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The Dunkerton News

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VOL. 22— 4TH ISSUE—MARCH 2012

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

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Lester Livewires Meeting

The Lester Livewires 4-H Club met on February 17, 2013 at 4:00 p.m. for our club meeting. Roll call was answered by fifteen members, and the Treasurer's Report was read by Cole Heiple.

The 4-H annual Omelet Breakfast will be held April 7th, 8 am to 1:00 pm. Members are still checking on different service projects. The FSQA and Show Clinic will be April 8 and 28. Family Movie Day is March 9th. The movies

are "Oz the Great and Powerful" and "Jack the Giant Slayer". Some of our service projects ideas are park cleanup, recycle bin at school, volunteering at food bank, food drive, et cetera. There was a cake decorating workshop which was directed by Jessica Cox and assisted by her mom. Ellie Magee gave a demonstration on "Shrinky Dinks". Everyone made one. The next meeting will be held on March 17th. Meeting was adjourned 4:47 p.m.

AWANA

by Dick Ede

Wednesday, February 27, was the third weather related cancellation for Awana at First Baptist Church in Dunkerton. Our fun activity for that date was inside-out night and Awana bucks would have been awarded to the most unique outfit. The next Awana night is March 6 and it is designated as "money for missions". Girls and boys are in a competition to see who can raise the most money for the Awana missionary. Who will win this time? Be sure and attend to find out.

From the Superintendent

Mr. James C. Stanton, Superintendent

February 25, 2013

Moving Forward

Yes, we are once again moving forward and will be soon starting work to finish 4 of the rooms on second floor of the new building, as well as the hallway, stairwells, the bathrooms, the elevator, and support areas. This will come at a cost of about \$1 million, and we will be using existing bond and statewide penny money to complete the work. This will allow us to get all of our 7 - 12 core classrooms out of the 1921 building 2nd and 3rd floor and over to the new building. That means that we will be moving Ms. Klinefelter's English room, Mr. Heuer's Math room, Ms. McCammant's English room, and Mr. Krueger's Social Studies room all out into the new building. While the construction is moving forward on that side of the building, Mr. Chapman's Building & Trades classes will continue to work on the other side of the building preparing to move even

more support services and a mini-computer lab into the new building also. We are able to start this project a little ahead of schedule because we had a little bond money left over from the first project, and state-wide penny revenues were a little better than projected this past year. That's right; no general fund money will have to be used to complete this phase of the project. Our target completion date is July 31, 2013 and we will then start to move the classrooms over after that. It is exciting to see the growth continue and to hear the students and teachers getting excited about moving into their new surroundings next year.

If you look real close, you will notice that Prom is coming up on April 6th. The reason I mention that is because once Prom gets hear, the school year is getting quite close to over. It is worth marking on your calendars that graduation is May 19th, and as of right now the last scheduled day of school is May 23rd. That date is of course somewhat depend-

ent upon the weather. Looking even a little further ahead, registration is on August 01, and the first day of school next year is on August 15th. Copies of next year's school calendar are available on the school's website, which is currently under some construction, and we appreciate your patience with us while we continue to work on that.

Notice: May 21, 22, & 23 are now school days. It is always fun to get those snow days, but never fun to make them up!

Thank you again for helping to make Dunkerton a great place to live, and Dunkerton Schools a great place to be a kid!!!

A few other short notes:

Mar. 06:1:00 dismiss - Teacher In-service

Mar. 07:JH Talent Show - 7:00

Mar. 11:PK & Kdg. Orientation - 6:30

Mar. 11:End 3rd Quarter

Mar. 12:1:00 dismiss - Parent Teacher Conferences

Mar. 14:1:00 dismiss - Parent Teacher Conferences

"You have power over your mind - not outside events. Realize this, and you will find strength."

— Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*

Mar. 15:NO SCHOOL

Mar. 18:School Board Meeting - 7:00

Mar. 20:1:00 dismiss - Teacher In-service

Mar. 21:Music Aid Dinner and Concert - 5:30

Mar. 27:Tentative No School - Makeup day #6

Mar. 28:Tentative No School - Makeup day #7

Mar. 29:No School - Good Friday

April 01: No School - Easter Monday

April 06: Prom

Stay in touch,

jstanton@dunkerton.k12.ia.us
GO RAIDERS!!!

Scholarship Applications Being Accepted

Covenant And Sartori Auxiliaries Now Accepting Scholarship Applications

Deadline for applications is March 15, 2013

Covenant Medical Center Auxiliary and Sartori Memorial Hospital Auxiliary will jointly award scholarships to area students in 2013. In conjunction with funds donated by McElroy Trust, the scholarship committee is able to award five \$2000 scholarships and three \$2000 scholarships this year. Deadline for submitting applications is March 15, 2013.

Qualified applicants must be graduating high-school students planning to pursue a career in a health-related program or post-secondary students currently enrolled in a health related program. Qualifying health related careers include medical or dental curriculum (including pre-med and pre-dental), nursing, dental hygiene, medical/clinical laboratory technology, dental technology, radiology technology, medical transcription, health information technology, medical office services, surgical technology, ultrasound technology, pharmacy, respiratory therapy and physical therapy).

Scholarships will be awarded on the basis of academics, financial need and citizenship. Applicants must have a minimum 3.0 grade-point average and be from the local area (Black Hawk, Bremer, Fayette, Buchanan, Benton, Tama, Grundy and Butler counties). Scholarships will be awarded in May for the 2013-2014 academic year.

Application forms, which include a request for a brief essay, grade transcripts and letters of recommendation, are available from the Covenant Foundation Office, 3421 West Ninth Street, Waterloo, Tel. (319) 272-7676; the Sartori Health Care Foundation Office, 515 College Street, Cedar Falls, Tel. (319) 268-3161; Applications are also available in area school counselor's offices and online at WheatonIowa.org. Submissions must be completed and returned to the Covenant Foundation Office by March 15, 2013. Applications submitted electronically will not be accepted.

