

THE SPECTATOR

BEING A FULL TIME EMPLOYEE DURING THE PANDEMIC

By Cailey Cornett

The one-year mark of COVID-19 has come up on us with no warning. After a year of fighting a pandemic, a lot has happened, especially with essential workers. As the essential workers continue with a normal work schedule, a lot has changed inside and out.

In McPherson, Kan., small businesses fill the downtown area. While some stores and

restaurants had to close their doors during this time to keep employees (and the community) safe, some were able to stay open due to the requirements for an essential business. One of those lucky businesses was Craft Coffee Parlor. Believe it or not coffee is essential to our consumerist country during a nationwide emergency.

Although they were able to stay open, their business had its struggle during this nightmare.

Gabe Lundberg has been a full-time employee through this pandemic at Craft. He started work in June 2020; right as the United States was peaking with cases. “I had worked with coffee before, so I was able to pick things up quickly. I wasn’t prepared for the months following though.”

There were thousands of people who refused to wear a mask or believe in the pandemic, which in turn, risked the safety of those who do take this pandemic seriously. “They would walk in with no mask, and when we asked them to put one on, they refused and would, most of the time, become very agitated,” said Lundberg. Not only would businesses suffer due to this ignorant act, but the health of essential employees became a huge risk. “There were a couple times I thought I had got covid. My family had to quarantine because my sister had covid.” The thought of not working for a couple weeks doesn’t

sound bad, but having bills to pay and rent due at the end of the month made two weeks of work crucial for survival. “At one point everyone was quarantined and only three of us were able to work. If I got sick, Craft would have to close their doors and I would not be able to pay bills or get groceries.”

Craft never had to officially close their doors, but they did close the lobby and change hours to keep employees safe from those who failed to wear a mask or follow distancing rules. Many did not agree with these new changes and “some people would come in groups of ten or twelve and wait in the lobby and socialize completely ignoring that we had closed the lobby,” said Lundberg.

Customers weren’t the only problem in this situation. Some employees refused to wear



their mask during shifts because it “goes against their rights” as one of the older employees would mention. “Eventually they quit, but I’m not sure how long we would have let them stay. They were risking everyone else’s health.” Craft also lost some employees due to the concern of working during a pandemic, so they had to build up a whole new team during the pandemic.

Currently, Craft is running steady with a

strong team and an open lobby, but that can change at any moment with one positive COVID-19 test. The new lobby has safer procedures to allow for social distancing and protect employees from those who choose not to wear a mask. These workers have dealt with a lot of stress and criticism from the public.



Photos of Craft Coffee Parlor in downtown McPherson, Kan. Photos taken by Ira Whitacre

NEWS



MARCH WAS INDEED MADNESS

By Jason Okoro

After March Madness got canceled last year due to the pandemic, college basketball fans finally got to see the return this past March. Millions of brackets were filled out all over the world with people hoping they could predict a perfect bracket. The tournament was filled with upsets left and right as Oral Roberts University, who was a 15 seed, knock off Ohio State University, who was a two seed, in the first round. Abilene Christian University, who was a 14 seed, knocked off three seed Texas in the first

round. Throughout the tournament, all eyes were on the one seeds in the tournament to see how far they would go. The one seeds were Michigan, Illinois, Gonzaga, and Baylor University; the favorites were easily Illinois, Gonzaga, and Baylor but Illinois ended up getting upset in the second round by in-state rival Loyola Chicago who was an eight-seed.

The most impressive run in March Madness was by 11 seed UCLA who had to play in the first four-game

to even make it into the tournament. They defeated Michigan State in overtime that game

and were able to move on to the first round where they defeated BYU to advance to the second



round where they blew out Abilene Christian by 20 points. In the sweet sixteen, they upset two-seed Alabama in overtime and moved on to the elite eight where they upset one-seed Michigan by two points. UCLA became the second first four-team to make it to the final four the other one being VCU in 2011. The final four was set between UCLA playing Gonzaga and Baylor playing Houston. Baylor took care of Houston with ease defeating them by double digits while Gonzaga and UCLA went to the wire where Gonzaga escaped the upset by hitting a game-

winning three in overtime by freshmen sensation Jalen Suggs. The national championship was set between undefeated Gonzaga (30-0) versus two-loss Baylor (28-2) making this one of the most anticipated national championship games of all time. Baylor led the whole game and put on an absolute clinic on the offensive and defensive end and ended up winning the game 86-70 and becoming National Champs. After a whole year without March Madness, the excitement was brought back to us and it didn't disappoint at all.

