

Hotline: Volunteers in Medicine and the birds and the bees

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Does IU Health still lend a hand?

Q: Why is IU Health no longer supporting Volunteers in Medicine?

B.S., Owensburg

A: This question came from the comments on a recent story about updates to Indiana University Health Bloomington Hospital. Health and social services reporter Jonathan Streetman met with Volunteers In Medicine Executive Director Nancy Richman last week to discuss another story for later this spring, and during that conversation Richman assured him that IU Health is still very committed to VIM's mission.

IU Health Bloomington donates two and a half employees to the clinic (that equates to hours worked, not just the upper torso of a third person), and a couple of IU Health employees are on the VIM Monroe County board of directors.

“We are unbelievably grateful to the hospital for that,” Richman said. “That’s huge for us.”

Don’t count your nests before they’re built

Q: Will the abnormally warm weather convince the birds to nest too early?

S.S., Bloomington

A: Cathy Meyer, a naturalist with the Monroe County Parks and Recreation Department and a regular writer for the H-T’s Outdoors section, said the warm weather we’ve been enjoying shouldn’t affect our feathered friends.

“The breeding cycle is mostly governed by day length, although cold weather may delay the process,” Meyer said in an email. However, “one of the effects of changing climate is that plants and insects respond more to the local weather. Earlier warm temperatures may disrupt the timing of leaf, flower and insect emergence. Birds may migrate to their nesting areas only to find that the food sources they rely on to feed their young are already gone.”

Bulletin: Dog food recall expanded

Evanger’s Dog and Cat Food Co. Inc. voluntarily recalled specific lots of its Hunk of Beef product last month because of potential exposure to a deadly contaminant. That recall has been expanded to include its Braised Beef and Against the Grain’s Pulled Beef products.

The affected lots have the following numbers listed on the second half of the product’s barcode, which can be found on the back of the product label: Hunk of Beef, 20109; Braised Beef, 20107; Against the Grain Pulled Beef, 80001.

You can return the recalled dog food wherever you purchased it for a full refund.

Scam alert for Hoosiers who work from home

The Consumer Protection Division of the Office of the Indiana Attorney General has recently received complaints about scammers who say they are hiring for work-from-home positions.

Job hunters using career websites should use their better judgment when responding to emails with job opportunities, and also watch for red flags.

Scam companies often request private information such as a phone number, a copy of your state-issued identification and bank account information, which should never be given out over email.

Some scammers also tell victims that they need to buy specialized equipment to begin their job, and that their new employer will reimburse them after their start date.

Job offers with requests to interview over text message, too, are often scams.

To file a complaint with the attorney general’s office and for more information, go to IndianaConsumer.com.

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