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RAINDROPS - Average precipitation across the 48 contiguous US states during the month of May 2015 was 4.36 inches, the wettest month ever in recorded history dating back 120 ½ years, i.e., back to January 1895 (source: National Centers for Environmental Information).

MAJOR ILLNESSES - 4 chronic diseases (cancer, strokes, diabetes and heart disease) are the cause of 67% of deaths in America each year (source: National Council on Aging).

NO FANCY DEGREE - 20 current members of the US House of Representatives (out of 435 members in the House) have no educational degree beyond a high school diploma (source: Congressional Research Service).

As we come to the beginning of the year, I am reminded of one of my favorite quotes:

“Every man should be born again on the first day of January. Start with a fresh page. Take up one hole more in the buckle if necessary, or let down one, according to circumstances; but on the first of January let every man gird himself once more, with his face to the front, and take no interest in the things that were and are past.” – Henry Ward Beecher

The last line reminds us not to dwell on what has already passed, but to embrace the New Year, which renews hope and inspires faith in a brighter future! The New Year is a time to set goals that will improve ourselves and give our lives even more meaning. While I do believe we should always remember the past and strive to learn from it, it's more important to focus on what is and what's to come.

Let's create goals for the future and love the present we are in. Let's begin the year mindful of the past, excited for the present, and full of hope for the future. Let's turn over a new page and spend the year filling it with the stories of our own making.

This January, I wish for you and yours a wonderful 2016!

HAPPY
New Year

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