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER CRISIS

By Riggs Reneberg

Immigration has been on the rise in the past four years. Some people try to stop it while others embrace it. Texas is one of the biggest crossover states in the U.S.

Ryder Faulkner, a freshman at McPherson College, originally from Burkburnett, Texas, said he did not see a lot of

immigration; he mostly saw it on the news. "If I were in a situation like these people who are trying to find a better life I would do it." He said that America is a free country and if you want to live in the U.S., you should be able to.

Faulkner stated that if he was competing for a job and an immigrant got the job instead of him, he

would be alright with it. He believes that people shouldn't get upset when someone of a different race or culture obtains something you couldn't.

We then got onto the discussion of the wall the Trump administration put up to slow down immigration. Faulkner believes the wall is pointless and if someone really wanted to get over

it, they could. He thinks it was a waste of money and time.

We think that money and time could be used more productively in finding a way for immigration to work properly. We should be helping people in need, not yelling at them.

CAMPUS BLOWOUT

90s Theme

When: Friday, April 23
6pm-10pm

Where: The Gazebo



VIEWPOINTS

ALL FOR ONE...

By Ira Whitacre

It's been said a million times. The bane of every teacher, professor and educator is that, "not every student learns the same way." For many, individuality defines what it means to be human. Individuality fuels art, provokes unique thought, and sparks innovation. In a classroom, individuality has the capacity to divide, leave students out, or, even worse, leave them behind. Naturally, it falls to the educator to solve this problem. As always, this problem must be solved within the confines of budget restraints and increasingly anxious administrators who re-

quire proof of success.

And, in keeping with the pattern of individuality, each educator often chooses to tackle this learning obstacle in their own unique way. Some choose to offer different learning plans under one roof, others choose to offer flexibility, and some choose to ignore the issue all-together, leaving students to their own devices.

The debatably unfortunate reality is that there is no single solution to this struggle. However, through collaboration and open communication between faculty and students, it is possible to increase the odds of success. Students must take re-

sponsibility for discovering their unique learning style and take the initiative to accurately communicate with faculty when a particular assignment creates insurmountable odds for that student's success. Likewise, faculty must be willing to flex on the rigid 'one-size-fits-all' legacy and search for a more fluid, but still demanding, option for some students to effectively and successfully meet the requirements.

A small liberal arts institution is perfectly suited for this type of negotiation. A large university setting where a professor might have four classes with 300 students each,

is an environment where it is practically impossible to accommodate this fine-tuning for student success. However, a class of 15 to 20 students is a much more manageable number for this type of exploration.

This negotiation is not an avenue for dodging assignments or 'opting-out' of certain requirements but is instead an integral process for creating an effective learning environment where students and faculty alike can thrive and find their true potential for the benefit of all.



VACCINATED WORLD

By Cailey Cornett

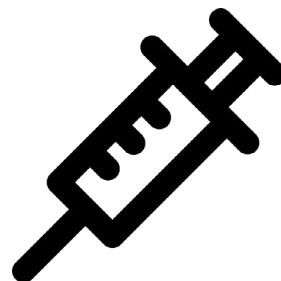
As more people are eligible for the vaccine, we can see a hopeful future of reopening and being mask free.

I got my first vaccine in March. A little after receiving the shot I had a sore arm, and a day later I began feeling sick. I was sick for a few days, but quickly bounced back. My second shot was in April, and I had a bit of a sore

arm for a few hours. That was not the case for many of my coworkers after they got their second shot. Several coworkers were too sick or dizzy to come to work after getting their second vaccine. Others I have talked to also felt worse after receiving their second shot. However, reactions are different for everyone.

