

## New Year's Resolutions

### AGRI-VIEWS

by Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent

I like New Year's Resolutions. They give us a chance to try to make some positive improvements in our lives. They make us reflect on ourselves and decide what we can do better in the coming year. If I may say so, I do a pretty darn good job of writing New Year's Resolutions, especially for other people! So let's have a little bit of fun and for every resolution I write for myself, I'll write one for the general public!

In 2015, I resolve to walk more, lose ten pounds and keep it off! I'm getting really close to 60 and while my weight has been pretty stable for the past decade or so I know I can lose weight because I did a few years ago when I was having a bit of a heart problem. Once that was corrected I started eating like I had before and jumped right back up. I'd really like to lose twenty pounds but I'm willing to take it ten the first year and try to keep it off. Walking is going to be a good way to help and since my wife wants to walk more it seems like a good plan to walk with her!

One for me, one for the general population. I feel that "they" should resolve to drive less selfishly and certainly less aggressively. Turn signals - they aren't optional. Be considerate and turn them on before you start to negotiate the turn. Then there's parking lots with diagonal parking. If all the cars are parked facing your direction, don't drive down that lane as it's intended to be one way the other way. Go to the next lane where you see all the tail lights. If you do head against the flow, you'd better hope I'm not coming at you because I won't get over! Start thinking about all the other folks out on the road and remember, speed limits are maximums, not minimums so get off my bumper!

In 2015 I resolve to spend more time on my hobbies. This means I'm going to have to be more efficient at work so I'm not spending time at home in the evenings writing. I've got a lot of hobbies that I enjoy (beyond birds believe it or not!) so I just need to find time to do them. I do enjoy time spent relaxing and I can kick back in a lawn chair on summer evenings and do nothing, if I try really hard anyway. 2014 was a crazy hectic year for me and once I get through mid summer, I'll have put a lot of things behind me (no, I'm not retiring - that's several years off yet), so that should open up some more time and give me a chance to learn some new things (stay tuned on that front!)

Now one for you to consider: resolve to learn more about the natural world and the environment around you. All the technology has gotten to the place that far too many people, especially people under the age of 20, spend too much time staring at a screen, interacting with a device, instead of interacting in real time with real people and the world around them. We are part of the natural world and we all need to learn more about the world around us. It's amazing, it's diverse and it isn't black or white, yes or no, and a lot of it all depends! Take a walk once a week and leave the phone in your pocket, turned off. You can go thirty minutes without checking your email or posting on Facebook. You may find yourself more relaxed for it too!

So there you go - two for you and two for me. I'm serious about mine, so I hope you're serious about yours. Even if you want to make your own resolutions, although I think mine are excellent, take the time to do a little soul searching. Feel free to have a little fun with yourself and figure out just one or two things to do better next year. Don't make it overwhelming, but make it meaningful. And in the mean time, have a Happy New Year!