

Over dinner the other night, the conversation turned to New Year's resolutions and a friend of ours made an interesting observation. "Instead of attempting a resolution for an entire year," he said (a nearly impossible task, as most of us know), "Why not challenge yourself to just three months?" Three months does seem a lot less daunting, doesn't it? Studies show that only 8% of resolution-making Americans keep their resolutions for a whole year, and 80% stop by February. Maybe he's on to something. Three months seems more like a trial run than a resolution. Psychologically, it makes sense to divide this thing up into more digestible chunks anyway. Sure I'll try to go to bed early, eat fewer pastries, and work out at 6 a.m. for three months. For three months, I'm willing to give it a go. But a whole year? I'm not so sure. While I'm not a great resolution-keeper when it comes to health and fitness (I'm down to eating pastries just three days a week), I love projects and planning. So I can't help but develop a list of goals for Ward 4 and the City of Edwardsville for the coming year. You'll find my list, and a short description about each, toward the bottom of this e-mail. (I'll save the spreadsheets, with implementation plans and timelines, for she who made a vow before God to stay with me in sickness and health – good thing she didn't see spreadsheets coming!) Happy New Year and please feel free to reach out to me about your thoughts on these and other projects for 2018.

CELUCH HONORED AS EAC PATRON OF THE ARTS: The Edwardsville Arts Center is honoring longtime Edwardsville artist and community activist John Celuch for his contributions to the local art community and beyond. The public is invited to attend a reception tomorrow night which pays tribute to John on Saturday, January 6 from 6-8pm at the Edwardsville Arts Center, with the exhibit, "The Best of Gateway East Artist Guild" in the main gallery. The event is free and open to the public. Food and beverages will be available for all guests while we celebrate John's contributions to the arts.

WHAT'S UP AT THE WILDEY: Tonight, Friday, January 5, "Silver Bullet STL" returns to the Wildey for their highly acclaimed Bob Seger tribute show. Next Saturday, January 13, the Grateful Dead-style band "Jake's Leg" takes the stage. For details on these and other shows at the Wildey, visit WildeyTheatre.com or call 307-1750.

WINTER CONCERT SERIES: The City of Edwardsville's Winter Concert Series continues on Friday, January 12 with the "Cree Rider Family Band" at the Wildey. Known for their energetic and engaging live shows, this group is rooted in a country music sound, with elements of folk, Americana and rock n' roll. Tickets for the show are only \$9 and \$14 gets you a pre-show tasting. For tickets, visit: <http://www.wildeytheatre.com/?nav=eventsDetails&num=1396>

On February 9, French-speaking Creole fiddler and accordionist Dennis Stroughmatt, and "Creole Stomp" promises a rollicking mix of contemporary blues, swamp pop, and traditional Cajun and zydeco dance tunes. For tickets, <http://www.wildeytheatre.com/?nav=eventsDetails&num=1398>

1820 PAINTING PARTY: Ever wonder what painting was like in the nineteenth century? On Saturday, January 20 from 1 – 3 p.m., guests to the Benjamin Stephenson House can participate in an 1820s

Painting Party – which will include the creation of a 9” x 12” floral with a break to enjoy treats and drinks. Supplies will be provided. Space is limited to 10 adults (age 18 and up). Admission is free. RSVP by calling 692-1818.

GOSHEN INDOOR MARKET: It’s so cold outside, aren’t you glad the Land of Goshen Community Market offers an INDOOR opportunity to shop for local food, pastries and crafts each month? Your next chance is Saturday, January 20 from 8 am – 12 Noon at NewSong Fellowship.

COFFEE & A MOVIE: The Edwardsville Parks Department invites seniors (55 and older) to join them for a showing of the 1964 comedy/drama “Send Me No Flowers” starring Doris Day and Rock Hudson at the Wildey Theatre on Wednesday, January 24. Doors open at 9:30 a.m. Mini pastries & coffee will be catered by 222 Artisan Bakery. The movie starts at 10 a.m. Reservations can be made by calling the Parks Office at 692-7538. The cost is \$5 in advance and \$7 at the door. Attendees will receive a pastry, popcorn, coffee, and a soda. The registration deadline is January 17.

