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The Dunkerton News

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VOL. 21—8TH ISSUE—APRIL 2012

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Editor—Linda Wachal; e-mail WdRoseLady@aol.com

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Community Hall Ham Dinner

by Stacey Reicherts

The Dunkerton Community Hall's annual ham dinner will be held on Sunday, April 29, 2012, from 11:00-1:30 pm.

Dinner will include ham, scalloped potatoes, corn, coleslaw, rolls, dessert, coffee, and lemonade. Come down

and enjoy a great meal with your friends and neighbors.

Board Members: Jon Rathe, Robbie Wheeler, Barb Nesbit, Bev Smock, Cari Cox, & Stacey Reicherts

Summer Rec Field Cleanup Day

April 21st from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. will be clean up day for the ball fields. If you have a child playing for any Dunkerton Summer Rec team, please come up to the school and help the coaches clean up the fields. We have three fields that need some work.

Many hands make lite work. If you have any questions, please email us at dunkertonsum-rec@gmail.com

Thank you,

Jon & Cari Cox, Rec. Directors

BTFE Challenge

by Paula Winkers

The Box Tops for Education Challenge starts April 2! Classes will compete to see who can bring in the most box tops. Winning classes will get treats and the class that collects the most BTFE overall will get their choice of a pizza or sundae party! This school year, we have already clipped almost \$1,200 worth! The money earned from this program pays for field trips, playground needs, READ distributions, classroom materials and many other items. Start clipping those box tops!! Also, if you save Hyvee receipts for the school, please send them in by April 30.

The Dunkerton News is now Online at www.CreativeImpactCo.com
or go to our Creative Impact Company LLC facebook page and "like" us. We post a message on our facebook page when the new issue is online

Century and Heritage Farms

Extension Seeks Information on Black Hawk County Century and Heritage Farms

Waterloo – Black Hawk County Extension and Outreach is seeking information from Black Hawk County farm families that have been designated as either a Century or Heritage Farm by the Iowa Department of Agriculture. An event showcasing these farms is planned on July 27 and 28 during the Black Hawk County Fair at Estel Hall on the National Cattle Congress grounds.

Project chair, Jill Ford, states, "In conjunction with the 100th anniversary of Extension and the 4-H in Black Hawk Coun-

ty, we are seeking to honor and learn about these farm families that have contributed to the economic wealth and well-being of our county. We are accepting pictures, stories or other artifacts that will uniquely tell their story." During the fair, the community is invited to learn more about these farms by visiting Estel Hall between 11:00 am and 5:00 pm. on either July 27 or 28.

The Century Farms Program recognizes and honors those individuals who have owned the farm land for 100 years or more. The program began in 1976 as part of the Bicentennial Celebration, when over 5,000 certificates and farm markers were distributed across Iowa at local ceremonies. It is sponsored by the

Iowa Department of Agriculture and the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation, with the endorsement of the Iowa American Revolution Bicentennial Commission.

The Heritage Farms Program recognizes and honors family members where ownership and operation of a farm by members of the same family for one hundred and fifty years or more. The Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship in conjunction with the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation established the Heritage Farm Program for farm families that have owned at least 40 acres for 150 years or more.

Contact Jill Ford at jill.ford@fbfs.com or (319) 404-4652 for further information about this unique event.

Family Picnic

by Paula Winkers

Don't forget to mark your calendar for the Family Picnic that PTO is hosting, coming up on May 5! It's BYOPicnic, but we'll supply the fun. There will be lots of lawn games set up for you, your family, friends and neighbors to enjoy. All children must be accompanied by an adult--this is a family event. Meet us out on the playground from noon--2:00 with your blanket and picnic lunch. All are welcome!

Speak ill of no man, but speak all the good you know of everybody. —Benjamin Franklin

Dunkerton Days Flea Market

by Tina Dalton

Vendors are needed for Dunkerton Days July 28th. A flea market will be held on Main Street. They are interested in new items, antiques, glassware, woodworking, collectibles, crafts and food.

Spaces available for rent are 10x20 and the cost is \$20 prior to June 15th and \$25 after. If you are interested, call Tina for details at 319-231-0962.

HVAAA Meals

(Waterloo, Iowa) November 16, 2011 – Hawkeye Valley Area Agency on Aging has its April and May meals planned. Each meal includes milk. Meals are offered on a contribution basis for people over 60 year of age. Actual cost for the meal is \$6. People under 60 must pay the actual cost.