The effects of the vaccine are temporary, but the outcome will be worth

it. We all want to go back to our public events and mask free life, so when you have the chance, get vaccinated.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Spectator encourages readers to submit letters to the editor regarding topics covered in the paper. Letters should be no more than 400 words in length and are due to spectator@mcperson.edu. For printing schedule, please consult with the Editor in Chief. The Spectator reserves the right to edit letters for clarity, space and libel. For any questions, please email us.

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CAMPUS



FILING FAFSA: A GUIDE

By Ira Whitacre

It's that time of year when words like "registration" and "FAFSA" begin to get thrown around with increasing frequency. But, if you're like me, you may have absolutely no clue what filling out or filing a FAFSA actually entails. If that's the case, we've got you covered. Below you'll find an easy-to-follow beginner's guide to filling out your FAFSA.

First off, what is a FAFSA? FAFSA, or your Free Application for Federal Student Aid, is the paperwork that you have to fill out to be eligible to receive student loans. You know, those things that Millennials keep complaining about and Boomers keep saying you'll pay off in no time. If you noticed above, the first "F" in "FAFSA" stands for the word "Free." So, don't fall victim to sites that charge a 'small fee' to file your FAFSA for you. You're already paying to go to college and you'll be paying back the government after you graduate, you don't need to be paying yet another entity in the interim.

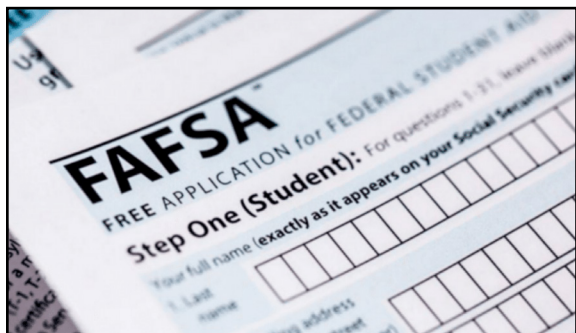
So, here's what you're going to need to

fill out your FAFSA: your social security number (and your parent's social security number, if you will be a dependent at the same time that you're going to be a student), your driver's license (if applicable), alien registration number (if applicable), your most recent federal tax returns (as well as your parent's returns, if you're a student-dependent), your nontaxable income records (as well as your parent's records if you're a student-dependent), and your assets. Your assets can be considered anything that contributes to your cumulative wealth, such as checking/savings balances, real estate ownership (if applicable), and stocks/bonds etc.

Once you have these items, you are ready to embark on your FAFSA journey. To begin, navigate to the official website at studentaid.gov. To progress any further, you'll have to create an account. It cannot be emphasized

how important it is that you do not lose your login information for your FAFSA. Due to the sensitive material that is contained within your FAFSA, the process to reset or recover your login information is drawn out, laborious and an altogether harrowing experience. Therefore, it's better to simply not lose that information in the first place.

Once you have created your account, the website will guide you through the rest of the process with clear instructions and "next" buttons. The final tip for filling out your FAFSA is: take your time! Once you have progressed from one step to the next and filed, it is a considerable headache and time-consuming endeavor to go back and correct incorrectly filed information. It is well worth it to go slowly and get it correct. The first time you file it feels confusing but by your senior year it will feel comfortable and easy, or at least easier. FAFSA allows you to file as early as October for the next year. If you follow the steps, it's pretty hard to go wrong. Good luck.



PATH TO PEBBLE UPDATE

By Spencer Ice

Over the past semester, students have been hard at work on the Pebble Beach 1953 Mercedes-Benz 300s Cabriolet. Cameron Luther is one of the students working on the car. He said that they have recently finished the fourth

coat of high build primer and that the team is getting very close to spraying the color coat on the car. Luther also said that the engine has been installed in the car, hopefully to stay until the vehicle is finished. A big project the team has been working on is the hardware. They have

been using bolts that you could find in a hardware store, and they grind the heads of the bolts smooth to replicate the factory look. The Mercedes team is also hoping to have the painted car ready to display at the C.A.R.S. Club car show on May 1.

