

New Year



By Paul Engel

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- New Year's Eve is often a time for drinking, followed by a hangover.
- It's also a time for making resolutions.
- What can we learn from 2024 and what can we do better in 2025.

For many, New Year's Eve is a time for drinking and partying, which frequently makes New Year's Day a time for dealing with a hangover. For others, New Years is a time for making resolutions or promises to ourselves to be better. I rarely drink, so hangovers are not a problem for me. I also do not make New Year's resolutions, not because I don't think there are ways I can be better, but because I don't wait until the New Year to act on them. That said, a new year is a good time to look at where we are and make plans for the future.

New Year

However you celebrate the holiday, I wish you a safe and enjoyable time. I also hope you'll take some time to consider the year that is past and make plans for the year to come. After all, 2024 has been quite a year.

2024 in Review

Let's start with some highlights from 2024

Election

Remember back in January when a handful of states attempted to

keep Donald Trump off the ballot, claiming that he had participated in an insurrection simply because they called the January 6th demonstration an insurrection? They seemed to ignore then President Trump's admonition to the crowd to "peacefully and patriotically demonstrate" their displeasure with how the election was conducted.

Maine showed their general ignorance of the Constitution, and their willingness to throw away the republic as they attempted to join the "Interstate Compact to Elect the President of the United States by National Popular Vote."

The Supreme Court

As usual, the Supreme Court handled several cases worth remembering. One of the most memorable was [Trump v. United States](#) when Donald Trump claimed Presidential Immunity in an attempt to counter the questionable legal charges against him. In this case the Supreme Court noted that there is not "Presidential Immunity" clause in the Constitution, then claimed that the President did have some limited immunity. If that confuses you, that's probably a good thing.

There were several cases that restricted the overreach of federal agencies. In [Louisiana, et. al. v. U.S. Department of Energy](#), the court found that the Dept. of Energy did not have the statutory authority to regulate water usage in whatever way they wanted. Then there was the case [USDA v. Kirtz](#) where the question of sovereign immunity was brought before the court. This was followed by [Loper Bright Enterprises Et Al. v. Raimondo, Secretary Of Commerce, Et Al.](#) where the court "overturned" a forty year precedent known as the "Chevron Doctrine" that illegally granted deference to executive agencies in direct opposition to federal law. And let's not forget [Securities And Exchange Commission v. Jarkesy et al.](#), where the court said the SEC could not use their "Administrative Courts" to deprive people of their right to a trial by jury.

Congress

Not only did Congress continue to spend trillions of dollars they did not have, but some of their other acts are worth remembering. We had the CHIPS Act, which spent billions of dollars to help redirect chip manufacturers to build new plants while shutting down others.

Then there was the [TikTok ban](#). Did Congress have the authority to tell private companies what apps they can provide on their equipment? Was there a better way to deal with people's concern about the Communist Chinese control of that platform? Then there was [H.Amdt.876 – 118th Congress \(2023-2024\)](#), a proposed amendment to the infamous §702 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA). Some claimed that this amendment to enforce the Constitution's protections against unreasonable searches is itself unconstitutional, a position apparently held by President Biden.

And let's not forget the political "investigations" held in both houses.

President

Then there was Joe Biden's "pardon" of Hunter Biden. I put "pardon" in quotes because, while part of the document is a pardon of Mr. Biden's son for crimes he was guilty of, there was some controversy over the expansion into what should be called a grant of immunity for crimes he may have committed.

Don't let that distract you from the hundreds of billions sent to Ukraine to help them fight their war against Russia and pushing the transgender agenda on our schools,

Looking Forward to 2025

While none of us can know the future, contemplating the future is a fun way to pass time.

President Trump

Shortly after the New Year, Donald Trump will become only the second person to hold two non-consecutive terms as President. Even considering how few people have held the office, that is still quite a distinction. Mr. Trump has made many promises to the American people about what he will do with this opportunity, and based on his proposed appointments, he may even keep some of them.

Court Cases

There are several cases that have been heard and will be decided this year. The Supreme Court's term finishes at the end of June, and that's when they tend to release their opinions on the most controversial cases.

San Francisco v. EPA looks at the limits of the agency's power to interpret the law. Garland v. Van Der Stock looks at the powers of the ATF to reclassify personally manufactured firearms. And United States v. Skrmetti is a challenge to Tennessee's law prohibiting transgender treatments for minors.

States

Some states, most notably California, have been putting policies in place to prevent the Trump administration from enforcing federal immigration laws, protect abortions, and generally get in the way.

Resolution Ideas

As I said, I don't make New Year's resolutions, but I know many who do. So here are some ideas you may want to consider adding to your list.

Study the Constitution

Since this is The Constitution Study, resolving to study the supreme law of the land should be expected. Whether you read the document online, read a book, take a class, or follow other content on the Internet, knowing the supreme law of the

land has plenty of benefits.

Hold an Elected Official Responsible

I'm sure, at some point in the year ahead, one of your elected representatives will screw something up. They will vote for some unconstitutional legislation, promote some unconstitutional policy, or do something in violation of their oath of office. Call them up on it. Write a letter, or better yet, visit their office and point out their mistake and the fact that you will remember it. If your elected official is a good one, they will learn from the experience. If not, then it's time to start looking for someone better. But pledge to yourself that when you see an unconstitutional act, regardless of what government they are in, you'll stand up to point out the mistake to your employee.

Defend Your Rights

Odds are that someone will enact or enforce some policy that will violate your rights. Don't take it sitting down. Do your research, put together a sound argument, and then stand up and defend your rights. Maybe even get some of your neighbors to join you. I've had people reach out for help putting together their case or legislation. Join the list of those standing up to defend and assert their rights.

Conclusion

As we prepare to celebrate another orbit around the sun and look forward to a new year, let's remember the lessons of our past year and use them to make next year better. Let's not make the perfect the enemy of the good. By which I mean, don't be put off by the fact you cannot fix everything, just fix something. And should we meet again at the beginning of another orbit, we can tell the tales of what we learned in 2025 and what we're preparing to do in 2026.

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