

It seems that New Year's Day (and New Year's Eve) is always an "event", the celebration of many things ...

... another year that mankind has survived ...

... another year that the planet has gotten just a little bit hotter

... another year that will lead me to write the date incorrectly for at least a few weeks ...

... and another year that the Toronto Maple Leafs go into their run for the Stanley Cup ... but I digress

Resolutions are made on this arbitrary day ... the day in which the calendar changes.

People go out to celebrate the coming of a new year ... but in reality, the "New Year" upon us really isn't so. Everyone celebrates their very own New Year - the date of their birth ... and some are quick to shy away while others face the din with delight.

Is *this* not the time that we should be reflecting upon the past year and looking ahead to another year in front of us? Is this not the time that we should ponder who we are in the world and how we are indeed leaving a legacy to share with those who follow us? Is this not the time for resolutions for the upcoming year?

I think many will refuse to believe that they are in the midst of leaving a legacy for the world. "I'm not important" may be the words or thoughts. "I'm just a common guy/gal looking to have the typical common guy's/gal's life - the wife/husband and 2.3 kids, the home (it's your castle, of course), the 2 cars (one of which will almost surely be an SUV since you've got to bus around the 2.3 kids) ... the idyllic North American existence.

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I guess if that's the sole focus, then you're probably not spending much time or effort thinking about "your legacy"!

We all have a story to tell and to share with the world. Our combined stories give the world greater knowledge and understanding of what it takes to be "human", to live on the planet with strength and courage, to go forward into the abyss and find whatever lurks within.

Your story will invariably involve high points and low points ... which is, in effect, the beauty of the human condition. We have the capacity to experience all of it ... but we also have the capacity to insulate ourselves from it, hoping to maintain some semblance of daily consistency without feeling too much or "being hurt".

This comes to me today as it's my day to reflect - that special day that my mother gave birth to this little blue-eyed boy some 42 years ago. It's a day that I take time to reflect on what I've learned, what I want to do next, where I've been, and where I am going. It's a day to pay my respects to Stevie Ray and a day to enjoy all that life has allowed me to experience.

A few things have occurred on August 27 over the years. For anyone in Texas, you are born to realize that the date is LBJ's birthday - and a state holiday. On this date in 1965, TIME magazine reported about the Gemini space project. In 1859, petroleum was discovered in Titusville, Pennsylvania - becoming the world's first oil well. In 1883, Krakatoa, an Indonesian volcano, erupted.

It's the birth date of Mother Teresa, Mack Brown (UT head football coach - Hook'Em!), Pee-Wee Herman, Alex Lifeson ... and on this date, we also remember the passing of Brian Epstein and Stevie Ray Vaughan ...

The Beatles met Elvis Presley for the one and only time on August 27.

But of course, today is my day as well ... and if my calculations are correct, I have now

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witnessed 15,340 days on this planet (including leap years, of course). That's a lot of mileage.

Over the past few weeks, I've taken some time to start archiving and tagging my photo collection - the results of which you will slowly see here on this site. It's a huge endeavor - but strangely enough, it's been very insightful to reflect upon images of times past and how they have impacted me today. I don't look back and see anguish or anything of the sort - though I know I have lived through some very difficult times physically, mentally, and emotionally. I am happy with who I am in the world today - and all of those events have led to me being who I am in the here and now. Would I change anything? Absolutely not - because the string of events, the timeline, that has led me to this place has in fact led me TO this place that I am content with ... and gives me the platform upon which to grow further, to learn more ... and to write and recount my adventure, chapter by chapter, day by day.

It's taken some time in the midst of all of this to find my voice ... and it evolves on a daily basis. The process is wonderful - I strongly suggest you search for yours. It's there, much as your own personal story lurks within you, waiting to be shared with the world. Find your voice, whatever it is - and explore it.

New Years may truly be just another day in the adventure - but when your birthday rolls around, reflect upon the beauty of time and the coming of a fresh new year. Today is truly the first day of the rest of my life ... with a whole lot of great stories, great people, and great adventures as a lovely foundation!