*Back Home by Chris Hardie*

**Turning back the time turmoil**

In less than a month — Nov. 7 at 2 a.m. to be precise — most of the nation’s clocks will be turned back an hour as we return to standard time.

The extra hour of daylight that we’ve experienced since March 14 as part of Daylight Saving Time will go away and we will be plunged into darkness.

While there are some states — Arizona and Hawaii along with some of our Amish neighbors — that remain on standard time year-round, the rest of us engage in the twice-yearly time trick. It seems like just when our circadian sleep cycle is getting normalized and we’ve located the last of the digital clocks that need to be changed, we’re changing them again.

There is a small corner of my world that has remained on standard time for the past year. In my basement office, there’s a wall clock that I never got around to springing forward in March.

Attribute it to a combination of procrastination and a little bit of laziness because I need a stepladder to reach the clock. In the past, I have stood on my swivel office chair to reach it, but at least I’m getting a little smarter.

The computer automatically changes time and since no one else uses that room much, it’s been a Hardie Standard Time holdout. Every so often I glance at the clock and figure I’ve got plenty of time to get stuff done and I end up getting nothing done because I’m already behind. And I’m comfortable with that.

This concept of adding additional daylight in the summer to save energy is really a farce because it’s shown to not do that anymore with the prevalence of air conditioning.

It’s also a myth — I learned from History.com — that farmers are responsible for changing the clocks. The agriculture industry was opposed to the time switch when it was first implemented on March 31, 1918, as a wartime measure.

If you asked most cows, they would lift their tail to the time change as well. While many cows are now milked three times a day, many others are still on a twice-a-day schedule. Anytime you mess with that time, the production is impacted.

When you delay the sun rising, you also mess up the natural rhythm of the day. The grass is wetter for another hour and some jobs don’t start until daylight. Sundials tell the real time all of the time

Studies have also shown that time changes affect people’s rhythms as well. Our internal body clocks settle into normal sleep patterns and cycles that are disrupted enough already by aging bladders, binge-watching TV shows and late-night doom scrolling. We don’t need artificial time changes to mess it up even more.

Even worse, it can be harmful to your health. Entrepreneur.com interviewed a Finnish doctor who said the rate of ischemic stroke was 8% higher during the first two days after a time change.

But even if you don’t blow a gasket, the time change is simply depressing. “The transition to standard time is likely to be associated with a negative psychological effect, as it very clearly marks the coming of a period of long, dark and cold days,” Soren Ostergaard, associate professor of clinical medicine at Aarhus University in Denmark told Entrepreneur.

Trust me. Scandinavians know a little something about long, dark winters.

I’ll probably have to change my office clock’s batteries soon anyway, but at least Hardie Standard Time will be in sync again.

Whether that contributes to any increase in productivity remains to be seen.

*Chris Hardie spent more than 30 years as a reporter, editor and publisher. He was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize and won dozens of state and national journalism awards. He is a former president of the Wisconsin Newspaper Association. Contact him at* *chardie1963@gmail.com**.*

***Photo cutline***

*Clock.jpg: This wall clock has been on Hardie Standard Time all season long.*