

COLUMN

Social distancing has us Zooming through the pandemic

Living through a pandemic has many side effects, but one particularly relevant to 2020 is knowing what the inside of professional acquaintances' homes look like.



Jade McDowell NEWS EDITOR

Video chatting with co-workers, teachers, professors and clients provides glimpses into living rooms and kitchens that under normal circumstances we would never visit.

some of our work from home, figuring out what slice of home to show people can be tricky.

My first video conferencing not with family or friends was as a guest presenter for a class of journalism students from my alma mater, where classes have now moved online.

We were using Zoom, which I have heard provides different backgrounds you can use to blur out what's actually behind you, but I was not confident enough in my Zoom proficiency to try getting fancy.

boxes on top of a chair in order to bring the laptop level with my face while I sat on my couch, in front of a wonderful abstract painting of the New York City skyline that I purchased at the point in my life where I decided that I was too old to keep using posters taped to walls as my only home decor.

Some video conferences, such as the ones we're conducting with candidates for the May election, I've done from the office. But for my 9 a.m. briefing with East Oregonian staff each morning I've just settled for leaving the laptop on my lap while I sit on my couch at home. Setting it on the

kitchen table would be easier, but a sink full of dirty dishes feels like the wrong background for a staff meeting.

(As a side note, I have noticed that not going anywhere has greatly decreased the amount of laundry I'm doing, but the number of dishes has multiplied exponentially.)

I don't know about anyone else, but seeing myself displayed on screen during video conferences makes me far more self-conscious than normal, in-person meetings:

"My ear itches, but I just scratched it 30 seconds ago. Will it look weird if I do it again? I'm thirsty, but no

one else is drinking water so maybe I shouldn't either. I just dropped my pen on the ground, but everyone else will notice me duck out of the frame to get it, so I'll just leave it there."

Other complaints people seem to have about working via video chat is people not muting themselves, but as someone who is used to regular conference calls over the telephone, I feel that this happens less often over video when people can visually see the symbol on their screen showing they are muted. Also, it is easier to quickly identify the culprit behind those errant sounds and shame them into silence when you can see

what everyone is doing. The internet has been full of humorous or cute examples of people's children or pets interrupting their video conferences, but sadly, I have no cute children or dogs or cats to hold up to the screen (I don't have any ugly ones either).

That may be a good thing, however, considering I saw a tweet from a NASA employee this week stating that her department had a serious conversation about how to prevent cats from accidentally commanding spacecraft from people's home offices.

I promise, there will be no cats writing for the Hermiston Herald.

COLUMN

Seniors deserve a graduation

Growing up in a small town, you look forward to big exciting events and new things happening.

When everyone thought of the year 2020, we thought it was going to be full of amazing, — wait, no — extravagant, new, exciting pathways. Just like the 1920s, it would be full of parties, happiness and feeling alive.



Nevaeh Cabbage-Thorp

Now looking back, none of those truly happened. Instead we got threats of world wide wars, and now a deadly virus that has no vaccine. The only part that is happening is everyone trying to feel alive while in quarantine.

While most people are in their kitchens doing work, or sitting back watching Netflix or Disney+, students are taking advantage of this moment of no school. We love that we have no school, but it leaves us stressing out and freaking out (mainly high school and college students) about our classes, grades, and whether we are able to graduate or move up toward that next grade. This also means that so many hopeful people may not get, or will have to wait even longer for, advancing, getting

their dream degree, or even graduating!

Yes, COVID-19 is a horrendous and horrible virus, but it is affecting everyone mentally, physically, and through their hopes and dreams too.

We seniors have worked so hard for this moment, and to get it thrown away like trash? I think not! We deserve to have this graduation, especially since it means the ending of our childhood, and the beginning of our next chapter. We dreamt of this moment for so long and worked incredibly hard for this. Restless nights and days of studying, taking classes to challenge ourselves and even taking classes that we are already supposed to take and working hard on them. No matter what type of student you are, we deserve to have a graduation. As one unknown has said "Graduation is an exciting time. It marks both an ending and a beginning; it's warm memories of the past and big dreams for the future."

Also, it gives seniors a chance to show our families what we accomplished; we completed high school and matured. A lot of us worked to pay for our graduation cap and gowns,

and all that goes with it. We deserve to have this moment, whether it is on the day the school planned it or on another day when it is safe and healthy to do so.

This is so important to me because I am a senior, and I have dreamt of the moment I walk across the stage and say goodbye to my dearest friends and childhood and say hello to adult life and the new challenges that will push me to become a better person to society and become more successful. It gives me the chance to prove those who doubted me wrong, to see that I have succeeded at this and I will overcome any other challenges as long as I keep a positive mind and a hard working soul!

This is our time, our chance to prove all those who doubted us, the class who was born at a horrible and horrendous time in 2001, and now living during another time that took our shine away again, to show that we will rise up and be the greatest. This class believes in themselves and the world and will do whatever it takes to make this world or even our community a better place!

