gave us, in life's rear view mirror and set on paper, share with friends and family or let bubble about in our brains those pesky New Year's resolutions. While the success rate is varied and indeterminate, the resolutions have an undercurrent of hope.

I asked residents the following questions: If you are making a New Year's resolution, what is it? For any resolution you made, how long did it last? What resolution do you wish someone else would make? Here are their answers.

Jordan Kotob, 13

I interviewed this articulate young man on the phone, turning the tables on him after he interviewed me for his Ashland Middle School Veterans' Day project. "I never really think about making any resolutions, but I'm going to start doing my laundry without being told. And maybe eat healthier," Kotob said. As he thought about other people, he said, "I wish some kids in school would be more respectful to others." There was a wistful finality to his last comment: "I wish my brother would play with me more."

Neha Shabeer, 14

Shabeer is a sophomore at Ashland High School and a 10-year Ashland resident. She is best known as the president of Breaking Down Barriers, a group of students fostering leadership and community service. She is also a regular contributing writer to *Ashland Local Town Pages*.

In keeping with the resolutions theme, Shabeer said she intends "to continue doing things that really have an impact and to surround myself with positive people." As she has matured and



Brian Abasciano

her priorities have changed, she admitted, "I wish I had focused more on people and not things." Her desire is a universal resolution for people "to smile bigger, laugh louder and work harder."

Brian and Terry Abasciano, 35 & 36

The Abascianos, high school sweethearts since the 11th grade and six-year residents of Ashland, have two young children, Bella and Chris. Brian and Terry said, as they each looked at the other for marital confirmation, they usually don't make resolutions together. Brian, however, added that whatever resolutions he has made in the past, "they usually last for a month." For the future, Terry thought for about a second and gave not so much a resolution but a promise: "When he starts cleaning, I'll go back to work."

For the coming year, "my resolution is to dust off my treadmill," Brian said. As a couple, they

were specific about what resolutions other people should make – Brian: "I wish people would be more considerate." Terry: "I wish people would take more pride in their professions."

Laura Pallazola, 67 (wife of this writer)

Pallazola recently moved to Ashland, and has several family

matters of greater concern than answering my questions, so her answers were as short as the hair on her grandson's shaved head. When asked if she makes New Year's resolutions, "Never" was her retort. Her previous promises at the start of any year lasted a day, she said. Pallazola did mention a resolution, not to procrastinate, which she said should have made but did not want to give details. When pressed if it involved exercise and money, I was given "the look." Softening just a bit, she said of others, "People should be nicer to one another."

Gabe Mugerian, 91 ½

Gabe Mugerian prides himself on being an Ashland resident since he was six months old. He is the bus driver for the Ashland Senior Center. During WWII, he was a flight engineer in the Brooklyn Navy Yard preparing U.S. Navy fighters and flying boats for service in both the Pacific and European theaters.

When asked if he makes any New Year's resolutions, Mugerian had a sharp retort: "I do what I want when I want to. I'm one of those rare people who have never made a resolution." Case closed.

Mugerian claims he has been driving since age 14 and has never been in an accident, some-



Gabe Mugerian

thing I think he resolves to perpetuate. But he was clear on what he wants others to resolve. "I wish people would be on time," he laughed, knowing he is dealing with seniors a few years younger but less spry than he.

For this unscientific study, I found that New Year's resolutions are well-meaning but short-lived. However, the respondents hoped that everyone should try to make the world a better place. It's a good place to start.

Les Clark is an Ashland resident and has resolved to refrain from any future spousal interviews. He can be reached at lclark9247@aol.com.

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