

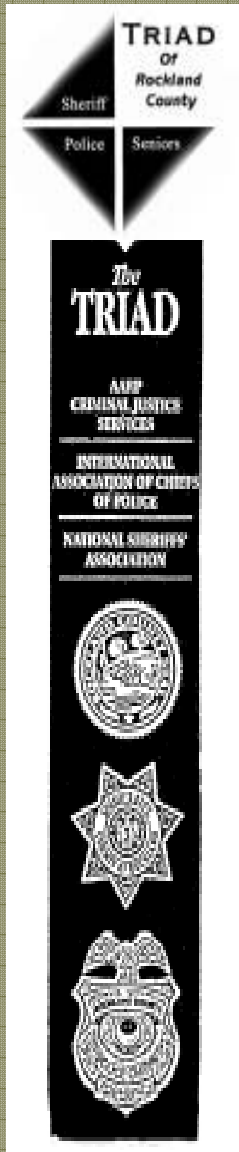
February/
March 2007

Rockland County TRIAD Program

Reducing Crimes Against Seniors

845-638-5582

www.co.rockland.ny.us



Past President
Pat McArdle
President:
Denis Herlihy
VP: Jim Finn
Sec.: Ed Berrigan
Treas.: Claire Brew

THE GRANDPARENT SCAM

The elderly are particularly susceptible to scams and cons and new ones seem to pop up every day. The “Grandparent Scam” is specifically aimed at victimizing a senior citizen. The scammer, posing as a grandchild, randomly telephones a senior and unravels a tale of woe, claiming they are in trouble and need some money sent right away. Unfortunately, the internet provides many websites a thief can access to obtain information on anyone, including the elderly.

The phone rings and you answer. The conversation may go something like this:

Caller: “*Hi Grandpa, do you know who this is?*” The caller is fishing for information because he may or may not know the name of the supposed grandson.

Grandparent: Answers “*Is this Tom?*” Elderly person will respond, thinking it's one of their grandchildren.

Caller: “*Yes Grandpa – it's Tom and I'm in trouble*”. The scammer then spells out a bogus problem, saying he is away from home and in a serious fix, needing some money right away, “*and please don't tell my mom or dad.*” The caller may claim they are in jail for a minor offense and need bail money to get out, or, this con artist convinces the grandparent to drive to a Western Union and wire him \$550 so he could get his car out of the tow yard.

The grandparent obligingly wires a few hundred dollars or a provides a credit card number, thinking they're helping a grandchild.

Very few people will hang up on a caller posing as a family member. That is why this scam is effective and costly to the elderly.

What to do if you're approached in this manner

- If the person asks for money, be sure to confirm that it's really a relative – ask a question or two that only a relative would know the answer to.
- Go with your gut – if you don't feel comfortable with the situation, say no and hang up the telephone.
- The person that's calling you is attempting to commit a crime – REPORT IT TO THE POLICE.

