

Same Old New Year's Resolution

By Nancy Martz

Addicted to metal art, I collected sculptures for my Greeley home over the years. Often I hired help getting them into the house, and sometimes had to have them taken apart, then reassembled inside. I spent money moving them around in decorating whims. As is my unfortunate habit with worldly goods, I bought high, suffered remorse, and sold low. Once I gave a piece away, fed up with it, only to realize I couldn't live without it, and re-purchased it at an even higher price.

Now that I've moved to a condo, my metal collection remains in Greeley for my renter to admire. My collection through decades of weight loss and regain, has included a recumbent bike, a better recumbent bike, a treadmill, a versa-climber, a universal weight machine, a fat monitor scale, a bench, free weight sets, plus accessories like mats, balls, pedometers, videos and stretching gear. Over time, some pieces have served as *objets d'art* during social gatherings. I recall stuffing ourselves with shrimp balls, cheeses, artichokes, olive tapenade, and chocolate dipped strawberries and sipping pomegranate martinis while discussing the smooth lines, cubism, perspective, balance, shading, objectivity and tone of the massive Home Gym for Total Body Workout, while also sharing tales of New Year's Resolutions gone south.

What are the back stories for such miscarriages of intention? Weight-loss-blockage tales include the New Year's resolver utilizing the equipment for several months, shedding ten pounds and gaining muscle, but then catching a scoundrel of a near-pneumonia cold. After bed rest and muscle mass loss, one was too weak to begin again and needed serious sustenance to recover--say some bacon cheeseburger meatloaf and Krispy Kreme bread pudding, and later, half a dozen root beer popsicles while watching *Sweatin' With The Oldies* on TV.

Another resolver tells how he lost the key to the treadmill, falling heir to exhaustion, hypertension, and endomorphism in a frustrating but somehow appetite-whetting search for it. Or the relatives came for a visit, upsetting the schedule of exercise, and having to be trotted around to fine restaurants. Or the versa-climber broke down. Or one finally married the love of one's life and no longer had to look buff for dating competition. Whatever the rough-patch antecedent, the result was that the equipment meant to fulfill the New Year's Resolution no longer lived up to its promise, became metal art, and was bound for Craig's List or the annual yard sale come summer.

Until then, the metal piece stood in high relief as guests admired the aesthetic of its statuesque cubism. Some noted the contraposto of bold lines and smooth textures, the abstract design and use of negative space, and the triumph of chiaroscuro as its light and dark metals elevated the drama. While the total effect was somewhat Bourgeois, observing the mixed media of plastic, steel and rubber was satisfying. Often the flirty antiqued sheen of old oil on angular steel parts drew a pleasant gasp from the guest.

Now that I have no room in my Denver condo for such artifacts, I have noticed that Windsor Gardens has a broader collection than mine in its gallery called "Fitness Center." Indeed, artists perform frequently on the metal sculptures. I must pack some hors d'oeuvres sometime soon and go watch.