There are two menu options on most days of the month. Both congregate and home delivered meals may choose between option A and option B. Meals must be ordered in advance. All meals must be ordered by 9 a.m. the day before receiving a meal. Preference for Option A or B must be given at time of order – if no preference is given, Option A will be served.

Meals are served in Dunkerton Mondays and Thursdays, for reservations call 319-822-7910

April 16:

A: Chicken Cacciatore, Roasted Potato Medley, Spinach, Multi-Grain Bread, Fresh

Fruit, and Margarine

B: Mixed Bean Soup, Egg Salad, Carrot Raisin Salad, Multi-Grain Bread, and Fresh Fruit

April 19:

A: Breaded Chicken Patty, Ranch Beans, Potato Salad, Hamburger Bun, Bread Pudding, and Mayonnaise

B: Sliced Turkey Breast, Swiss Cheese, Pasta and Bean Salad, Tropical Fruit, Wheat Bread, Bread Pudding, and Mustard

April 23:

A: Turkey Ham and White Beans, Sliced Carrots, Broccoli, Cornbread, Peanut Butter Cookie, and Margarine

B: Tuna Mac Salad, Tossed Salad, Crackers, Fresh Fruit, Peanut Butter Cookie, and Assorted Salad Dressings

April 26:

A: Italian Style Pork Patty, Yellow Rice, Spinach, Wheat Bread, Gelatin, and Margarine

B: Potato Soup, Chicken Salad, Carrot Raisin Salad, Wheat Bread, and Gelatin

April 30:

A: Breaded Cod, Cheese Whipped Potatoes, Green Peas, Wheat Bread, Fresh Fruit, Tartar Sauce, and Margarine

B: Tomato and Rice Soup, Egg Salad, Beet Salad, Wheat Bread, and Fresh Fruit

May 3:

A: Beef Spaghetti Casserole, Italian Mixed Vegetables, Tossed Salad with Dressing, Wheat Bread, Carnival Cookie, and Margarine

B: Chef Salad with Turkey, Orange Juice, Crackers, Carnival Cookie, and Assorted

Death of a Doornail

An old mansion, a spoiled daughter, a greedy ex-wife, an arm-candy girlfriend, and a creepy butler. All the workings for a perfect murder mystery. Only one thing is missing - the body! Albert Doornail is nowhere to be found and there is blood all over the upstairs bathroom but no one can seem to find the body. Luckily, Inspector Bukowski bursts in to solve the case! Let's just hope he can solve it before someone else is murdered!

Directed by Olivia Hauptly, the show will be presented Saturday, April 28th at 7 p.m. at the Dunkerton Community School Auditorium. Tickets are \$4 and can be purchased at the door.

Don't miss it!

Looking for Vendors/Craft for Good Ol' Days - Evansdale, Ia 50707 June 8th-10th. Please contact Kathleen Robinson Johnson work-319-235-6731 or Home 319-231-1556. Evansdale Chamber Commerce

Salad Dressings

May 7:

A: Hamburger Patty, O'Brien Potatoes, Baked Beans, Hamburger Bun, Peaches with Pineapple, and Ketchup

B: Grilled Pork Patty, O'Brien Potatoes, Baked Beans, Hamburger Bun, Peaches with Pineapple, and Ketchup

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1/16-12

1/16-12

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Mon, Apr 17, 2012

4:00pm Golf: Varsity Triangular Tripoli vs. CAL Community @ Cal HS

4:30pm Track:Girls Varsity Meet vs. Hudson @ Hudson HS

7:00pm School Board mtg ICN Room
Tuesday, Apr 17, 2012

Book Fair all week

Grade 4 Field Trip - Waterloo Symphony

12-5pm Hawkeye Class Registration

4:30pm Track:Boys Varsity Invitational (Cancelled) vs. Kee @ Kee High School

Thursday, Apr 19, 2012

2:00pm Title 1-Parent Meeting

4:45pm Track:Girls Var Meet vs. Nashua-Plainfield @ Nashua HS. Girls only

5 pm Track:Boys Varsity Meet vs. Denver Community Schools @ Denver HS

6:30pm Title 1-Parent Meeting

7:00pm-8:30pm Concert-Grades 2-4 Auditorium

Sunday, Apr 22, 2012

Earth Day

Monday, Apr 23, 2012

4 pm Golf: Varsity Triangular vs. Tripoli, Waterloo Christian @ Wapsie Ridge Golf Course

