

from our viewpoint...

Daylight Time should start sooner

The country goes off Daylight Saving Time on Sunday, and it's about time. It's getting mighty dark for those who get up early.

Daylight Saving Time has been around since World War I, when the government pushed it as an efficiency measure. It's been much debated because, in essence, it's just a trick.

You can't save daylight. There are still only 24 hours in a day.

You can save the energy it takes to light up workplaces, streets and schools late in the afternoon, though, and in the war emergency, people thought that was important.

The people doing the thinking were mostly city folk, though. Many farmers objected, claiming either that they couldn't milk a cow on Daylight Time, or that since they had to get up with the sun anyway, the whole thing was just a nuisance to them.

For nearly a century, Daylight Saving Time has come and gone at the whim of the era. It was banished most places after the Great War, then came back in the years of the Greatest Generation.

If the country needed a little saving in 1918, it needed a lot in 1941. After V-J Day, though, the need seemed a lot less. American was prosperous, growing and full of itself. We had no problems, save the Russians and the commies in the closet.

The time-altering scheme was dormant then until the energy crisis years of the 1970s. It always seemed ironic that it was a Republican president, Richard Nixon, on whose watch we got federal orders to go to Daylight Time and the 55-mile-an-hour speed limit.

So much for states' rights.

Since then, the whole nation has been on Daylight Saving Time save a couple of rebel states, Indiana and Arizona, whose time is so confusing, we can't explain it to you.

Indiana is in the Central Time Zone part of the year and partly in Eastern Time the rest of the year. We think. Arizona comes and goes from Mountain Time, but it's unlikely anyone there is young enough to set the clock on the video recorder.

In Kansas, we live mostly on Central Standard Time, whatever that may be on a given day. It's Central Time east of Goodland, and Mountain Time west thereof, which isn't much. But it's Daylight Time all summer across the state.

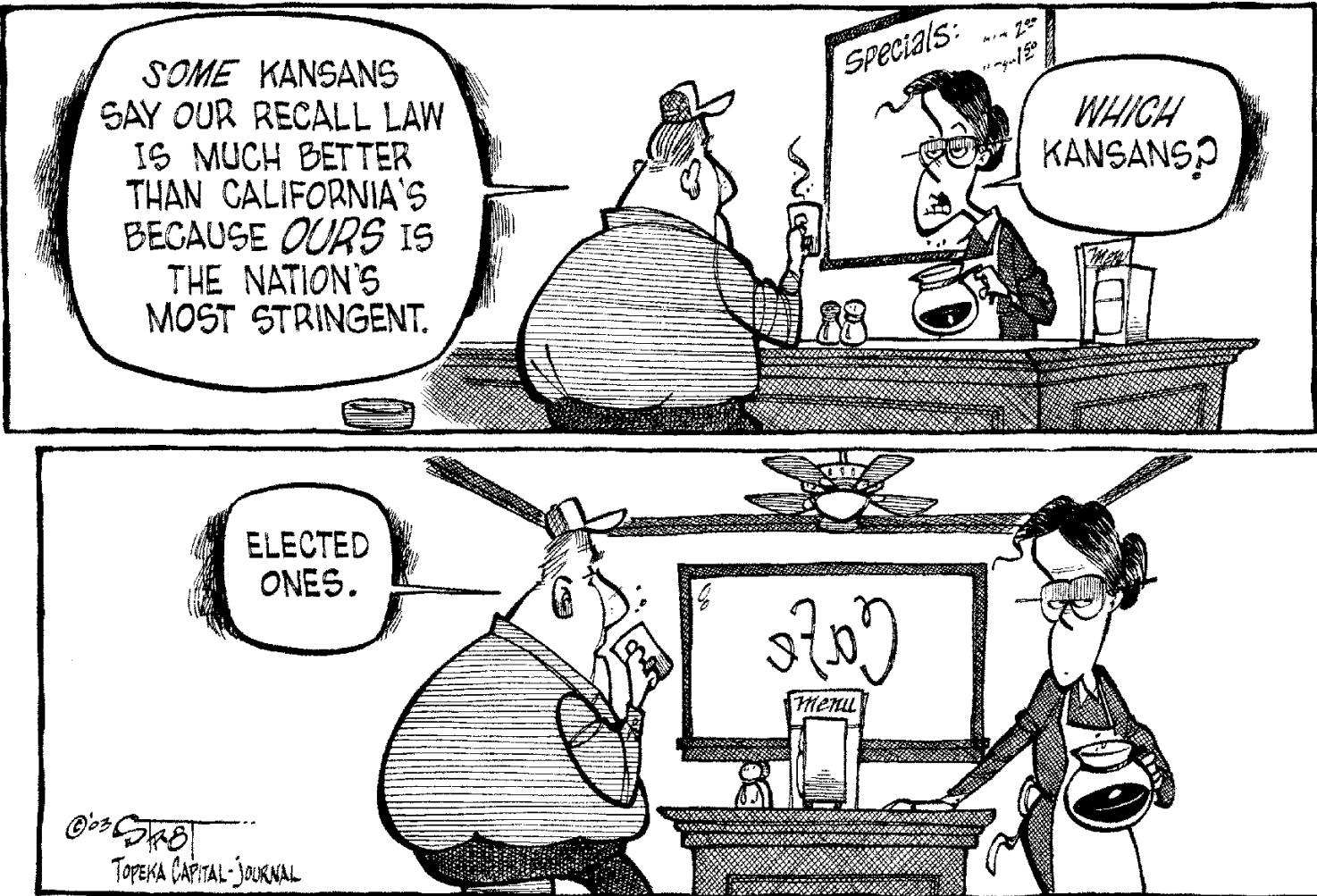
And for the most part, we can deal with it. We're used to it. And it is nice to have a little extra sunshine after work.

