

Taking advantage of the opportunity within the darkness

BROCK'S BANTER

By Brock Weir

So, here we are again, sitting in the dark.

Our clocks went back an hour in the wee hours of Sunday morning, as we've more or less been forced to become accustomed to throughout our lives, setting them accordingly before bed, knowing we would wake up the next morning feeling slightly off-kilter.

As we all know by know, it takes our complex body clock a little while longer than the most superficial part of our brains to get used to the switch. Even however minute a change an hour might seem, few of us began the week operating on all cylinders. Thankfully, as most others have a wobble of one or two degrees as a result, it all balances out and we usually cut each other a bit of slack.

We understand. We deal with it. We get on with it.

But is it worth it?

What follows is not based on any degree of bitterness, or a wobble that is in any way wobblier than usual getting used to the weight of the extra hour on our shoulders; as a matter of fact, I woke up on Sunday feeling a bit more energetic than expected, which is never the norm during a clock change. Sunday carried on as usual? until about 5 p.m. when the harsh reality of night in the afternoon once again reared its ugly head.

Okay, there might be a smidgeon of early onset curmudgeon here, but I digress.

Daylight Saving Time was largely borne out of simple practicality, allowing industry, particularly agriculture, to function at its most optimal level. These industries needed the maximum number of daylight hours in order to work most efficiently.

On the retail side of things, there is a lengthy documented history of businesses before the advent of Standard Time adjusting their operating hours according to the number of daylight hours in the day and, I suppose, to make the most of the light they had, people simply got out of bed with similar adjustments.

At one point, keeping standard time year-round could have been as simple as adjusting the aforesaid business hours, setting your morning alarm one hour earlier, or just by using common sense.

We're long past that now, however.

In our interconnected world, standard time is here to say and, of course, that is a good thing, but this interconnectivity is a primary part of the reason we're still dealing with the weight or loss of the extra hour, depending on the season.

The present Ontario Government, for instance, has supported the idea of abolishing Daylight Savings Time, but nothing has been done about it. No, this isn't an example of government inaction; rather, it is another example of that 'pesky' interconnectivity of our world.

Making Daylight Savings Time a thing of the past has been a particular pet project for Ontario Progressive Conservative MPP Jeremy Roberts, who formally introduced legislation to that effect in Queen's Park last year. The issue is the legislation is contingent on the Province of Quebec and New York State passing similar laws before they can be applied here.

?When it comes to New York State, we benefit as being in the same time zone as the market in New York City as well as there being a ton of cross-border trade, so we don't want to disrupt that,? Roberts told Global News at the end of October, noting that government being divided between Ottawa and Gatineau, QC across the Ottawa River adds another dimension to the mix. ?If we went ahead and did this without Quebec, we'd have a weird situation where half of the Federal government would be working on one time and the other half on another? so we want to do this responsibly.?

While I would argue that government employees would be able to deftly handle the situation, I do agree that it would be ?weird? and lead to some inevitable complications.

So, once again, until Premier Legault and Governor Hochul bring forward formal proposals, where we are, wobbles and all, getting on with it and knowing we'll have to do this again in the spring. And next fall. For the foreseeable future.

In my personal view, I would answer the question of whether it's worth it with a decided no, but, as always, there is also an opportunity here.

While that extra hour we gained on Sunday night might have seemed like a yoke around our necks at the beginning of the week, and while few of us will ever be on board with even the idea of nighttime darkness setting in by 5 p.m., we have a theoretic extra hour to work with.

So, how will you use it?

If you didn't spend it on Sunday doing something brand new, something extra exciting, or something unusual and crafty to get those creative juices flowing, that's okay, neither did I, but as long as this extra hour is theoretical, so is its expiration date ? although with COVID numbers rising again, you might be wise to use the hour sooner rather than later while the going is reasonably good.

But the question stands.

With lockdowns being what they were, maybe the extra hour can be spent catching up with someone you haven't seen since the start of the pandemic. Perhaps that hour can be spent planning for a trip now that the question mark eclipsing the light at the end of the tunnel keeps getting smaller and smaller. Now that we're getting our bearings again, maybe your personal bandwidth is strong enough again to resume some self care that might have fallen by the wayside, to research a local organization that might need your hour ? and I think that entitles one to an extra hour if we're just giving them away willy-nilly, right? ? and spend it there, or simply pop into a local business that you haven't tried before.

After nearly two years of lockdowns and stay-at-home orders, the options almost seem limitless.

I think I need some extra time to think about what to do with mine.

If you have suggestions, please send them to brock@lpcmedia.ca.