5 pm Track:Girls & Boys Varsity Meet Clarksville HS Denver Community

Schools, Northern University, West Central vs. Wapsie Valley @ Oelwein HS

Tuesday, Apr 24, 2012

NEICDA Junior High Honor Choir Oelwein

4 pm Golf: Varsity Meet vs. Don Bosco Catholic @ Don Bosco Catholic HS

Wednesday, Apr 25, 2012

1:00pm Early Release

1:30pm-3:30pm Inservice

Thursday, Apr 26, 2012

8:00am-2:00pm Compass Test-10th Grade HCC

4 pm Golf: Varsity Meet vs. North Tama @ North Tama HS

4:15pm Track: JH Meet vs. Dike-New Hartford CSD @ Dike-New Hartford Junior High

4:30pm Track:Boys Varsity Meet vs. Cresco @ Cresco

4:30pm Track:Girls Varsity Meet vs. Cresco @ Cresco

Friday, Apr 27, 2012

4:00pm Golf: Varsity Meet Jesup vs. Tripoli @ Maple Hills Country Club - Tripoli

4:30pm Track:Girls Varsity Meet vs. Northern University @ NU High School

4:30pm Track: JH Meet vs. GMG Community School District @ Tama HS

Saturday, Apr 28, 2012

1:00pm-5:30pm Spring Play - Dress Rehearsal/Pictures Auditorium

7:00pm-8:30pm Spring Play Auditorium

Sunday, Apr 29, 2012

Arbor Day

National Teacher Appreciation Week

Mon. Apr 30, 2012

4:15pm Track: JH Meet vs. Tripoli @ Tripoli HS

4:45pm Track:Girls Varsity Invitational vs. Independence @ Independence HS

Tuesday, May 1, 2012

NEICDA Elementary Honor Choir Oelwein

4:30pm Track:Boys Varsity Meet vs. Tripoli @ Tripoli HS

4:30pm Track:Girls Varsity Meet

vs. Tripoli @ Tripoli HS

Wednesday, May 2, 2012

How To Succeed In College-12th Grad

10am Golf: Varsity Conference CAL Cadets, Clarksville HS, Colo-NESCO, Don Bosco Catholic, Janesville, Meskwaki HS, North Tama, Northeast Hamilton, Blairsburg, Tripoli, Walnut Ridge, GMG Community School District vs. North Tama @ North Tama HS

Boy Conf. Meet - rain date is May 3

7pm-8pm Booster Club Meeting

Thursday, May 3, 2012
4:30pm Track :Boys & Girls Varsity Meet CAL Cadets, Clarksville High School, Colo-NESCO, Don Bosco Catholic, Janesville, Meskwaki High School, North Tama, Northeast Hamilton, Blairsburg, Tripoli, Waterloo Christian, GMG Community School District vs. Meskwaki High School @ Meskwaki High School

Field Events Start at 4:30 Ru...

Friday, May 4, 2012

Des Moines Field Trip-6th Grade

State Large Group Music

4:30pm Track: Girls & Boys JH Meet Clarksville JH, Colo-NESCO, Don Bosco Catholic, GMG Community School District, Janesville, Meskwaki HS, North Tama, Northeast Hamilton, Blairsburg, Tripoli, Waterloo Christian vs. Meskwaki HS @ Meskwaki HS coed

Saturday, May 5, 2012

10:00am Golf: Varsity Invitational vs. Waterloo Christian @ Gates Park Golf Course

Monday, May 7, 2012

Next issue of The Dunkerton News

10:00am Golf: Varsity Conference CAL Cadets, Clarksville HS, Colo-NESCO, Don Bosco Catholic, Janesville, Meskwaki HS, North Tama, Northeast Hamilton, Blairsburg, Tripoli, Waterloo Christian, GMG Community School District vs. Colo-NESCO @ Colo-NESCO

7-8:00pm NHS Induction Auditorium

Chucky's Tollgate

304 W. Main Dunkerton
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Restaurant hours

11:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.

LUNCH SPECIALS

April 16-20

Monday-Hot Beef
Tuesday-Tacos & Goulash
Wednesday –Ham Loaf
Thursday-Cavatini
Friday-BBQ Meatballs

April 23-27

Monday-Hot Beef
Tuesday-Tacos & Lasagna
Wednesday-Scalloped Potatoes & Ham
Thursday- Swiss Steak
Friday-Salmon Patties and homemade Mac and Cheese

Friday Night April 20th
Prime Rib 5-8

Friday Night April 27th
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Saturday April 21 & 28
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1/18-20



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1/16-12

Feeling like you paid too much in taxes this year?