THE SHOW GOES ON (IN-PERSON)

By Ira Whitacre

Spring is the season of planting and growing. The McPherson College Theatre Department will perform live for the first time in over one year; since the first COVID-19 lockdowns in the Spring of 2020. This live production will debut the perfect Spring theme with the play "Native Gardens," which is adapted from the novel of the same name by Karen Zacharias.

The story encompasses themes of planting and growing but quickly moves into deeper themes that process conflict, prejudice, and what it means to be rooted. This dramatic, yet comical story follows the events that unfold when Pablo and his pregnant wife, Tania, move into their fixer-upper dream home, next-door to

garden-loving Frank and his lovely wife, Virginia. Frank's non-native, almost award-winning, garden is his pride and joy but it soon becomes a point of contention between the couples, when Pablo decides to put up a fence, only to discover that his property-line extends two-feet into Franks beloved garden. What ensues is a neighborly row for the ages that reflects upon the subtle and not so subtle influence that privilege and prejudice can have in the actions and interactions of not so neighborly neighbors.

The show features performers both new and old to the McPherson College stage, with performances by Allison Penalva, Jacob Reed, Michael Beltran and Tomi Simmons. This one-act show, which spans a total of 90-minutes, never

fails to disappoint and will have you laughing, crying, and discovering a new respect for the true meaning of community and community gardening. The cast has been quoted as describing the show as, "funny," "chaotic" and "challenging."

With limited seating available, the department's goal is to entertain as many people as possible while maintaining the utmost regard for social distancing and COVID-19 precautions. The show will debuted on Thursday, April 22 in Brown Auditorium, but will be performed Friday, April 23 at 7:30 p.m. and on Saturday, April 24. To reserve your seat please call the Theatre Box Office at 620.242.0444.



CAMPUS

HOW THINGS MIGHT LOOK IN THE FALL

By Elle Barrett

The past three semesters at McPherson College have been chaotic to say the least. The COVID-19 pandemic has been a learning experience for all students, faculty and staff, and everybody is itching to get back to normal. Hopefully that can take place this fall.

McPherson County is now in phase three and four of the vaccination plan and significant progress has been made since the winter. All students are

now eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. There is a good possibility that those interested in the vaccine will come back in the fall fully vaccinated.

There are currently no mandates in the state of Kansas, but it would not be surprising if masks continue to be required on campus for an additional semester to keep the students who are not vaccinated, safe.

If things continue to look up, I'd predict almost all classes will be in person. Those vulnerable to

COVID-19 will likely be vaccinated by the fall semester and will be back in the classroom with everybody else. Masks and social distancing do go hand-in-hand, so social distancing in classrooms may be required, depending on the class size.

There may be few event cancellations in the fall, along with no limit for spectators. As student athletes return to campus and their practices, I imagine they will be tested immediately to keep the virus under control.

The pandemic has not been easy, but I think there may be one more semester after this spring before things are back to normal. I assume a few campus restrictions will be lifted here and there, but the college is aware that this recovery cannot be rushed. I don't think there is such thing as getting back to life as if the virus never existed, but whatever the college decides for the fall of 2021 will be for the best.

C.A.R.S. CLUB CAR SHOW 2021 WILL HAPPEN

By Mason Duffey

COVID-19 ruined a lot of plans throughout 2020 including the annual car show put on by the C.A.R.S. club. Luckily, the club has been given the green light to host the car show this year, with a few stipulations.

The car show will be held on May 1 and will be open to the public, but, unlike previous years, only students, faculty and alumni will be allowed to bring cars. While this means there will be noticeably fewer cars than previous shows, there will still be plenty of cars to see whether it be students' projects or completed restorations brought by alumni.

Along with the cars to look at, Templeton will

be open for self-guided tours, with students located inside to inform spectators about the school's projects and the restoration classes. The Model T Build Team will also be showing off their skills by putting together a Ford Model T in the afternoon. The show will also feature live music provided by the McPherson College and McPherson High School Jazz bands.

