

Time to stop messing with time changes

THE LOS ANGELES TIMES

It's nearly that time of year again when Americans reset their clocks one hour ahead, grumble about losing an hour of sleep — and wonder why on Earth we keep observing the outdated tradition of tinkering with time twice a year.

It's a good question. There's no practical benefit to the biannual clock-changing ritual beyond reminding people to check their smoke alarm batteries. But there are plenty of annoyances and maybe some health risks too.

It sows confusion and discombobulation (is it spring forward, fall back — or the other way round?). Some studies have found a correlation between changing the clocks and increased heart attacks, strokes and car accidents. That's not proof, of course, but given how messing with time schedules can disrupt sleep, and messing with sleep can decrease alertness and impair physical health, it's not hard to see a connection.

But inertia is a powerful force. We keep doing it because we've been doing it. And with more important issues commanding the attention of Congress, lawmakers must find it a lot easier just to follow this pointless tradition than to take to the time to examine it.

Nevertheless, momentum is building nationally to dump this practice and stick with daylight saving time year round. (In the event you are confused — and many of us are — daylight saving is recognized for the eight months from March to November; standard time is what we revert to for the other four months.)

Sixteen states including California have endorsed the idea of remaining on daylight saving time permanently, and others are considering it. Two states don't do the clock-changing thing at all, but that's because they recognize standard time year-round: Arizona (except for the portion within the Navajo nation), because of the summer heat, and Hawaii, because of its proximity to the equator, which gives each day there a roughly

equal amount of daylight all year long. The European parliament has also voted to stop changing the clocks but has yet to actually implement the change.

Time may be running short for the clock-changing foolishness. This week Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., reintroduced a bill that would put the nation on permanent daylight saving time. It's the third time he has proposed this change since 2018, when his state's Legislature voted in favor of stopping the time shift. Earlier versions didn't get very far. This time may be different, however, because Rubio has enlisted the support of seven other senators from both parties.

We sure hope the third time is the charm because the benefits for keeping this tradition, if there ever were any, aren't relevant in 2021. It didn't deliver any significant energy savings, as was hoped when adopted during World War I. And though we have all heard the argument about kids having to walk to school in the dark if we don't move the clocks back for winter, it's not really an issue today.

And the poor farmers we have heard so much about? It's a myth that adopting daylight saving was a measure to help agriculture. In fact, when California voted to start the clock-changing practice in 1949, farmers were very much opposed to it, noting that cows didn't care whether it was 6 a.m. or 3 million o'clock.

There are some who would prefer permanent standard time, which means more daylight in the morning year-round. But we think it makes more sense to have more daylight at the end of the day when more people are awake and active. Besides, it would be less disruptive, as we already spend two-thirds of the year on daylight saving time.



My Nickel's Worth

Health care workers deserve parity

A letter in Thursday's editorial page reminds us that there are two sides to every story, that it is dangerous to demonize. This is true.

The writer, in referring to the current strike of technical workers at St. Charles, points out the difficulties of management. I imagine their stress is as great as that of the people who are petitioning.

As an outsider, one who has lived here long enough to observe the morph from a smaller, intimate hospital into a large corporate structure, I have heard from friends and family who work or have worked at St. Charles.

Lack of respect, which includes fair wages, has been an ongoing employee concern. Is the problem inevitable, given the expanse of the operation? Is it possible to give the same level of care to employees that we get as patients? As details are worked out it is my hope that all employees are heard and seen as a necessary and valuable part of the health care team.

— Janet Whitey, Bend

Boosting Bend's livability

Thank you to the editorial board for highlighting the need for more invest-

ment in transit, biking and walking. Bend is at a critical juncture in prioritizing spending on these types of initiatives while also mitigating parking pressures.

At Commute Options, we strive to facilitate better and safer commuting options for Bend and throughout Central Oregon for a number of reasons. A well-funded bike and pedestrian route system can improve safety for children and adults who choose to walk or roll, boost Bend's livability, increase health benefits through active transportation and reduce adverse environmental impacts from traffic congestion and carbon emissions.

In regard to financing mechanisms, one new source for increased funding is under consideration right now by the state Legislature. Senate Bill 395, dubbed "Safe Routes For All" would increase funding for safer bike and pedestrian routes. Funding for this use has been stuck at just 1% of state transportation funding for 50 years. A lot has changed in the last five decades, especially in Bend and Central Oregon. A funding hike is long overdue.

Commute Options has been active in Central Oregon for 30 years and has seen firsthand how commuting patterns have changed, due to more options such as bus service, bikeshare, expanded bike

and pedestrian routes and more. We appreciate all that our local elected officials have done to make that happen along the way. That said, with renewed investment, there are new options and technologies that will make commuting even easier and safer in the years ahead.

— Brian Potwin, executive director, Commute Options, Bend

Support voiced for 'common-sense thinking'

I am not a parent of a school-aged child but am so glad to see that there is one elected official that has the courage to step up on this issue: Redmond city Councilor Krisanna Clark-Endicott's support of protecting women's sports against transgender players.

(Clark-Endicott faced criticism this week from the community and a fellow city councilor after posting support for a controversial South Dakota law about transgender student-athletes on her personal Facebook page).

We need a champion for common-sense thinking in this part of Oregon and I am glad to see that we have one close by. It will be interesting to see what our COVID-19-bound City Council has to say on this matter.

— Bill Gregoricus, Bend

Letters policy

We welcome your letters. Letters should be limited to one issue, contain no more than 250 words and include the writer's signature, phone number and address for verification. We edit letters for brevity, grammar, taste and legal reasons. We reject poetry, personal attacks, form letters, letters submitted elsewhere and those appropriate for other sections of The Bulletin. Writers are limited to one letter or guest column every 30 days.

