

# Straight TALK

by *John A. Arway*

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## Spring Ahead

Most of us have grown up with the biannual ritual of changing our clocks in the spring and fall to accommodate for Daylight Savings Time (DST). We typically move our clocks forward one hour in the spring, spring ahead, and backward one hour in the fall, fall back. This practice was created to allow us to take advantage of an extra hour of daylight during the spring and summer months.

Our ancestors never had to worry about clocks since their day started when the sun rose in the east and finished when it set in the west. They also ate meals when they were hungry and went to sleep when they were tired. Many of us long for those simpler times. Unfortunately, we now live in a time where, by necessity, we eat, sleep, work and play by schedules that are controlled by the clock. Although our ancestor's method of timekeeping was ok for keeping track of local time, we have evolved as a society and now require a time structure for all of our daily activities. This happened when we changed from an agrarian society to an industrialized society. Now that we are a computerized society, it is even more important to most of us.

Society first began timekeeping on standard time because of the need to synchronize clocks around the world. In fact, Samuel Langley at the Western University of Pennsylvania's Allegheny Observatory in Pittsburgh has been recognized as being the originator of the modern standard time system in 1869, 3 years after the creation of the Pennsylvania Fish Commission.<sup>1</sup> Time is responsible for separating the globe into eastern and western hemispheres and one prime meridian (0° longitude) and an international date line (180° longitude).

We should thank or criticize New Zealand entomologist George Vernon Hudson who is credited with the modern DST concept. He first proposed a 2-hour daylight saving shift in a paper he presented to the Wellington Philosophical Society in 1895. He proposed the idea, so he could have more time collecting insects when he finished his day shift job.<sup>2</sup> Leave it to a biologist to come up with a world changing idea, so he could spend more time studying insects.



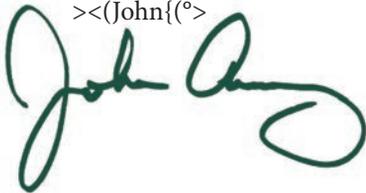
Although Benjamin Franklin's proverb "Early to bed and early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise" preceded the creation of DST, many suggest that it was a recognition of one of the very reasons why DST was created. In Franklin's time, it was to save candles. In our case, it is to save energy. Winston Churchill once said that it enlarges "the opportunities for the pursuit of health and happiness among the millions of people who live in this country."<sup>3</sup> Churchill's quote was a recognition of William Willett, a prominent English builder and outdoorsman, who independent of Hudson, proposed the concept of DST, because he noticed how many Londoners were sleeping through a large part of the day. He personally wanted more time at the end of the day to finish his round of golf.

DST has been controversial since it was first created. Clearly, there are both perceived and actual advantages and disadvantages to DST. Some of the benefits include saving energy by using less electricity for lighting, promoting outdoor activities, which is good for our physical and mental health, reducing traffic accidents and crime and being good for business. It is also said to bring a smile to everyone's face, because it provides more light and sunshine. Others argue that it really doesn't save energy, especially in today's society, increases the incidence of heart attacks, changes our morning behavior, which can be bad for our health by disturbing our rest-activity cycle, increases fuel consumption and atmospheric deposition and creates problems due to uncertainty about when to change our clocks and computers.

I would like to focus on the fact that one more hour of daylight at the end of the day allows us to take advantage of the outdoor opportunities Pennsylvania has to offer. A study conducted in the European Union showed that DST increases leisure sector turnover (think of it as fishing and boating instead of working) by 3 percent.<sup>4</sup> Franklin and Churchill realized that DST allows people to rise with the sun (think of it as sleeping later in the morning), so they can have more time to enjoy the outdoors since the sun sets one hour later. In 2015, our clocks are scheduled to be set ahead one hour on Sunday, March 8. I encourage you to take advantage of this gift of time from our forefathers and spring forward by enjoying the extra hour of daylight and using it to fish and boat this year. Remember, it only lasts until November 1 when we reset our clocks and fall back one hour in time.

See you on the water.

Your Director,  
><(John{(>



I would like to thank **Wikipedia.com**, my go-to source of reference material, for their research that greatly assisted my ability to tell this story.

- <sup>1</sup> Walcott, Charles Doolittle (April 1912). *Biographical Memoir of Samuel Pierpont Langley, 1834-1906*. National Academy of Sciences. p. 248.
- <sup>2</sup> G. V. Hudson (1895). "On seasonal time-adjustment in countries south of lat. 30°." *Transactions and Proceedings of the New Zealand Institute* 28: 734.
- <sup>3</sup> Winston S. Churchill (1934-04-28). "A silent toast to William Willett." *Pictorial Weekly*.
- <sup>4</sup> Aries, M.B.C., Newsham, G.R. 2008. Effect of daylight saving time on lighting energy use: A literature review. *Energy Policy*, 36 (6), 1858-1866.



*The mission of the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission is to protect, conserve and enhance the Commonwealth's aquatic resources and provide fishing and boating opportunities.*



*Enjoy the extra hour of daylight by using it to fish and boat this year.*

**Get questions answered.  
Share your ideas.**



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