While this year's car show will look different than it has in the past, C.A.R.S. Club is excited to be hosting this show and welcoming new and old friends onto the field to enjoy the restoration department's most exciting event.

7TH ANNUAL POWER DAY SETS RECORD

By Elle Barrett

It was another successful online day of giving on the seventh annual Power Day 2021. Held this year on March 11, McPherson College set a record of donors with 342. In 2020, the record of money raised \$194,000. This year, over \$193,000 was raised by alumni and other friends for students and programs at the college.

The alumni donor matches totaled \$85,000. The biggest match included a \$50,000 gift from

the Paul family for the MC Fund, any academic program and the Student Debt Project. The Van Goethem family made a match to gifts made by young alumni for \$15,000. Stella Koch and Dave Kinney made a \$10,000 match for the automotive restoration program. Lastly, the Van Goethems had another match for \$10,000 made to athletics.

The Power Day updates featured videos from alumni around the campus throughout Power Day. They were posted

on McPherson College's Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. The videos discussed the stories of students and staff and how McPherson College has prepared them for life after college. Scholarships and the importance of the Student Debt Project were touched on as well.

There were videos leading up to Power Day encouraging alumni to donate. Many donors also left comments on the College's website sharing gratitude and positivity with one another. The theme this year

was "building community wherever life takes you."

The coordinator of Power Day, Dave Barrett, shared his perspective on why Power Day is such a significant day for the college. "Power Day is special to our faculty, staff, alumni and friends. It's a day to celebrate, remember, and pay homage to those that set the standard. We greatly appreciate those that remember MC and choose to invest in the next generation of Bulldogs."



SPORTS



#23 RANK BULLDOG BASEBALL TEAM CONTINUES HOT STREAK

By Eli Jordan

The 2021 Bulldog Baseball team is careening teams left, front and center. This far into the season, the men's team is 28 and seven on the season, and they are 16 and seven in conference. So far, they have won every series they have played, but one. That one was against the #7 ranked Oklahoma- Wesleyan Eagles. And against the top ten team, the Bulldogs only lost a combined

14 to 8. Two of the three games were decided by one run.

On the offensive side of the diamond, McPherson is averaging 11.5 runs per game. Trevor Johnson leads the team with the hottest bat averaging just short of 500 with a .474 batting average. Kyle Lux and James Canar are lighting up defenses as well, both batting around 400 with Lux batting .403 and Canar batting .393. The Bulldogs also have four

players with 10 or more home runs. Canar leads the team with 14, Johnson following with 12, Lux, who had the historic start to his season in 2020 before it was cut short, has 11, and Jake Pearson has 10.

On the mound, Jacob Gilcrease has the most starts with 14, and has an ERA of 3.97. Zach Reynolds follows behind with 11 games played, his ERA is sitting at 6.26. Blake Maddock has the most innings

pitched with 41 as well as the most games saved with 8. His ERA is 5.49. Darby Gilbert is leading the team with an ERA of 1.35, but he only has six games played. The boys on the bump are keeping the opponents honest by only allowing 31 homeruns on the year. The Bulldogs have struck out 289 batters with holding an opponent batting average at .276.

Notable players on the fielding side of things are Lux, Kris Perez and Hunt-

er Hughes. Of the players that have played 25 or more games, those three have a fielding percentage of 1.00 and the three of them have not let up a single error. Of the members of the team that have played 25 or more games, the lowest fielding percentage of .864.

The Bulldogs have upcoming series against Friends University, Kansas Wesleyan, and Bethany College. A single game against Sterling is in be-

tween the Friends and Kansas Wesleyan series.

The Bulldogs hope to continue the streak of series won, and after have a good showing during the KCAC tournament. By winning the tournament the Bulldogs can find themselves in the NAIA post-season tournament, and can also hope for an at-large bid.

