

News Column
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ZOOM MEETINGS

I threatened to start drinking when my counterpart in Geary County suggested we have a Zoom Christmas party. While the party wasn't a roaring success, it wasn't bad either. I didn't start drinking.

Some of us are born with a stubborn streak that makes us want to stick with our original opinions, even after it appears we may have been wrong. I've been there with Zoom, but I think I have turned the corner. Zoom works well for some things.

I know some of you haven't participated in virtual meetings yet,... but you probably will some day, even if you are stubborn and don't like the idea. Eventually, the opportunity to see kids or grandchildren will cause you to click that button and connect via Zoom (or some other virtual technology).

We have several virtual learning opportunities lined up for January and February of 2021 and we can walk you through the connection process if you think you need help. I would even set up a meeting for just you and me, to practice in advance, if you want.

For those who are still apprehensive about the virtual format, let me remind you of the advantages. First, showering is optional. We don't even care if your hair is a mess and you have manure on your face. You can click the little button that turns off your video and we won't be able to see you.

A web cam is actually optional too. We won't be able to see you if you don't have a web

cam, but that's not a problem. Many people turn off their camera to conserve bandwidth anyway. The downside is that audio usually comes with the web cam. You might have to type into the chat box to ask questions.

You can buy a web cam for under \$25, by the way. Plug it in to a USB port and it should work. There's nothing to it.

Back to the virtual meeting advantages. No driving to the meeting. Your cat can come to the meeting with you. Pants are optional. If you fall asleep, nobody will know (as long as your video and audio are turned off). If the meeting gets boring, you just leave. Nobody knows to be offended.

Here's what we have lined up for you.

Coffee Shop Agronomy meetings will be held via Zoom this year, starting at 11:00 a.m. and adjourning by noon on meeting days. Dates, topics, and presenters:

- January 14 – Herbicides and Weed Control, presented by Sarah Lancaster.
- January 28 – Plant Tissue Testing to Fine-tune Fertility Programs, presented by Dave Mengel
- February 11 – Best Management Practices for Row Crops – Focusing on Planting Practices, presented by Ignacio Ciampitti

We have also revived the Knowledge@Noon concept to present a virtual series titled "You Inherited the Farm – Now What?" Those meetings will start at noon and adjourn by 1:00 p.m. and will be held each Tuesday from January 12 through February 2.

Topics in the Knowledge@Noon series include: Intro to Farm Ownership, Lease Law and Common Leasing Principles, Fence Law, and Soil Fertility Basics.

Registration is required for both the coffee shop meeting and the Knowledge@Noon

series. A Zoom link will be sent to participants by e-mail the day before the meeting. Register online at www.riley.ksu.edu.

If you have questions, you can reach me at the Riley County Extension Office at 785/537-6350. Or, you can send e-mail to gmclure@ksu.edu.

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