

GEORGE: Yea! The kids don't realize it, though. You see, what they do is turn the heat up kinda high in the meds, and when the tables start melting the kids open the windows, the heat escapes and warms the surrounding shrubs.

ME: Did you make any New Year's resolutions?

GEORGE: Yea. To snoop, have a big mouth, put the kid's concern above mine, tell people when I think they're wrong or headed in that direction and complain, complain, complain.

ME: But that isn't any different from what you've been doing for the past year!

GEORGE: I know. Why give up a good thing? Tell me. If you had said, "Hey, George! Happy New Year!" and I said "Thanks" and no more, wouldn't that have ended our conversation?

ME: Well, yes.

GEORGE: And if I made no effort to complain or offer further information, wouldn't you stop seeking me out?

ME: I guess so.

GEORGE: And if you stopped talking to me, wouldn't this column be boring?

ME: It could be.

GEORGE: And if it was boring and the kids stopped reading it, wouldn't the editors drop the whole column?

ME: Now that you mention it...

GEORGE: And if no one ever saw "Hey, George!" again, wouldn't I lose all my popularity, fan club, and think of all those "George for President in '76" stickers going to waste?!

ME: "George for Pres--?"

GEORGE: SHH! That's still a secret.

ME: UH...I'd better move on. The kids think I'm talking to the Chocolate Juniors. Do you have any parting words?

GEORGE: Life is like a bottle of wine. Wait long enough, and the taste mellows. Wait too long to do something and you lose a good thing, get a sour stomach, and possibly hurt others in the meantime.

Happy New Year!