VOLLEYBALL: THE ROAD TO NATIONALS

By Ben Hulsmeyer

On April 1, McPherson lost their quar-

terfinals matchup against Oklahoma Wesleyan. With this, some believed that the Bulldogs were

done for the year. After receiving an at-large bid to the NAIA National Championship, they traveled to Des Moines, Iowa, on Saturday, April 17 to play the Grand View University Vikings. The Bulldogs were able to receive this bid because of their impressive performance throughout the season. Finishing the season with an overall record of 23 wins and nine losses, while

having 19 wins and four losses in the conference.

The team was led by first team All-KCAC, as well as Freshman of the Year, Aidan Brown. Brown is a dominant force on the outside with elite power and attacking abilities. Brown isn't the only freshman stud the Bulldogs have leading the team at the setter position. Cynarah Rodriguez was also

named first Team-KCAC as well as winning the Setter of the Year award. Rodriguez is in control of the Bulldogs' attack with her precision sets while dropping in a well-timed setter dump every now and then. Sydney Burton and Morgan Watson were also named second team All-KCAC. With Burton being a strong force in the middle both offensively

and defensively, it's no surprised she made All-KCAC. Watson is also a powerhouse on the wing with attacking abilities on par with Brown, as well as a killer serve and well-timed blocks. With this star-studded group, the McPherson volleyball team looks to take the challenge and definitely has a chance to go far in the tournament.



Riley Bradbury digs the ball from opposing team. Photo by Natalia Ahrens



SPORTS

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT: KRIS PEREZ

By Jason Okoro

Kris Perez has had an outstanding senior campaign thus far. He earned KCAC player of the week where he batted .588 with six extra-base hits, which included four home runs. His perfor-

mance led McPherson to a solid week as they went 3-1. He was nominated for NAIA player of the week, which was well deserved. The redshirt senior is from Miramar, Fla., and transferred to McPherson College from Northern

Oklahoma College. In the baseball team's last outing, they faced York College, where Perez had six RBIs in the three games played. With Perez playing at a high level, it makes this McPherson baseball team even more dangerous.



Kris Perez waits for the pitch. Photo by Micah Gilbert

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT: MAILE DEUTSCH

By Natalia Ahrens

“Being part of the softball team has allowed me to grow and develop into the woman and leader I am today,” said softball senior Maile Deutsch. She has competed in softball at McPherson College for four years. She plays first base, and currently has a .506 batting average in the 2021 season. The KCAC named Deutsch Softball Player of the week on March 16, 2021 and she was also named the NAIA Softball Player of the week on April 20. She said that her favorite part about playing softball at McPherson College is the lifelong and ev-

erlasting relationships she has made with her teammates. “I will always cherish the time spent together and memories we made that will last a lifetime.”

A challenge that she has had to overcome within softball is having to do with a coaching transition from the 2018 to the 2019 season. “We were unsure of what to expect from Coach Segovia and his staff, but that year we worked hard every day and came together to win the conference championship. Coach Segovia showed us what it was like to be a family. Since then, he has continuously provided us with lifelong les-

sons both on and off the field that have prepared us for life after college.” Off the field, Deutsch is a biology major, and is very involved around campus. She is the Lead RA for the Apartments, Assistant to the Director of Student Life, Member of PHP, and involved with Tri-Beta, Gamma Beta Phi and Rotaract. After she graduates in May, Deutsch plans on returning to Texas, where she is from, to attend graduate school to become a Physician's Assistant. She aspires to attend University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center or Baylor College of Medicine, and she is “very thankful for the staff and faculty at McPherson College who have helped prepare and guide me to embark on this next chapter of my life.”



Maile Deutsch gets a hit. Photo by Natalia Ahrens

VIEWPOINTS



CARS ON THE CORNER

By Mason Duffey

After writing this section of the Spectator for three years, I've been able to share the stories of many students and their beloved cars. With this being my last issue, I thought it would be a great time to share the story of my project.

When I turned 16, I was immediately on the hunt for my first car, more specifically a vintage Japanese car. At the time I had become obsessed with the history of Japanese cars and the culture that surrounds them, which led me to purchase a 1978 Datsun 510. The paint was faded, the interior was in shambles, and the rust provided unnecessary ventilation. But none of that mattered to me, I was

smiling as if I had bought a Lamborghini.