This year, evaluate whether you can benefit from:

1. Tax-advantaged investments. If appropriate, consider tax-free municipal bonds to provide federally tax-free income.*
2. Tax-advantaged retirement accounts. Consider contributing to a traditional Individual Retirement Account (IRA) or 401(k) to help lower your taxable income.
3. Tax-advantaged college savings accounts. Contribute or gift to a college savings plan for your children or grandchildren.

*May be subject to state and local taxes and the alternative minimum tax (AMT).

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1/12-15

1/8-20



LIBRARY NEWS

by Michelle Wheeler, Library Director

After the movie, peruse our new book section. New books are added weekly. Use our updated card catalog, which shows our entire collection online (accessible from home, too). If we don't have the book you're looking for, ask the librarian. If it's a book that's checked out, we can put your name on a reserve list. If it's a book we don't own, we may be able to purchase it or make an interlibrary loan request for you. *We are able to request books from libraries across the state, at no charge to you.

**Interlibrary loans aren't available for new releases.*

Morning Movie at the library!

Join us Wed., April 25, at 9:00 AM for the movie, Titanic, starring Leonardo DiCaprio and Kate Winslet (PG-13, 194 min.). Enjoy a cup of coffee as you view this epic romance, disaster film - shown to commemorate the 100 year anniversary of the sinking of the Titanic on April 15, 1912.

Support Group: Survivors of Suicide

Survivor of Suicide meets the second Saturday of the month from 10 a.m. to noon at Heritage United Methodist Church, 1201 230th St., Waverly, Iowa. This is a group for fellow survivors to come to-

gether for support, healing, information and empowerment. Contact person: Bonnie Travers.

Email: bonnietravers@ymail.com or you can call at 702-203-9567.

Scambusters

Electronic Medical Health Records Plan Sparks Data Breach Alarm

The switch from paper files to electronic medical health records is gathering pace as the nation moves towards the 2014 digital deadline set by President Obama.

By the end of that year, everyone who maintains such records, from health insurers to your physician and dentist, is supposed to have made the switch. If they don't, they could face a fine.

One of the main aims of the change to electronic medical records, or EMRs, is to speed up the transfer of information between care providers and increase accuracy, thereby ensuring treatment is both timely and appropriate.

With medical diagnosis and treatment becoming more complex than ever, this is especially important.

But, as we know, computerized data is a whole lot easier to steal than a stack of papers from a filing cabinet.

In fact, with more than half of all records already stored electronically, data breaches are occurring with alarming frequency.

In 2011, there were more than 380 breaches involving more than 18 million, yes 18 million, electronic medical health records.

This is more than double the rate of just two years earlier.

And those are just the statistics for breach incidents that individually involved more than 500 records, so the actual total is likely to be much higher.

Of course, for the most part, crooks don't steal medical records so they can find out if you've had your gall bladder removed.

As we have previously reported,

they use the information for identity theft.

http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=OtAeW&m=lrhCMMCPGtWfo&b=V0lOT-fwyWpFU_vcqlaHJ5g

That involves using your personal information for anything from making purchases or taking out loans in your name to assuming your full identity to get jobs and "free" health care.

And there are all sorts of opportunities for the thieves to get their hands on your electronic medical health records.

Quoting the Los Angeles Times, the online Wikipedia encyclopedia says that about 150 individuals, ranging from health care professionals to billing clerks, are able to access records relating to a single hospital stay.

Thousands more who handle billing data can also access at least some parts of your EMR.

The information is extremely valuable. For example, according to one estimate, a stolen electronic medical health record sells for \$50, compared with just a dollar or two for a credit card or Social Security number.

So, it's not surprising that the general public is increasingly concerned about the risks of their EMRs (or EHRs -- electronic health records) falling into the wrong hands.

A survey by the polling company Harris established that 80% of Americans are worried about the switch to electronic medical records.

Another study revealed that less than 60% of health care providers and only about 40% of insurers had trained employees on EMR privacy.

That's not to say nothing is being done to safeguard electronic medical health records.

Security and access are governed by two laws:

* The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act



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1/2-75

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NO SPECIALS

JUST WANT TO SAY
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1/16-28

Obituary

Judith D. "Judy" Carlson (1940-2012)

DUNKERTON- Judy Carlson, 71, of Dunkerton, died Friday, March 30, 2012, at Covenant Medical Center, Waterloo.

