

The Morning File

Carpe diem

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By Peter Leo, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

What day is it?

Have you ever asked that question? And, believe me, you don't have to be a full-fledged geezer to not know what day of the week it is. So if you or a loved one has trouble telling Sunday from Saturday or Sunday from Jupiter, for that matter, then it might be time for the DayClock.

Here's the concept: They took a wall clock, got rid of all those pesky numbers and divided the clock face into seven sections, one for each day of the week. Then they arranged for a clock hand to point to the correct day, like clockwork.

Any questions so far?



Time out I

Let me point out for the 50th time that The Morning File accepts no fees for product placement, because it's unethical, and the money isn't that good. Today's effort is public service journalism, fine-tuned to our readership.

It sells itself, one day at a time

The DayClock publicity material, e-mailed to The Morning File, calls it a product that "has revolutionized the clock industry in favor of senior citizens! It sounds silly at first, but when you see the clever, patented design in action, it's hard to pass up. DayClocks are ideal for retired persons with the luxury of living the type of leisurely life where the day is more important than the hour. Perfect for a comical yet practical retirement gift and also great for RVs, vacation homes or the memory-challenged.

"With a DayClock, you'll never forget if it's Golf Sunday or Bingo Wednesday! DayClocks are available at www.DayClocks.com and range in price from \$39.95 to \$49.95."

Some models come with -- get this -- the actual time as well as the day of the week. None of the models resemble the Morning File illustration. It's just a suggestion.



The story behind the story



Stacy Innerst, Post-Gazette
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Many years ago, John P. Kallestad and Mark Pierce were dirt-sailing in Nevada's Black Rock Desert, and we can only assume that dirt-sailing is some rare Nevadan entertainment alternative to gambling or prostitution. The guys were having a great time, and, as many of you know, when you dirt-sail, the minutes, hours, days tend to blur.

But it was crucial for the retired businessmen to know the day of the week: Their wives were joining them on Friday. Their wristwatches told the date but not the day. So that night, they brainstormed around the campfire with the aid of a few beers. The result was the DayClock. (No word on whether either of the guys got clocked by a DayWife.)

After three years of planning and testing, and after finding no interest among several manufacturers, Mr. Kallestad decided to develop the clock himself. It hit the market in 2002. "The clock industry is pretty set in its ways," he told the Reno Gazette-Journal in 2003. "They have a hard time accepting a new concept of looking at time where the day is more important than the hour."

Hard to believe but true.



Time out II

Let's take a moment here to observe that you wouldn't need a DayClock if YOU READ A NEWSPAPER EVERY DAY, because every page has the date and day of the week, 365 days a year. Is the Internet this reliable? What's more, a daily newspaper adjusts effortlessly to Daylight Saving Time and Leap Year.

If you have friends either in their dotage or merely susceptible to regular "senior moments," before buying them a DayClock, consider signing them up for the Post-Gazette. (Yet another product placement for which I get no remuneration.)

There's no requirement that they read the paper, but it's an easy way to keep track of the day of the week -- unless, of course, the person doesn't know what day it is when he or she picks up the paper.



Remember, the PG publishes on Sunday

Cathy Lubenski in The San Diego Union-Tribune, November 2005:

"My mom lives in Pennsylvania and has been retired for several years, and housebound for part of that time. The big highlight of her day is when the newspaper arrives. Our small-town newspaper doesn't print on Sundays, but my mom is right there at the door waiting for it because she's lost track of what day it is. Why doesn't someone make it easier for her to know what day it is? Someone has -- a DayClock . . ."



From the AP

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Yet another endorsement

From a discussion of dyslexia on a writing Web site, nanowrimo.org:

"Dyslexia also messes with time, spatial relationships and math. Some dyslexics have trouble with fine motor skills and severe lapses of time. I have two clocks. One tells the 24-hour version of time and the other is a DayClock. Clocks that are digital and show dates only confuse me. So my old-fashioned ticking clocks -- for time and day -- work like charms. I'd be truly lost without my DayClock."

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