WATERSHED DISCOVERY DAY: What do our feathered friends in the winter? I thought they all flew south... Learn more at the next Watershed Discovery Day on Saturday January 27, from 10 am – Noon at the Watershed Nature Center. Come enjoy special activities designed for young explorers, ages 5-12, as we learn about busy winter birds. The focus of this month’s event will be how birds interact with their winter habitats. Discovery Day is free and open to the public. Groups of 5-10 participants are welcome if registered in advance.

DADDY / DAUGHTER DANCE: Fathers and daughters are invited to put on their dancing shoes and step out together for a fun Valentine's event at this year's Daddy Daughter Valentine Dance at the Wildey Theatre. This year, participants will have two dates to choose from, Friday, February 16 or Saturday, February 17. Both nights, the dance will take place in the Events Rooms at the Wildey and will run from 6 pm - 8:30 pm. The evening’s festivities will also include dinner, crafts and a photo booth. The Online Registration will be opening after the first of the year.

NO PARKING ON NORTH SIDE OF MAGNOLIA: Residents asked, and we made it happen. At City Council this week, we approved an ordinance which prohibits parking on the north side of Magnolia Street, here in Ward 4. As you’ll remember, residents of the street contacted me about having trouble reaching their homes because the 18-foot street is too narrow when cars are parked on both sides. A small portion of the south side of Magnolia was also designated as No Parking, to allow for garbage trucks to make the turn from the alley. Thanks for letting me know about this safety concern on your street, I’m glad we were able to get it done!

BACKYARD HENS APPROVED: Earlier I spoke about trial runs. Now it's time to talk about "chicken runs" on a "trial basis." On Tuesday night, City Council agreed (5-2) to a trial run for Backyard Hens in Edwardsville. But it's not three months, it's two years. After what feels like two years of negotiating, five of the seven aldermen came to an agreement that allowing 20 license holders to have chickens is a reasonable exercise. As I mentioned previously, the guidelines for having hens are very strict, and license holders are subject to strict scrutiny. Applicants will also have to get signatures of all abutting property owners before they will be granted a license. The new ordinance takes effect 10 days from approval, which is next Friday.

...And don't forget about...

NEW CITY WEBSITE: The City of Edwardsville has launched a new and more user-friendly website. Check it out at: <http://www.cityofedwardsville.com/>

MAIN STREET COMMUNITY CENTER PROGRAMS: This energetic organization has a lot going on, and programs are open to the public. Check out the recreation, education and lifelong learning opportunities at the Main Street Community Center by visiting the following link: http://mainstcc.org/wp/?page_id=15

WINTER POOL MEMBERSHIP SALE: The Edwardsville Parks and Recreation Department is having a Winter Membership sale beginning today and running through February 28. While Family memberships for Edwardsville and Glen Carbon residents normally start at \$300, the Winter membership price is \$260. Memberships for senior citizen residents are normally \$125, but the Winter membership price is \$112. The pool, which sits adjacent to beautiful Cougar Lake, includes lockers, restrooms and a concession area as well as a small splash pad for the youngest visitors. It is accessible from N. University Drive with parking available at Lot 10 which sits just southwest of The Gardens and Cougar Lake Drive. Parking at this lot during the summer is free to anyone visiting the pool. Daily passes will also be available for \$5 per day or \$4 per day for seniors and children 4-15, kids three and under swim free. Private rentals will also be available for birthday parties, reunions and more. For more information contact the Edwardsville Parks Department at 692-7538 or visit www.cityofedwardsville.com.

YOGA AT THE WILDEY: Come experience the Wildey and be refreshed in body, mind, & soul on the third Tuesday of each month (Nov – May) from 7pm-8pm with Free yoga on the second floor of the Wildey. All levels are invited to join the group, led by certified yoga instructor Donna Bartley. Guests must bring a yoga mat and water and are encouraged to arrive 15 minutes early. Space is limited and small donations are welcomed.