The only flaw in the plan is this: Standard time covers the four darkest months of the year, when the days are shortest, November, December, January and February. It does not include October, but it does include March, though the days are roughly equal in length those months.

It'd make more sense to change the time the first Sunday in March rather than the first Sunday in April, and there have been bills in Congress to do just that. It would be a good idea to make the change, just to even things out.

We'd recommend that to Congress, if it feels so inclined, to change the start date for Daylight Time to the first Sunday in March.

Oh, and don't forget to set your clocks back an hour Saturday night before retiring. It's time to change. — *Steve Haynes*



Halloween mostly harmless fun

I don't know about you, but Halloween is all around me.

The stores are full of ghosts and goblins, fall color flower arrangements, and enticements to buy. People now decorate their homes almost as much as for Christmas.

But you'd better hurry if you're going to buy Halloween costumes; they will be replaced by Christmas items even before Oct. 31. Whatever happened to Thanksgiving?

Halloween has always been a time for pranks. What will today's children tell their grandchildren about their Halloween pranks? What will they consider "innocent" fun?

The past few weeks I've been hearing grandparents talk about what they (well, not they themselves, of course, but other kids their age) did for pranks — a turkey in a school classroom, a cow on top the schoolhouse, a Volkswagen tipped on end to get it in a narrow storefront, and pushing over outhouses — sometimes with people in them.

I was never even involved in soaping windows; my mother expressly forbid any of those kinds of things. But who doesn't enjoy dressing up and pretending? Surely there's no harm in that.

Today's kids have way too much reality in their lives; let them imagine — if only for one evening.



lorna gt
● commentary

Part of the joy has gone out of Halloween, though. Getting that much candy in one place at one time used to be a real treat, because we seldom had candy — especially store-bought candy. We used to eat even the homemade cookies, fruit and popcorn balls we received — without once thinking they might be dangerous.

We have lost so much. What can be fun about harming others? Halloween should be innocent fun for the young or costume parties for adults.

Some people don't like Halloween for various reasons, and many of their reasons have merit. If Halloween glorifies or celebrates evil, then we should avoid it. No one should get too comfortable with any form of evil.

Something to think about is this quote spoken by an Amish elder in the movie, "Harvest of Fire": "We don't understand the evil, nor do we try to. For the things you understand too well, you are in danger of becoming."

Maybe that's the fear of the anti-Halloween

people; it's worth considering. We should continue to be appalled and repulsed by evil — to keep from accepting it and becoming evil ourselves. However, we should be on guard against that kind of evil every day, not just on Halloween.

Everyone has to admit, though: Halloween comes at a beautiful time of year. The trees are spectacular as they say goodbye to their summer clothing.

The brilliance of fall flowers rivals the trees' finery. The weather is mild and pleasant. It's a time to be enjoyed to its fullest.

Let's encourage fun and smiles before winter's blast sends us all inside.

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Flood of spam a deepening pool

Anyone who goes on the Internet knows how much junk e-mail there is rolling through the ether.

Ream after ream of the stuff, known as "spam" after the patented form of fake ham, jams mailboxes and bogs down servers. Experts estimate that business spends millions every year just paying employees to clean out their mailboxes and block that spam.

Mostly, it's a losing battle. Government can't regulate spam well because much of it originates offshore. Nonresident spammers aren't likely to toe the mark on American law. And we can't hardly send the Marines into Belize or Estonia to grab their computers, popular as that might be at home.

That leaves us poor computer users with pitiful and inadequate tools for fighting this junk. And I think I'm losing.

I've been buried under and avalanche of spam lately. Either I signed up for a site that sold me down the river of spam, or someone did it for me. I'm really not sure.

I can see a prankster signing me up for some porn site or Takwondo lessons, but I don't have any ex-wives who are that mad at me. At least, not yet.

Whatever happened, it opened the gates of spam hell and let a river of the stuff flow into my computer.

(I also started getting phone calls from very insistent salesmen who said I "had signed up on their web site" for information on whatever they were selling. Right, I really need real estate in central Florida and accessories for my new Mercedes. Since they were calling on line 2, we figured it wasn't me who filled out the



steve haynes
● along the sappa

form.)

I've written filters and trashed messages, and so far, I've been able to keep my head above water. But just barely.

Filters are kind of fun. You have to guess which part of a message or address might be repeated and then write your filter to block that. Mostly, we block the domain the sender lives at, unless it's something terribly common like "aol.com."

Also, it pays to block words like (Mothers: do not let pre-teen children read the next paragraph.) viagra, prescription, sex, porn and arnold.

where to write

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