She was born April 11, 1940 in Kingfield, Maine, daughter of Leslie and Rowena Murray Taylor. She married Gile H. Carlson on July 2, 1960 in Cedar Falls.

Mrs. Carlson earned her LPN from Central Maine Hospital in Lewiston, Maine, and RN in 1981 from Hawkeye Tech. She was a Registered Nurse for 32 years with Covenant Medical Center, retiring in 2002. She owned and operated Country Baskets in Dunkerton with her husband.

Survived by: her husband; a son, Steve (Tina) Carlson of



Las Vegas, NV; daughter, Kathy Baethke of Dunkerton; six grandchildren: Cameron Baethke of Waterloo, Torie Baethke of Dunkerton, Tabetha Rosenberg of La Vegas, Zachary Baethke of Kansas City, MO, Steven and Slade Carlson of

Las Vegas; and a sister, Sharon (Vincent) Parsons of Kingfield, ME.

Preceded in death by: a brother, Dawrence Taylor.

Services were held 10:00 a.m. Tuesday at Richardson Funeral Service in Cedar Falls with burial in Fairview Cemetery in Dunkerton.

Memorials may be directed to the family.

Condolences may be left at www.richardsonfuneralservice.com.

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What you do speaks so loud that I cannot hear what you say. — Ralph Waldo Emerson

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St. John's Lutheran Church Bennington

Sunday School 8:45 a.m.
Worship 10 a.m.

April 29: Lutheran Leaders - 6: The Mission Organizers - Wilhelm Loehe/C.F.W. Walther

May 6: ATWCFFADRM...the All-Time-World-Class-Free-for-All-Discussion-of-Religious-Matters... - Any subject relating to the Church/Christian faith and life/ current events you find or choose to bring will be considered...spontaneous/off the cuff/un-rehearsed. Information/discussion of current religious faith and life.



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web: <http://www.stjohnsbennington.com>

Pastor: Wm. Thalacker e-mail: billthalacker@yahoo.com 319-287-7836

Scams

Continued from page 4

(HIPAA), which was enacted in 1996 and covers paper records and, by extension, EMRs.

* A provision called the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH), which covers the current drive to switch to EMRs. Together, these two regulations are aimed at ensuring individuals have access to their own electronic medical record and lay down rules for safeguarding privacy.

What can you do to protect your records?

Sadly, the answer is: not a lot. But that shouldn't stop you from being vigilant to the possibility of theft of your EMR and taking swift action to prevent the impact of a subsequent identity theft.

Here are seven things you could and should do:

1. Check the status of your records with your insurer and health care providers. Ask if they're stored electronically.
2. Check whether staff have been trained to safeguard EMR privacy and, if not, what they propose to do about it.
3. Ask if they have suffered a data breach and, regardless, what their policy is for notifying patients.
4. Check your electronic record once a year. Although not yet enshrined in law, the Office of

Civil Rights (OCR - part of the Department of Health and Human Services) has proposed a rule that would allow one free request per year starting 2013.

5. Bookmark and monitor OCR's list of breaches. The law requires that these are reported and the searchable list is regularly updated. You'll find it at <http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=OtAeW&m=lirhCMMCPGtWfo&b=5MWM.MOVzHsrROMytYwqkQ>

6. If you think your privacy rights have been violated or are concerned about the way your EMR is being handled, you can file a complaint with OCR. See: <http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=OtAeW&m=lirhCMMCPGtWfo&b=hMqH-HyUPEakJ66qU47PK3Q>

7. If you find you are the victim of a data breach and/or identity theft, check out these earlier Scambusters reports on what to do: <http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=OtAeW&m=lirhCMMCPGtWfo&b=Efi6np7mYcZVHwjaWNjP9A>

<http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=OtAeW&m=lirhCMMCPGtWfo&b=L2q0WZSpGwtcF57MILrqnw>

Incidentally, the OCR site referred to above is an extremely valuable resource for learning more about what the law does to protect your health records.

In particular, you can download or read online the specifics of the two key elements of HIPAA -- the so-called Privacy Rule and the Security Rule.

In the age of electronic medical health records you'll need to

Scams

Continued from page 6

play your part to ensure your interests and privacy are safeguarded.

Scores Arrested as Police Clamp Down on Olympic Games Scams

With the 2012 Olympic Games in London just a few weeks away, law enforcement agencies have issued warnings about the risk of scams.

Memories of the phony ticket and package deal scams that hit the games both in Sydney and Beijing have come flooding back.