2018 GOALS: Here they are! Don't hesitate to share your thoughts and/or if you'd like to help in some way.

---BIKE/PED PLAN: Increasingly, Edwardsville is becoming a bike-able, walk-able and stroller-able community. It's time we lean in and make a plan for the safety of our residents. I've said it before, but places where people walk and bike are safer and healthier because there are more eyes and ears on the street.

Goal: Develop a framework for a Bike/Pedestrian plan. Complete with an effort to improve: wayfinding, designating certain paths as "Ped Only" or "Shared Use," identifying and prioritizing new connections to residential and commercial areas and implementing a bike/pedestrian safety effort in Downtown Edwardsville.

---BIKESHARE PROGRAM: Not everyone has a bike, and not everyone wants or even needs a bike all the time. But, as most cities are discovering, there are a lot of folks who will use bikes for short trips or recreation if doing so is convenient, and affordable. In the last 5-10 years several major metro areas have introduced bike-sharing programs that require the bikes to be brought back to one of a handful of designated "docking stations." These require a significant public and private subsidy to develop, construct and support. However, in the Uber-influenced economy of today, "dockless" bikesharing programs that require ZERO public subsidy and are not tied to a limited number of docks are becoming much more popular and much more successful.

Goal: Introduce a "dockless" bikesharing program to Edwardsville and SIUE.

---IL-157 SHARED USE PATH: For residents in Timberlake and Lincoln Knolls, as well as those who will live in the new Whispering Heights complex, it's time to create a safe and family-friendly way to reach retail, restaurants, and the bike trails by bike or by foot.

Goal: Construct a 10-foot wide separated, shared-use path from Lewis Road to the MCT Goshen Trail along IL-157 and the new Whispering Heights Development. Long term goal would be to extend the shared-use path to Lincoln Middle School and St. Louis Street for access to Downtown.

---ST. LOUIS STREET: In 2018, the City will be re-paving St. Louis Street from West Street to New Poag Road, complete with a sidewalk re-construction, addition of bike lanes, and a water main replacement.

Goal: The project is happening in 2018, so my goal is to make sure that residents are given plenty of notice on the construction schedule and stay informed on the progress of the project.

---NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS: Organizing into neighborhood associations allows a group of residents to speak with one voice on issues, and communicate information in an efficient and timely manner. It also makes for a safer and more connected place to live. When we know our neighbors and lean on one another, we're all better off. Living in community makes life better. Besides, once you're a City-recognized Neighborhood Association you can apply for the City's (confusingly and clumsily named) "ENERGI" grants. ("Edwardsville Neighborhood Enhancement, Recognition and Grant Initiative") This will allow a group to seek funds for: planters, streetlight banners, signs, and other small projects to enhance the character and brand of a neighborhood.

Goal: Work with Ward 4 neighborhoods to form recognized "Neighborhood Associations" for the purpose of information-sharing, community-building, neighborhood improvement efforts and the ability to apply for and receive City "ENERGI" grants.

---200 ACRES FOR 200 YEARS: As part of the State's Bicentennial celebration, the City has embarked on an effort to acquire 200 additional acres of green space to add to the City's park system. Not just green space for manicured parks, but green space for forests, wildflower fields, ball diamonds, and everything else you can think of. It's an exciting project and I've already had some very productive conversations. In fact, the State of Illinois' Bicentennial Committee listed the project on their website today: <https://illinois200.com/projects/200-acres-200-years/>

Goal: By the end of 2018, have commitments on all 200 acres.

---SIDEWALKS: There are several areas in Ward 4 that need sidewalk work. If we are truly going to make this a more pedestrian friendly community, we need to make sure the sidewalks are well-maintained and ADA accessible.

Goal: Identify streets throughout Ward 4 that need sidewalk improvements and work to make that happen.

---IL-157 LIGHTING: Safety on IL-157 remains a concern. After a series of tragic accidents on a half-mile stretch of IL-157, Ward 4 residents stood up and demanded that we have a discussion about what can be done. That discussion, which began at a Public Safety meeting is still underway. The City is still petitioning IDOT, the authority that controls the road, for changes.

Goal: Work with City Staff, regional elected officials and IDOT to place improved lighting on IL-157 and make other safety accommodations.

Let me know what you think, Ward 4!

SJ Morrison

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