

## BRINGING IN THE NEW YEAR



VIC CLEVENGER

Cooking Comedian

victor0568@gmail.com



It's that time of year again when you take the tree down, return the presents you'd received or decide which ones you will re-gift throughout the year. The family has all returned to their homes but they did leave you with the left overs, which is a major plus. So while all this rumbles through your mind over that piece of pumpkin pie no one could find because you hid it, thoughts of what the New Year will bring creeps in. In addition to all the college bowl games and chip dip to go with all the snacks, there's the thoughts of resolutions, goals, dreams and other adventures this 2019 will bring you.

## The New Year brings new Resolutions

I already have a gym membership but this will not stop me from resolving to lose more weight. I would like to go from a BBQ Medium to a BBQ Small, eventually, but then again, I resolve to do this every year and every year I still buy XXL shirts. What I've discovered about resolutions is they take determination and time to complete. Much like when you decide to cook a brisket or whole hog, you have to stay after it. My gym membership is only a great investment if I resolve to take the time to use it. What this has taught me is, before I make any resolutions, I sit down to think long and hard about how determined I am to achieve it.

## The New Year brings new Dreams

Do you remember the old cartoon about the boy, Ralph Philips, who daydreamed about all the great accomplishments he desired? Ralph was a war hero, a mariner who fought underwater monsters and even an adventurer Indiana Jones would be in awe of even if it were only in his dreams. What makes this cartoon so fun to watch is not just the imaginative thoughts of a child but how we can relate to having dreams even as adults. Dreams like what I would do if I won the lottery or once my rich uncle gets out of jail. Dreams of what it would be like to be on TV, win a major BBQ competition like Memphis in May or both. I've had the good fortune to know many people who've had the entertainment dream as well as watch a few see those dreams come true. The difference between having a dream and fulfilling that dream has been the amount of effort it takes.

## The New Year brings new Goals

I don't know about you, but for a while I was sick and tired of hearing every corporate trainer talk about having short term and long term goals. "Do you have a one year, three year and five year plan in which you will accomplish your career ambitions of whatever it is you set out to do for said career?" All of this nonsense spewed by the latest self-help guru and I was one of them (yes, I do more than tell jokes) just annoyed me. It wasn't until I realized goals didn't have to be so large and even if I did have a large one, I could break it down to smaller bite size goals. If I want to Grand Champion at a major competition then my bite size goals could be to improve one protein at one cook. This realization taught me the value of To-Do Lists and short term milestones not to mention seeing the value of one-year, three-year and five-year plans. Those self-help people may be on to something.

## The New Year brings new Obstacles

Have you ever had that cook where everything went perfect? Ribs were amazing. The money muscle was, well, money. The brisket would be the envy of every Texan and the chicken, finally a perfect 180. At this point, we shift gears and bring in the judges. Ribs are overdone, they ate the pulled pork instead of the money, the brisket and chicken compete for which was the toughest. There's nothing like an obstacle to crush your dreams of success or discourage you from completing your goals. In a word, obstacles can be disheartening. But it's here when your determination (see above resolutions) comes in. It's also here where we learn and grow as a pitmaster, speaker, writer or whatever it is you are endeavoring to do. Every setback is the opportunity to learn a new pitch, new method or new recipe. This is where your pride gets bruised but this is also when you realize your ambitions are bigger than your pride and you see what you're made of.

## The New Year brings new Victories

This time of year you can count on two things, it's going to be cold and it's going to snow. Which growing up in Kentucky and living on the side of a small mountain was amazing. With dreams of snow days coming true, we would spring from the bed trading the walk to school for the fun walk to the top of the hill with sled in hand. It wasn't long until the fun sleigh rides would turn into a friendly competition of seeing who got to the bottom first or could go the farthest. With each victory we would cheer as if we had won an Olympic gold medal. With each new goal you accomplish, both large and small, relish in your victory, you deserve it.

## The New Year brings new Adventures

Do you remember the song, My Heroes Have Always Been Cowboys? Mine truly were as well as Indiana Jones, Robin Hood or any other adventure seeking person which led me to explore the forest behind my house as if I were on the Lewis and Clark Expedition. This sense of adventure has served me well through the years as I explored brand new roads, not afraid to go down that road less traveled. It's the excitement of the unknown which

keeps me going. This includes food. This past year was a good adventure year which will be hard to top. I became a new grandfather, competed, with my daughter Rebecca, in the dessert category at the World Food Championships, tying with 2nd in round one and finishing 8th overall. I cooked my first alligator, spoke at the NBBQA conference and founded the Chimney Cartel just to name a few. Needless to say, but I'm looking forward to what adventures will bring.

## The New Year brings new Friends

One of the most popular TV shows of all time revolves around the lives of 6 friends, so they named the show, FRIENDS. This world of food, especially BBQ, revolves around the same relationships, friends. When old friends get together at a competition or at the NBBQA it becomes more than just friends getting together this is why you hear "family reunion" tossed about. But all these "old" friends were once "new." As the New Year begins to move along, don't be surprised if you meet a new friend who will soon become an old friend you look forward to seeing.

When you set out to look at this 2019 where you seemingly get to begin again, join me in my excited giddiness as we anticipate what all the New Year will bring.

Happy New Year y'all.





**AWARD-WINNING SAUCES, RUBS, MARINADES, & SEASONINGS WISELY CRAFTED WITH ONLY HEALTHY-MINDED INGREDIENTS.**

**Enlighten Your Fire™**

 

For true BBQ knowledge, visit: [bbqbuddha.com](http://bbqbuddha.com)

# SAUCES SIZZLE

## in All American Bottles and Jars

Fire up the grill and fill up your sauce in All American bottles and jars. We're the country's leading supplier of quality glass and plastic sauce containers and carry a huge selection in all shapes & sizes. We'll make your sauce sizzle!

To get started, call 813-740-8777 or email [sales@allamericancontainers.com](mailto:sales@allamericancontainers.com)

**All American Containers, Inc.**

[www.allamericancontainers.com](http://www.allamericancontainers.com)



**MANY MORE SIZES AVAILABLE!**