



Get ready: It's time to zone out

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It's almost March, the traditional stupid time of the year. Now, I'm not against March, it's a pretty nice month, with St. Paddy's Day and the first day of spring and all, but we always do something stupid during this month. Like mess with our clocks.

We're going to do that again on Saturday the 13th. Before we go to bed on the 12th or when we get up on the 13th, we'll push the clocks ahead. Which means we'll lose an hour of sleep when we're too tired to get up and gain an hour at night, when we're too tired to stay up.

Is Daylight Saving Time starting, or ending? Who knows? Who cares?

I've ranted enough about this over the years, so I don't want to bore you again.

In fact, we have bigger clocks to reset.

Say you get up at 7 and the newly risen sun is shining, you eat a mid-day lunch at noon because you're hungry and you go to bed at 10 because you're ready to snooze.

Now, suppose that when you got up the clock said 1 p.m. But the newly-risen sun was shining. When you ate lunch it was 6 p.m., but you were hungry for your mid-day meal. When you went to bed the clock said 4 a.m., but you were ready to snooze.

How tied are we to the traditional hours in our day? Does the time on the clock really matter?

To evolve, we need to change the way we think about time. It would be the beginning of a major change in the crazy quilt pattern of time zones around the globe.

You know how many time zones Russia has? 11. China? 1. The U.S. and its territories have 9. North Korea just arbitrarily created a new time zone last year. For the fun of it.

There shouldn't be fewer time zones; there should only be one universal time.

This isn't my idea. It comes from Steve Hanke and Dick Henry. Hanke is an economist with Johns Hopkins University and a senior fellow with the CATO Institute, and Henry is a professor of physics and astronomy at Johns Hopkins.

They're smarter than I am.

Big thinkers, they are also working on the Hanke-Henry Permanent Calendar, in which every new year starts on a Monday.

With their calendar every five or six years you have an extra week.

What a great time for a week-long, world-wide introspection. Or party.

Sunday sermon

"I get up every morning determined to both change the world and have one hell of a good time. Sometimes this makes planning my day difficult."

- E. B. White

So you're so smart...

Last week I asked you to tell me which candidate for president is running under a name he wasn't born with.

"Hillary Clinton was Hillary Rodham until she married," writes a reader. True, but too easy. And I did say "he."

"Easy one this week, Oreste," writes another reader. "Bernie Sanders is a Polish Jew. I'm confident his last name has been changed from his original birth name."

Maybe. I was looking for Jeb Bush, who was born John Ellis Bush but combined his initials to make a new first name.

Of course, today the question is JEB who?

Now, I'll bet you can't tell me where bald eagles - which have been spotted in the area of late - get their name.

And it's not because they look bald.

See you next week.