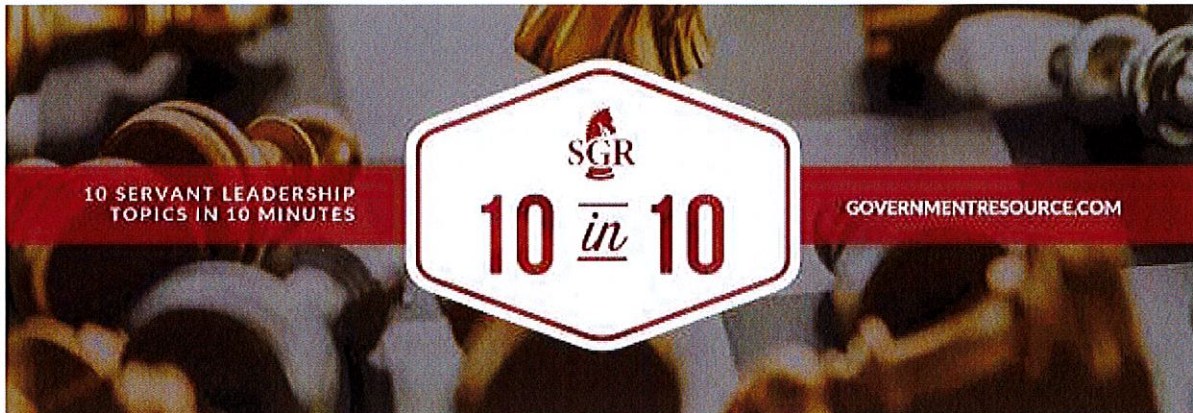


[View this email in your browser](#)**February 27, 2024**

Leap year has me thinking about time and our relationship to it. Most of us think about time a lot, even if only in passing. For the most part, we think about how we wish we had more of it. In two days, that wish will be granted. This Thursday, February 29, is an extra day—one we don't have outside of the quadrennial leap year. So, what are we going to do about this incredible gift of more time?

Here's some context for you. This is a leap year. Leap years happen every four years resulting in February 29, which occurs only during a leap year. Until a few days ago, that was the sum total of everything I knew about leap years. And I was content with that. I really was. But then I just had to know more. I blame Google.

It turns out leap years started in 46 B.C. in the Roman Empire, under Julius Caesar. In countries that use the Gregorian calendar (that's most of us), it works like this:

*A leap day occurs in a leap year, which is a year with an inserted period of time. Leap days are necessary because an astronomical year—the time it takes for Earth to complete its orbit around the sun—is about 365.25 days, while a calendar year is 365 days. So, about every four years, a leap day is added to account for four extra 0.25 days. This is accomplished by adding an extra day in February.**

In local government parlance, this would be called a long-term strategy. In

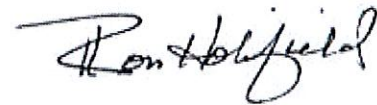
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But, *what if?* What if there were no leap days and no leap years? Well, if we didn't account for the extra time, the seasons would begin to drift. Over a period of about 700 years our summers, which we've come to expect in June in the northern hemisphere, would begin to occur in December. This would, indeed, be annoying. But it would also disrupt things like agriculture—when farmers plant, grow, and harvest—and much of the rhythm of humans and domesticated animals on the planet. By adding an extra day every four years, our calendar years stay adjusted to the [sidereal year](#), and life as we know it can remain the same.

It's all very complicated and mathematical, but once you get past Julius Caesar, Gregorian calendars, and the earth's orbits and rotations, the bottom line is that leap years and leap days are important to every one of us. To paraphrase [Pigpen from the Peanuts gang](#) (a well-known philosopher among the Boomer set), "It sort of makes you want to treat them with more respect, doesn't it?"

Now that we know all that, it brings me back to my original question. So, what are we going to do about this incredible gift of more time? A word of wisdom (not necessarily mine), it's not how much time has passed or how much is left, it's about how we use the time we have. So, here's hoping you treat this upcoming Leap Day as a gift and, for that matter, all the days that follow it, too.

Have a great week, everyone.



*Source: [Britannica.com](#)