

FIT YOURSELF FOR SAFE DRIVING

Get yourself registered soon for CarFit, scheduled 10 am to 2 pm, June 22, 2017, at the Church of the Open Door, 816 13th Avenue North in Clinton. Each year, Seniors vs. Crime coordinates with AARP, American Automobile Association to promote this event. CarFit is an interactive educational program designed to make sure older drivers get a proper “fit” in their vehicles. While we know older drivers are safer drivers, as they use seat belts and abide by traffic laws at rates higher than the general population, we also must acknowledge older drivers are at greater risk of death or serious injury in a crash, due to the effects of aging.

So it’s important for older drivers to assume the safest possible position in their cars, both to prevent crashes, and to better survive them if they happen. When you come to CarFit, you can expect to meet with a team of trained techs, who will check you out as you sit in your car, looking at seat position, mirrors, your reach distance to the brake and accelerator, steering wheel position, and how your seat belt harness fits. The process takes about twenty minutes. The CarFit team might make recommendations on re-positioning yourself, or informing you about after-factory accessories which can enhance your safety and ability to react as you drive.

CarFit perform this service without charge. But you need to register to claim a slot. To register, call 563-213-2446. Don’t wait too long. The number of slots is limited.

THE DRIVEWAY SEALERS ARRIVED – AS PREDICTED

In my last column, I warned we should expect to see the traveling peddlers, solicitors, and sales people. And they came. Yesterday I received a complaint from a Clinton woman who reported a crew of people showed up and wanted to “seal” her asphalt driveway. They pressured the woman to allow the project. They initially demanded \$1000 for the job, but in the face of strong objections from the customer, settled for a lot less.

I checked with Clinton City Clerk Pat VanLoo. She told me, no one running an asphalt business applied for or received a solicitor’s permit, as required by city ordinance. Nor did they offer their customer a written three day notice of cancellation, as required by Iowa law.

Expect to see more of these transient types, in the incorporated towns and cities, and in the rural areas of Clinton County. It doesn’t matter where you see them; they need a permit to go door to door asking for work. If they can’t produce one, it should be the end of the conversation.

ONLINE BILL PAYING GONE WRONG

The convenience of using the internet to pay bills can be a pretty sweet thing, saving postage, and maybe late fees when you realize your bill was due TODAY, and you scramble to pay up.

But just be careful. A Wheatland woman, we'll call her Barb, found her life much more complicated after making what she thought was an online payment.

Barb wanted to pay her utility bill. She felt confident using the internet to get this done. Barb searched for the utility's bill paying website, and found it. Barb authorized a debit from her bank account, and thought this chore was finished. A week later she talked to the utility on another matter, and learned the utility never received her payment, but her bank showed money withdrawn from her account.

What went wrong here? After some checking, we learned Barb hit upon a look-alike, or spoofed website for the utility. It seems a certain company created a number of look-alike websites designed to snare utility customers across the nation.

How do you prevent this? I would not rely on a search engine result to identify the correct website for bill paying. You are much safer to use the website indicated on the bill you receive, or to set up automatic payments through the merchant. Often this will involve sending the merchant a voided check.

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

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