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Your submissions should be between 550 and 650 words; they must be signed; and they must include the writer's phone number and address for verification. We edit submissions for brevity, grammar, taste and legal reasons. We reject those submitted elsewhere. Locally submitted columns alternate with national columnists and commentaries. Writers are limited to one letter or guest column every 30 days.

How to submit

Please address your submission to either My Nickel's Worth or Guest Column and mail, fax or email it to The Bulletin. Email submissions are preferred.

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Historical editorials: 3 kinds of U.S. senators

■ *Editor's note: The following historical editorials originally appeared in the Feb. 24 edition of what was then called The Bend Bulletin.*

Talk about weather — did you ever see anywhere a finer brand than that we are now enjoying? Frost has gone from the soil and farmers are turning the "stubborn glebe," the birds are caroling their prettiest, sunny days and moony nights entice one out of doors. All of which makes one glad to be alive.

...

Congressman Adam Bede, of Minnesota, has been having some fun with his brethren of the Senate. The noted wit is reported as having said: "You know there are three kinds of United States Senator these days, the old Senator with the young wife, the senator with several wives and the senators who have been indicted. Why, nowadays, when the roll is called in the United States Senate, the members don't know whether to answer present or not guilty."

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The experience of mankind for thousands of years has evolved this precept, which

ought to be framed into the life of every man who values his own peace of mind and his obligations to his fellow man: Live within your means.

The practice of living beyond one's means lies at the bottom of more dishonor and misery that can be catalogued in a month. Greed and hypocrisy thrive upon it, honest toil is always its prey. The maxim is as good for public corporations as for individuals.

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Now comes the biennial "mileage grab" as a sort of sequel to the "clerkship abuse" of the legislature. Mileage and per diem for the members of the Legislature amounts to \$15,674.30. Two representatives and one senator, A.L. Mills, S.M. Mears and R.A. Booth do not claim mileage. The assumption is that these members do not think it necessary to accept transportation at the hands of the state, so long as they traveled on passes. Linthicum of Multnomah, accepts only \$3.30, which is the round-trip fare between Portland and Salem. Smith of Josephine, pays his railroad fare and takes a receipt to show that he has the same.

Tunnel vision about vaping brings harm

BY TANNER ALIFF

In the spirit of hasty overreaction, states like Maryland and Oregon have seized the momentum of last year's federal ban on flavored vapes and are looking to take it a step further, effectively halting the sale, manufacturing and distribution of all flavored vaping products.

Legislation like this is only going to open the floodgates for black market exploitation and strip away another alternative pathway for tobacco smokers to leave traditional cigarettes.

Health advocates, especially those who wanted to prevent Juul from targeting teens with their advertising, are hailing the federal and state level bans as colossal victories. But the potential long-term effects of the bans aren't sitting well with everyone. Skeptics are concerned this will just promote black-market flavor manufacturing and incentivize e-cigarette users to return to more harmful tobacco products.

Creating legislation to protect children from malicious marketing is a noble cause, but it's important that we consider the costs. Overbearing regulations have historically created a vacuum for unsafe black markets to rise up. Take the Prohibition, for example. It's hard to find a better picture of a public health regulation that opened the door for organized crime and illegal distillation of toxic moonshine.

Today, with the prohibition of flavored vaping products, history is repeating itself. Why do we think e-cigarette regulations would be any better? They're

GUEST COLUMN



Aliff

susceptible to the same exploitation that booze was in the 1920s. And we're seeing the effects already.

Crude and counterfeit vaping products had been making their way onto shelves

across the country years before the ban. Even former FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb said many of the 2019 early pulmonary issues associated with e-cigarettes were probably linked to counterfeit products that work with commonly used devices, including Juul.

Post-ban, those black market products are the only ones left for young adults to get their hands on. What's more, the federal ban targets only nicotine flavor-cartridges, despite federal studies showing that the initial 1,500 cases of EVALI and the 33 deaths that spurred panics have been linked mostly to contaminated cannabis products.

Besides giving rise to a dangerous black-market, the ban also undermines e-cigs intended purpose: To help tobacco users to quit smoking more harmful traditional cigarettes.

Vaping, smoking, drinking or ingesting most any synthetic substance over time tends to carry negative health consequences — that much is true. But helping people quit inhaling the 7,000 chemical compounds found in a standard cigarette by offering them an alter-

native with significantly lower amount of toxins is still a good idea.

Just five years ago, many e-cigarette technologies were being championed as a public health advancement that was greatly lowering the amount of die-hard tobacco smokers. Now public opinion has drastically changed despite many entities like the NHS in Britain still affirming vaping as a reliable way to quit traditional smoking.

It was not nicotine patches or gum that led the United States to see its all-time lowest adult smoking rate. It was vaping and the uptake use of e-cigarettes that allowed for massive increases in the one-year quit rate. And a major component of vaping's success can be attributed to its wide variety of flavors. Most people don't leave traditional smoking just to switch over to an electronic machine that emits the same tobacco flavor. Polls strongly indicate that most vapers love flavors other than tobacco and enjoy the variety.

Without flavors, society stands to lose any benefit that could be pulled from vaping in the first place. America needs to take a breath and reconsider. Is it prudent to move forward with these kinds of reactionary bans without more substantiated evidence?

It's clear: The ban is not helping teens or adults. If anything, it's simply removing legitimate FDA oversight and inviting widespread exploitation. Why do it?

■ Tanner Aliff, formerly of Portland, is a Washington, D.C.-based Young Voices contributor who works as a research fellow studying the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Healthcare Freedom and Reforming Medicare.