Nevaeh Cabbage-Thorp is a Hermiston High School senior.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Things I miss from before COVID-19

School plays, dance competitions and practices, watching my brother play baseball, hanging out with friends, are all things I miss from before COVID-19. It has been really hard adjusting to staying at home and no longer being able to do my activities.

My life was jam-packed before this and

now I have no idea if I will even be able to go back to my activities I have worked so hard for, until next year. I am very unhappy having everything shut down and not being able to do things that I love.

I wish things would go back to normal.

I even want school to come back.

Reagan Stanek is a seventh-grader at Sandstone Middle School.

TELL US YOUR STORY

We are collecting stories from students and teachers about COVID-19's affects on the school year. Submit guest columns, letters or video clips (shot horizontally) to editor@hermistonherald.com with your name and contact information.

'Heroes Work Here'



Staff photo by Ben Lonergan

A "Heroes Work Here" sign was erected at Guardian Angel Homes in Hermiston last week.

CRYPTOQUIP

CryptoQuip

This is a simple substitution cipher in which each letter used stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Solution is accomplished by trial and error.

Clue: O equals P

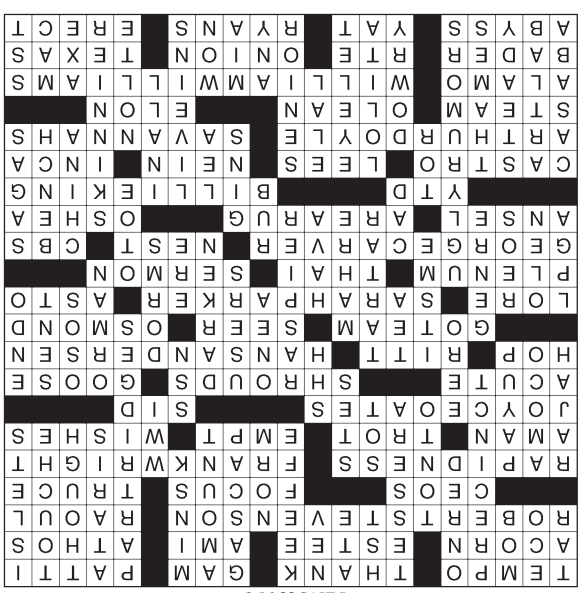
ZC UTJ OXJOWX YBX GXNYUZVQ UDX

RXBZUI JC UDXBRJIUYUI, TJSWG ZU

NX Y DXYUXG YBQSRXVU?

If two people are debating the merits of the thermostat, would it be a heated argument?

CryptoQuip ANSWER



Super Crossword

For Hermiston Herald information 541-567-6457 • info@hermistonherald.com 333 E. Main St. • HermistonHerald.com

