

Opinion: Should Nevada switch time zones?

By David McGrath Schwartz, Las Vegas Sun

We've been told over and over that there's no quick fix for Nevada's grinding unemployment and underwater mortgages. So how about an extra hour of daylight to brighten these dark days?

From the Internet comes a provocative idea: Nevada should part ways with the Pacific time zone of the coastal states and join Arizona, Idaho and Utah in the Mountain time zone.

It would not, of course, increase the amount of daylight in a 24-hour period. But on a day like today it would push sunset from 4:32pm to 5:32pm – ending the depressing late-fall phenomenon of leaving work – for those of us still with jobs – at 5pm only to find night has fallen.

More would be awake for the early sunshine – sunrise would on a day like today go from 6:16am to 7:17am.

Nevada rides at the rear of the parade that is the Pacific Time Zone, a fact that becomes apparent after daylight saving time ends and darkness arrives an hour earlier.

Consider Los Angeles at the western edge of the time zone: Sunset today is at 4:49pm, according to the U.S. Naval Observatory Astronomical Applications Department. They get the beach and 17 minutes more of evening light.

Then consider Phoenix, in the Mountain time zone. There, the sun will not set until 5:25pm.

It would be a stretch to describe the idea of changing time zones a movement. It's mostly the griping of co-workers and one man ranting on a blog.

When the state moved its clocks back this month, Hugh Jackson, proprietor of lasvegasgleaner.com, opined: “Lickety-split it’s going to be getting dark around here at, oh, 4:14 in the afternoon. Dreary, depression-inducing, soul-sucking darkness and it’s not even cocktail time ... isn’t that what North Dakota is for?”

While a lone voice, Jackson, a liberal commentator, raises an interesting question: Why is Nevada time-tethered to California?

Getting a state or county’s time zone changed is uncommon, but not unprecedented.

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