

With time change, replace batteries and detectors

Daylight Saving Time ends Sunday, Nov. 2, and the Collierville Fire Marshal's Office reminds you that as you prepare to set your clocks back an hour also remember to change the batteries in your smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors.

Smoke detectors are your first line of defense against injury and death. The death rate in homes without working detectors is twice as high as those with working detectors.

Smoke detectors should be on every level of the house, inside each bedroom and outside each sleeping area. Hardwired and battery-operated wireless detectors should be interconnected throughout the home so that when one sounds, they all sound.

- Do not use rechargeable batteries as they have a shorter charge life.

- Check the manufactured date and replace smoke detectors more than 10 years old because their ability to function is reduced regardless of battery life.

- Check detectors for dust and vacuum to improve effectiveness.

- Rental property owners are responsible to install working detectors upon rental contact. Then it is the responsibility of the tenant to replace the batteries. If the detector is more than 10 years old, has been painted over or damaged, notify management.

- Collierville Fire & Rescue will provide free smoke detectors and replace batteries for low-income residents, the elderly or those with physical impairment. To apply, contact the non-emergency number, 853.3290, between the hours of 7 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Use the "extra" hour gained with the end of Daylight Saving Time to:

- Change the batteries in smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors.
- Check your emergency kit and rotate supplies.
- Update your medical records and list of current prescriptions.
- Check fire extinguishers.
- Review your fire escape plan and meeting place with all family members.
- Have a fire drill to practice your escape plan.

For more information, contact the Collierville Fire Marshal's Office of Public Education at 853.3290.

— Collierville Fire Marshal's Office of Public Education

Don't forget to set clocks back one hour before you go to bed Sunday night, Nov. 2, and remember to replace the batteries in smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.



CONFESSIONS OF A CONFUSED DAD:

An American for President

JEFF MARTINDALE
Special to The Collierville Herald

This year's historical presidential race has captivated the nation like few others. Even my boys have taken notice.

During a recent ride in our minivan, Lana and I asked the boys which candidate they favored.

"I'm for McCain," announced Will.
"I'm for Obama," retorted Jack.

At first, I assumed Jack's answer was simply to contradict Will's since they agree with each other about as often as, well, Democrats and Republicans. Even on simple choice matters, I hesitate to seek their input because invariably their opposing answers require me to make an executive decision that leaves someone unhappy, but such is the life of a dad — and a husband.

Anyway, I consider myself a Republican, albeit half-hearted, with the favorite part of the electoral process being its merciful end after Election Day. Nevertheless, I had to know why Jack supported Obama.

"Why is that, Jack?" I asked.

"Somebody other than an American should be president."

Lana and I stared at each other. "He is an American, Jack," Lana corrected.

"No, he's not!" Jack snapped. "He's African-American."

Lana explained that African-Americans are American citizens with African ancestors. As Jack sat in stunned silence, his furrowed brow and tight lips gave signs that wheels turned in his mop-topped head. I doubted, however, that he would change his mind since agreeing with his big brother could be calamitous to the world's equilibrium.

A few days later, Will's class assignment was to watch the third and final presidential debate and document some topics and record his thoughts on the candidates' comments.

He and Jack rushed through bedtime routines and scampered downstairs just in time to catch the handshaking at the debate's start. As Will sprawled across the couch to work on his assignment, I wondered how long it would take for him to lose interest. But I didn't have a chance to find out because within minutes the relentless rhetoric drove me into my office for more interesting endeavors, like balancing our checkbook.

The next day, I asked Will about the debate.

"They're not talking about the main stuff, but they're always talking about the other person. It's okay to do that sometimes, but I don't like that they didn't answer

the questions," he said, ending with, "It's a very negative campaign."

Perhaps I've underestimated how much my children notice today's campaign messages. Why, just the other day, Jack and Lana were watching TV when, after a particularly nasty Mississippi governor's race commercial, Jack asked, "Mom, what's the deal with Wicker and Musgrove?"

Having paid little attention to the ad, Lana didn't know what to say. She did, however, adeptly answer another question later that evening.

"What is one good reason you'd vote for McCain over Obama?" Will asked at dinner.

Lana responded that it came down to trust and faith. While presidents make lots of promises they don't keep, she said, and she doesn't agree with everything McCain says and neither candidate is "fabulous," she trusts McCain more than Obama.

The boys nodded, which, to my recollection, was the first time they had agreed on anything since the Cubs last won the World Series.

The moment reminded me to brush up on my conflict resolution skills since brotherly quarrels are always around the corner. Besides, my current strategy of high-decibel commands produces migraines more than lasting harmony. And, frankly, I've probably reached the point where I should instruct the boys to involve me only when necessary in their disputes. I'll retreat somewhere with a cold drink and a good book, but I won't be too hard to find. Just look for the contented guy wearing earplugs.



Jeff Martindale is a Collierville resident, FedEx employee and proud father of two boys. You can learn more about his writings at jeffmartindalebooks.com.



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*From Standard and Poor's Equity Research quoted in BusinessWeek "Focus Stock" report posted on its Web site July 15. Full BusinessWeek report available at http://www.businessweek.com/feature/content/080714_20080714_000079.htm.

**American Banker, March 31, 2008. U.S.-based bank holding companies by asset size excluding thrifts.