

## **NO SUCH THING AS A FREE LUNCH, OR FREE MOVIES**

If you use the internet, you know there's a lot of content and entertainment available for viewing, much of it free. But be careful about "free". You might find yourself reeling from hidden costs and pitfalls. In particular, you should avoid websites or apps offering free viewing of major movies, popular TV shows, or big league sporting events.

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) announced on April 12, 2017, the results of a small survey they conducted researching these websites. The FTC downloaded movies from five sites which offered up the movies for free. In all five cases, the FTC found the movies carried malware which infected their computers. This kind of malware is designed to relentlessly pound you with online ads, take over your computer, or steal your personal information, including passwords. And another thing. Downloading these pirated movies is illegal anyway.

Apparently these crooks are not content to just infect you with malware. Some of these sites demand a credit card number as part of registering for the service. It's a pretty bad idea to give out your credit card to an outfit running such a shady enterprise. Nothing good will come of that.

Free movie apps or websites are another version of "phishing", which is simply something desirable, interesting, or urgent sounding, offered through social media posts, emails, or websites as bait, luring the unwary into internet trouble.

## **CLEAN OUT YOUR MEDICINE CABINET**

The Clinton Police Department and the Gateway Impact Coalition, which includes Seniors vs. Crime, is sponsoring a medication drop-off event on April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2017. From 10 am to 2 pm, you can drop off your expired, unused, or unneeded medications at Ashford University Field (Lumber Kings Stadium) at 537 Ballpark Drive in Clinton. Medications are accepted as is, you don't need to remove any pills from containers, or scrap off the prescription label. The medications will be collected and handled by law enforcement for destruction. We do ask you not turn in any needles or sharps.

The safe disposal of prescription medications is part of the mission of Seniors vs. Crime. It's no real surprise the elderly population accounts for a disproportionate share of prescriptions in the United States. This country, and Clinton, suffers from an epidemic of opioid abuse, including heroin and pain-killers. Safely ridding ourselves of unwanted medications is one step toward a solution of the abuse epidemic. And it keeps these drugs out of our water supply, which is where they eventually go if flushed down the toilet.

Clinton County law enforcement continues to accept medications dropped off at the Clinton, Camanche, and Dewitt Police Departments, and the Sheriff's Office. The special drop-off on April 29<sup>th</sup> gives us another opportunity to dispose of these meds, and you won't even need to get out of your car!

### **SEE YOU AT THE FAIR!**

Seniors vs. Crime will staff a booth at the KROS Plus 50 Fair on April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2017, at the Vista Grande. The event is scheduled from 9 am to 1 pm. Stop by and introduce yourselves. Sign up for a door prize, and look over our anti-scam literature. Or gather it up and take it home for later reading. We're also offering some promotional gifts, come and see what we've got.

### **GRANDPARENT SCAM MAKES BIG SCORE**

In early February of this year, I wrote I saw an uptick in complaints of the grandparent scam. That trend continued, and now we learned the scammers made a big score on a ninety-two year old woman from western Clinton County. Most aspects of this scam were depressingly familiar, but it did involve a completely new twist also. The victim, we'll call her Bernice, got a phone call from someone posing as her grandson. The caller said he crashed his car, but needed \$8000 "to keep this off my record." Bernice agreed to pay, and here's the twist. The caller wanted the money sent via a Fedex parcel, in \$100 bills. In all previous cases I know of, the caller wants the money wired through Western Union or Moneygram, or wants gift cards. So the money went out as cash. And, in a familiar refrain, the next day the scammers called back, wanting another \$15,000. Bernice went to her bank to withdraw, but the bank officers figured out what happened, and stopped the scam.

The grandparent scam is one of the top successful scams reported to me. A fair number of folks fall for it, and their loss is pretty significant. So be warned. And warn others. We need to get everyone educated on this.

### **CONTACT SENIORS VS. CRIME**

Let me know about scams, fraud, or other crookedness you run across. Most of what I learn, I learn from you. Contact me at Seniors vs. Crime, Clinton County Sheriff's Office, 563-242-9211 extension 4433, or email me at [randymeier@gapa911.us](mailto:randymeier@gapa911.us)

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