

(Photo by Dan Mancuso, Illinois Valley News)

After making an arrest of a man using a stolen credit card, Josephine County Sheriff's deputies educate Floyd Greenlee Jr. and his dog Bonnie about jay-walking.

Lions ...

Continued from A-1

Because poor vision and hearing can affect a child in diverse ways, Young and his colleagues derive much fulfillment from the feedback they receive that shows how children have benefited from the program. "I'll relate a story that illustrates the positives of the screenings. Recently, I was approached by a teacher who wondered if a vision impairment could be playing a role in the disruptive, uncontrollable behavior of a certain student.

After testing showed that he had an off-the-scale vision problem, the teacher was delighted that at least part of the underlying problem had been found. I'm dying to see how the student is doing when I go again next year.

"We get heartwarming letters from children exclaiming that they can see road signs for the first time or relishing the fact that they no longer have to sit in the front of the classroom. Grateful letters also come from parents and teachers that tell how a child's glasses have improved his or her ability to read, communicate or pay attention. Based on the responses, which have been very motivating, I know we're doing a good service."

SCAM ...

Continued from A-1

2) You are pressured to act quickly: Scam artists are very good at pretending to have "limited time only" offers or "inside information" that is designed to get you to act quickly and make an irrational decision. (This is the tactic they used with Benson - telling her to send cash overnight for her grandson.) Don't fall for those tactics. If

the offer is legitimate it will still be there tomorrow.

3) The third red flag is a really simple one - if it seems too good to be true, it probably is: Scam artists have a knack for making people believe that they'll be better off if they take the deal. But what really happens is that the scammers are the ones who are better off - they leave with your money, and you're left with nothing from the too-good-to-be-true promises that were made.

To report fraud or

financial exploitation you can call the AARP at 1-800-222-444, option 2. If you would like to read more about scam avoidance or I.D. theft you can visit www.aarp.org and look for AARP Foundation ElderWatch. Elderwatch engages hundreds of volunteers each year to help older consumers recognize, refuse and report fraud and scams. This website provides additional information and tools to help protect consumers against financial exploitation.

Just in time for spring, crocuses are here

Christy Solo
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Few things tell us "Spring has sprung" with as much clarity and vibrancy as the crocus flower. Crocuses are in the genus Iridaceae, little cousins of Iris. Spring blooming crocuses bloom as early as January in some areas, but typically burst forth in February and March here in Southern Oregon.

In addition to being gorgeous little flowers, crocus have a laundry list of uses and a history dating back thousands of years. Not only are crocuses a welcome sight for us after the monochrome winter months, but for early rising pollinators they are a literal oasis filled with nectar and pollen to help get them going after their long hibernation. Pictured is a male Andrena mining bee, mining bees are some of the first bees to arrive in spring. If you have crocuses in your yard, you are also likely to spot bumblebee queens enjoying them. Bumblebees will often even sleep in the crocus flower at night, the blossoms close up at night providing both food and protection.

The word "crocus" showed up in the 14th century, derived from the Greek word "krokos", meaning "saffron." Yep. The fall blooming crocuses, which have reddish/orange stigmas, are also known as saffron flowers and are the source of the spice of the same name. Any dish made with authentic saffron is truly a dish fit for a king. It takes 150 flowers and a lot of labor to produce just a single gram of saffron spice. It ranges in price from \$2,000 - \$10,000 per pound, leaving caviar and truffles in its rusty red dust as it reigns supreme as the world's most expensive food.

I have never used or tasted saffron, but

I have read, "Its flavor and distinct aroma elevate its surrounding flavors into something ethereal."

It is no wonder that the Hittites who lived on the Anatolian plateau about 2000 BCE gave the crocus a spotlight role in their spring festival. Frescos in Akrotiri on the volcanic island of Thera (Santorini) depict saffron plantations in the second millennium BCE. In the Bronze Age, Around 1500 BCE, in Minoan Crete, women wore crocus flowers in their hair and used saffron-based cosmetics for a glowing skin. Meanwhile, in Rome women used saffron dye to color their hair and dye their clothing a fab "royal yellow" to symbolize their wealth.

Now that you know some fun facts about crocuses, you probably want to plant some of your own. You can find blooming plants right now at local nurseries or you can order bulbs online to plant in the fall.

Crocuses prefer full sun but will do well in a partially shaded area. Because they are small, you can tuck them in just about anywhere. You can put them at the front of flowerbeds (remember, they are short), in cracks between rocks or pathway stones, or just dotted throughout your yard. Crocuses are not fussy plants and will do well just about anywhere - in any type of soil. When you notice their blooming slowing (or stopping), it is because the bulbs have become too clustered. There is a quick fix for this: once blooming is done for the year and before the leaves die back (so you know where they are), dig the cluster up, divide the bulbs into small clusters and replant in the same area with at least 6 inches in between. Then, the following spring you will once again have a garden filled with color, pollinators and history.



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(Photo by Christy Solo, for the Illinois Valley News)

A male Andrena aka mining bee on a purple crocus.

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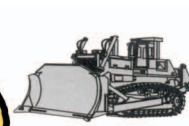


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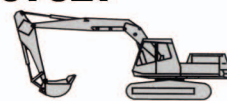
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