In both of those events, thousands of victims were lured into paying for tickets on crooked websites, or paying for packages that either didn't exist or didn't include the implied ticket.

The 2012 Olympic Games will be opened by Queen Elizabeth on July 27, with an expected audience of 80,000 at the newly built Olympic Stadium. The event will be followed a few weeks later by the Paralympic Games at some of the London venues and the same alert about scam artists has been sounded. London's Metropolitan Police have even set up a special program, Operation Podium, to counter organized crime. In particular, they're concerned about Olympic Games-related scams that target overseas sports enthusiasts. In one bizarre incident, they arrested a man allegedly involved in an online scam that duped one US victim out of more than \$200,000.

The crooks supposedly claimed to be law enforcement officials and tricked the victim with a bogus contract to provide transportation for police throughout the whole event. So far, more than 100 people have been arrested for allegedly selling forged tickets and non-existent hotel packages, or for running bogus Olympic Games sites.

News reports suggest demand for tickets and hotels is driving up prices, with tickets and hotel rooms selling for more than \$1,000 apiece. According to London newspaper The Independent, scammers have seized this opportunity to market bogus vacation rentals in and around London, using photographs of genuine properties. They set up

promotional websites, take deposits and then shut down and disappear. In some cases, even legitimate rental agencies have been fooled into accepting scam rentals onto their listings.

The owner of one such agency told the newspaper: "It's an awful state of affairs, and visitors to London must be extremely careful about thoroughly checking the credentials of the agencies they are thinking of booking with, before parting company with their money." The fear is that many travelers won't discover they've been conned until they arrive in London for the 2012 Olympic Games to find the apartment they thought they had rented either doesn't exist or has been legitimately rented to someone else. In other cases, authorities have warned that even genuine rentals can spring a surprise, when the renter discovers there are a number of hidden charges -- like sales tax (VAT), which, in the UK, is currently 20%.

The Olympic Games are one of the few events for which people travel from all over the world, often tying in vacations and other tourist activities, so travelers are being warned to be on the lookout for other scams that target tourists.

Beware, especially, of pickpockets, who will be out in force in London, and check out these earlier Scambusters issues for more information on travel scams:

<http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=OtAeW&m=Itejdk4XPGtWfo&b=knIAGP-vawvMCm8JjGNoYHA>

<http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=OtAeW&m=Itejdk4XPGtWfo&b=vsxJ66BzQjEP9uFY91CKnw>

In the meanwhile, if you plan to head to London for the 2012 Olympic Games, or have business connections with the event, here are 10 tips to follow to make sure you don't get scammed:

* Only buy tickets from the official site (or ensure your travel agent has done so). If you live in the UK or Europe, get them from the 2012 Olympic Games site

(http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=OtAeW&m=Itejdk4XPGtWfo&b=VL-BOcxKmCyc_yW.RkIE.org).

In the US and other countries, you should buy them through your National Olympic Committee or their authorized sellers

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http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=OtAeW&m=Itejdk4XPGtWfo&b=zrBr1_muW5tM2n3u7ugobg).

* Beware of bargain hotel and rental rates that require a high deposit.

* Independently establish the name and phone number of hotels, then check them out online. Book by phone if you can, using your credit card.

* Refuse to make any kind of payment or deposit via money-wiring services like Western Union or similar.

* If you're renting accommodations, ask the owner or agent for references that you can independently check out.

* Find out if any agency you're using belongs to a trade body with whom you can verify their credentials.

* Do a search on the address of any rental you're considering -- to check that it exists and isn't being sold or rented out by someone else.

* Check what's not included in the price. If you're buying what seems to be a hotel and tickets package, double check that it does in fact include tickets and that they have been obtained

from official sources.

* Beware of any phone numbers that start with the numbers 070 (or, from the US, 44-70). These are what are called UK "platform numbers" and can be used anywhere in the world.

* If you're in business, thoroughly and independently check out any contract proposals. None should involve you having to make an upfront payment. Start your inquiries with the Olympic Delivery Authority. Contact details here: <http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=OtAeW&m=Itejdk4XPGtWfo&b=FYoalk1sF234Sh2akMUNA>

And, just in case things do go wrong, consider taking out travel insurance and have a back-up plan in mind -- where you'll go and stay -- so at least you can salvage something from the experience.

Better yet, here's hoping the 2012 Olympic Games are peaceful and, if you're going, that the scammers leave you free to enjoy yourself!

That's it for today -- we hope you enjoy your week!

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The Classifieds

The Classifieds

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