Once I got the car home it didn't last long before I started modifying it. From the start my goal was to build the car in the style that was popular in Japan throughout the eighties. First, I installed coil over suspension in the front and removed the springs to get the car as low as possible. Once the car was sitting on the ground, I got some period correct wheels that would allow the car to sit even lower. After I got the car sitting how I wanted, I started the body work, fixing every dent and door ding the car had accumulated over the years.

I think anyone who works on cars will agree with me when I say most projects never go accord-

ing to plan. The head gasket eventually blew and gave me the chance to learn how to work on the engine. Once the engine was running again my friends and I painted the car ourselves, and just days after it was painted I loaded the car up and road tripped from Ohio to Tennessee for a car show, making my favorite road-trip memory to date.

Since I started attending McPherson College I have continued to work on the car, mostly fixing rust and continuing to customize the car how it would have been done in back in the day in Japan. When the car is done, I'm looking forward to taking it to car shows and using it to teach others about the history of Japanese auto trends.

"A SILENT VOICE" REVIEW

By Ben Hulsmeyer

TW: "A Silent Voice" has themes of suicide and depression.

"A Silent Voice" is an animated Japanese film, following Shoya Ishida through a rough part of his life. When Shoya is a 6th grader, he starts bullying a deaf girl named Shoko Nishimiya. Later, in high school, Shoya tries to

right the wrongs of his past. This film was masterfully done by Kyoto Animation, a studio known for creating human-like animation and attention to sound detail; when a character is dragging their feet or taking steps, or when you hear the faint sound of water hitting off



an umbrella. This movie is beautiful. It feels genuine, as if you're in the scenes yourself rather than watching from afar.

THREE RULES OF ZOOM ETIQUETTE

By Ira Whitacre

Whether used for class, board meetings, or arduous family 'reunions' during the COVID-19 pandemic, many of us have become well-acquainted with the bright blue hue of the Zoom logo. Whether you see the digital platform as a blessing of connection or a curse of online learning there is no denying that, even as COVID-19 restrictions begin to ease up, the use of Zoom in everyday life is likely to persist. Therefore, it is important to establish some ground rules for what can be considered good Zoom etiquette.

Admittedly the platform has its advantages; allowing participants to stretch, move around, and even break wind without disturbing their cohorts. However, with these new freedoms also comes a whole new set of social faux pas to both commit or painfully endure from others. Here is a short list of three 'Zoom rules' you can follow to help you avoid being, 'that participant'.

First, there is a mute button: use it! This point is for both hosts and participants of any self-respecting Zoom meeting. There are two parts to this

rule. First, as a participant, never assume that you're automatically muted. We've all felt the second-hand embarrassment of over-hearing a private conversation or experienced the auditory assault of being blasted by a coworker's poor taste in music. Don't let it be you. Additionally, as a host do yourself and your participants a favor and mute them upon entry to the meeting. This way, the problem is solved at its root and everyone can go about their business, peacefully enjoying another meeting that probably just could've been an email.

Two, eat as if you're on a first date. One of the freedoms offered by the Zoom platform, is that you can eat your breakfast or lunch on schedule rather than have your stomach rumble, louder than a freight train, at the quietest possible moment. That being said, every meeting should not be taken as an opportunity to gorge an 'all you can eat buffet' before your



peers and colleagues. In many meetings, you have the power to turn your camera off. Use it sparingly, but please, no one wants to see or hear your food while you're eating it.

Finally, be mindful of your camera. Think about your backdrop. A good rule of thumb is that, if you wouldn't want it in your Tinder profile, it shouldn't be visible in your Zoom camera either. Think about how you want others to perceive you. If you're lying in bed or your week-old pile of laundry can be seen in the background, it's unlikely that you'll gain much respect from your audience or peers. So, clean for the occasion. All it takes is a little mindfulness and a few manners, to take your Zoom etiquette to a whole new level.