

Cons and Scams

Letter to the Editor

By: Sheriff Michael D. Carr

With our declining economy the way it is, I thought it is vitally important that we address crimes involving Cons and Scams. These types of crimes often target our growing senior population and I think it's imperative that we remain vigilant in addressing these issues.

One of the more popular "weapons of choice" today is the telephone because it provides telemarketers an easy entrance to the home and detection and prosecution is difficult. Our senior population is often targeted because they are naturally trusting and may find it hard to say "no" to a telemarketer. Keep in mind, that \$40 Billion is made each year on scammers and that 75% of the victims are senior adults.

Many of these people may work for days or weeks setting up a victim for phone fraud by pretending to be a "friend" even claiming that they are in a similar situation. They may use several voices or different people to make them sound more legitimate. They also may use real company and charity names, but don't be fooled by these people. Although there are wonderful organizations out there, they should be checked out before you donate.

Telemarketers called "list brokers" sell lists to each other or simply give them your information. A polite response would be to advise them you are not interested and to take you off the calling list. Senses play an important role. If it seems too good to be true...stick with your instincts and don't do it.

Some "tricks" you may wish to be on the lookout for are:

*"You must pay to win."

*"You must decide right now."

*"We need your credit card number now."

*"Don't tell anyone."

*"It will be worth the risk in the long run" or "you'll regret it now if you don't."

*"You're stupid if you don't do this."

*"The prize or promise is in the mail."

*"A relative is in jail in another state and needs to be bailed out right now. Send money right away...."

Please understand that there are people in our communities and throughout the world that prey on other people and don't think anything of it. Education is the key to success and it is my goal, as your sheriff, to keep you up to date with what we are seeing in law enforcement. You will also start to get telemarketers calling you on your cell phones and the number to call to be put on the "do not call list" for your cell phone is **888-382-1222 which you must call from your cell phone**. We need to work together as a team in an effort to keep our communities as well as in our homes safe.

Sheriff Michael D. Carr

Wadena County Sheriff