

Reporter-Herald

Friday, Dec. 31, 2010 - default Edition - Edition: (RH)- Page: 4-A

Seizing happiness a week at a time

By Sarah Bultema

In My Own Words

Carpe diem.

It's a catchy Latin phrase that roughly translates into "seize the day." It's also a motto I try to live by in my own life.

But let's face it. The carpe diem way of living isn't always easy.

Along with the joys and adventures come the necessities, like work, driving to work, winding down from work, catching up with friends, catching up on TV and catching up on the dishes. It's easy to get relaxed in the routine and lost in the comfort of it all.

So this past year, I made a promise to myself not to let that happen.

Short of leaving my husband, job and friends behind and sailing a boat around the world (which sounds amazing but not so practical), I instead vowed to make the most of what I have right here.

My 2010 New Year's resolution was to try something new once a week for the whole year. I even named it: 52 Something News.

Most of these mini-adventures weren't extravagant. In fact, many included activities that would probably be boring to other people.

For example, one week I decided to try cooking chicken curry, (which I'm happy to say turned out pretty good, even for this culinary cripple).

I also listened to my first book on tape, explored the forest via snowshoes, completed a 1,000-piece puzzle and learned how to knit.

But not all of the "news" were totally simple or ordinary. Throughout the year I also completed my first sprint triathlon, took a jump into Dumpster diving and gave vegetarianism a go.

Each week was completely different from the last, without much rhyme or reason to each adventure. Yet that's exactly what my resolution was all about.

Each week brought an experience I probably never would have found the initiative or courage to try without this dare I'd made myself.

Today, a year later, I'm happy to complete new No. 52 by fulfilling a New Year's resolution for the first time.

Looking back, I can see how much all of these little events changed my life. I'm not on the couch nearly as much; I've picked up more than a few new hobbies; and I always have something interesting to talk about over dinner. Honestly, I just feel more happy.

It was a year I really did seize the day — and found a new way of living I hope to continue for many years.