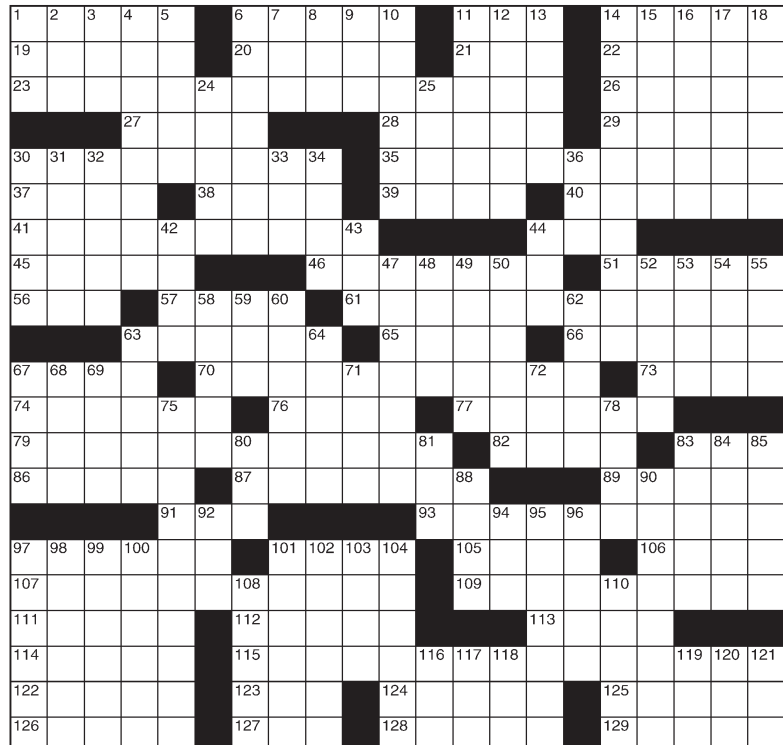
SUPER CROSSWORD: TAKING OUT THE MIDDLE

ACROSS

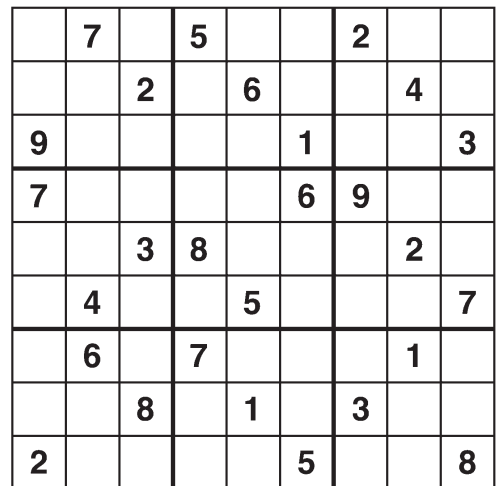
- 1 Musical pace 6 — you note 11 Looker's leg 14 LaBelle with a Grammy 19 Oak seed 20 Perfume queen 21 Laidler 21 Pal, to Gigi 22 One of the Three Musketeers 23 LOUIS 26 Painter Dufy 27 Co. heads 28 Zero in (on) 29 What a white flag signifies 30 Speed 35 LLOYD 37 Make — out of (toughen up) 38 Jogger's gait 39 Pre- (bump, so to speak) 40 Candle blowers' secrets 41 CAROL 44 Caesar of old comedy 45 Severe 46 Hides from view 51 Swan's kin 56 Copy a bunny 57 "Nuts" director Martin 61 CHRISTIAN 63 Pep rally cry 65 Tarot card reader, e.g. 66 Singer Donny 67 Folk knowledge 70 JESSICA 73 In the matter of 74 Assembly with all members present 76 Language of Bangkok 77 Pastor's talk 79 WASHINGTON (old ABC soap) 82 Wren's home 83 "Mike & Molly" aier 86 Adams of photography 87 Small carpet 89 "Ulysses" star Milo 91 Cumulative pay abbr. 93 JEAN 97 Cuba's Fidel 101 Some jeans, familiarly 105 "No, mein Herr" 106 Peruvian of long ago 107 CONAN 109 Tropical grassy plains 111 Kettle output 112 Brand of fat replacer 113 University in North Carolina 114 1836 siege setting 115 CARLOS 122 Justice Ruth — Ginsburg 123 Highway with a no. 124 Leek relative 125 With 59-Down, crude oil, in slang 126 Deep pit 127 Sun — -sen 128 — "Hope" (old ABC soap) 129 Build, as a building

DOWN

- 1 Paving gunk 2 Prefix with car or warrior 3 Unruly throng 4 District police station 5 How right turns are often allowed 6 Mosaic tile 7 DDE's forerunner 8 Lunched, e.g. 9 It's east of Calif. 10 Painter Georgia O'— 11 It's removed for a fill-up 12 Total number 13 Capital of Belarus 14 Pheasants' cousins 15 1980s video game consoles 16 Despite the fact that 17 "Clever comeback!" 18 Florida keys, e.g. 24 The Lone Ranger's companion 25 Par for the course 30 Hindu prince 31 Mobil rival 32 Settle the tab 33 Boozing sort 34 Fr. ladies' warrior 36 Early 20th-cen. conflict 42 Architect, Saaninen 43 "Stop talking!" 44 IRS ID 47 More like a hoarse voice 48 High on the draft list 49 Online folks 50 Grow dim 52 Financial tipster Suze 53 Bears, in Buenos Aires 54 Faxed, say 55 Prefix with spore 58 Response to "Who's there?" 59 See 125-Across 60 Dentists scrape it off 62 Houses for students 63 Music style 64 Skier Phil 67 Women's links org. 68 Steinhauer who wrote the 2009 bestseller "The Tourist" 69 Antique cars 71 "— Nagila" 72 Sooner than 75 Nasty bits of dirt 78 Nebraska 80 Ill-bred guy 81 Barbecue spice mix 83 Beijing's land 84 Judge's seat 85 Epic tales 88 Cotton deseeders 90 Less chubby 92 Ontario's capital, on scoreboards 94 Grassland 95 Resident maids 96 Wholly 97 Melon type 98 Place to sculpt in school, say 99 Dependable 100 English river 101 "Blaze" actress 102 Tennis shoe hole 103 Israel's flag carrier 104 12th grader 108 Bride's property 110 Nick of "Cape Fear" — old way 117 Actress Waskowska 118 Gained 119 Firefighter's tool 120 Freddie — 121 Onetime jet-set jet



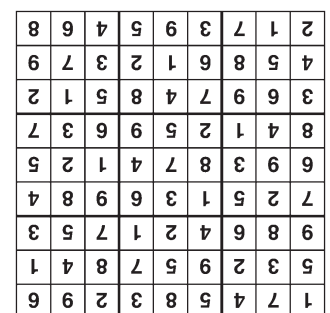
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