Andrea Barker Director, Marketing Communications Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare - Iowa 319.272.7463 Phone 319.272.7313 Fax

Telephone Company Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting will be held Thursday, April 11th at 6:30 p.m. at the Community Hall.

The following people are running for the board.

Kenny Kuentling, Nancy Happel, and Dennis Magee, all incumbents; and Jon Cox, Robbie Wheeler, and Michael Winkers. Three will be elected.

There will be information on those who are running in the next Dunkerton News.

Along with the usual gifts the phone company gives out each year, they will also be giving away a Kindle Fire HD 8.9. You must be present to win.

"It is unwise to be too sure of one's own wisdom. It is healthy to be reminded that the strongest might weaken and the wisest might err."

— Mahatma Gandhi

Public notice:

A public Hearing on the Lester Township budget will be held Monday March 11 at 7:45 at the Dunkerton Library.

Items to consider; Ambulance and Fire department request; Lester Cemetery and fence for it; request from Fairview Cemetery for assistance.

Robert Jefferson, Clerk

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Barclay Presbyterian Church
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9:30 a.m.

Worship Service
10:30 a.m.

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WHAT'S HAPPENING

Wednesday, March 6	Tuesday, March 12
9:30 a.m. Storytime at the Dunkerton Public Library	1:00 dismissal - Parent Teacher Conferences
Early dismissal - teacher insert	Thursday, March 14
Tuesday March 7	1:00 dismissal - Parent Teacher Conferences
JH Talent Show 7 p.m.	Friday, March 15
Sunday, March 10	No School
Baseball Open Gym 4 p.m.	Sunday, March 17
Monday, March 11	* Happy St. Patrick's Day!
Contact Linda with any news for The Dunkerton News	Baseball Open Gym 4 p.m.
Pre K and Kindergarten Orientation 6:30 p.m.	Monday, March 18
	Next issue of The Dunkerton News
	School Board Meeting 7 p.m.

Scambusters

By Scambuster Keith
 Issue #532 February 20, 2013
 Disaster Scams Special Part 2: What To Do and Where To Get Help
 This is the second part of our special report on disaster scams — the tricks that con artists, unscrupulous traders and sick-minded individuals play on us in the wake of natural disasters like storms and earthquakes and human-induced incidents like shooting tragedies and power station meltdowns. In Part One we listed the 20 most frequent tricks both disaster victims and the public are likely to encounter. This time, we provide the 10 rules you should follow to avoid also becoming a scam

victim, and the places you can turn to for more help.
 10 Rules for Avoiding Disaster Scams
 1. Avoid charity and fundraising scams by:
 * Only donating to established charities.
 * Using your own resources to track down the charity — don't rely on links or emails.
 * Refusing to donate over the phone to telesales or other incoming calls. Initiate the donation yourself.
 * Checking out charities' credentials with the Wise Giving Alliance: http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=OtAeW&m=JeXs.riZ1GtWfo&b=_qUmLd-KSxT6qI6jzW3HvyA
 * Thoroughly checking and

Womens Club

by Mary Jane Averhoff
 The Dunkerton Womens Club met at the Dunkerton Library. The program was a very interesting talk given by Denise Smith, from the Visiting Nursing Association, and a film was shown. In 2012, they had 80 years of service which started out with 3 nurses giving caring service in their homes and the same care today.
 Meeting called to order by President Teresa Bartholomew, Pledge of Allegiance and the gathering were recited. Roll Call answered by 12.
 Dawn had called to report to Gayle that 3rd grade teachers would like some help. Also 2:15-3:15 for Kindergarten.
 Blood drive on January 21 had 13.
 No newborns.
 Senior friends decided we will bring a card to pass around or feel free to send a card on your own to anyone on the list.
 Cindy Mixdorf moved we do that. Gayle seconded. All agreed.
 Thank you from County View for the Christmas items.
 New Business
 Have cell phones in book of 2013-2014. See about getting a new parade sign made.
 Bring items for March program.
 Deloris Joens made a motion to adjourn. Gayle Wolff seconded.

vetting websites and Facebook pages supposedly set up by or for victims. If you can't be sure they're genuine, don't donate.
 Check out these Scambusters issues...
<http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=OtAeW&m=JeXs.riZ1GtWfo&b=GyBfL.iblPmYbF7BzURuIg>
<http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=OtAeW&m=JeXs.riZ1GtWfo&b=8J5XlyAqKAcplwH-Sj2c8MQ>
 ...and this guidance from the Federal Trade Commission (FTC):
http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=OtAeW&m=JeXs.riZ1GtWfo&b=5aldkXgk1HphjpEENR_iKg
 2. Avoid bogus contractors by:
 * Refusing to deal with doorstep and telesales solicitors.
 * Checking contractors' li-

censes and registrations with state and local boards and trade associations.
 * Requesting copies of their liability insurance and references from past clients.
 * Getting at least two professional opinions and competitive bids in writing.
 * Keeping advance payments to a minimum — don't pay in full upfront.
 * Don't let people into your house whom you haven't positively identified.
 3. Don't send cash or money-wire payments
 Whether it's for a charitable donation or any other service supposedly related to the disaster, never wire money to individuals or organizations you don't know.
 4. Use extreme caution with personal financial information
 SEE SCAMS/Page 4

Why Go Anywhere Else?

When it comes to meeting your financial goals, you really only need to see one person. At Edward Jones, we strive to meet all your financial services needs while providing exceptional personalized service.

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LIBRARY NEWS



by Michelle Wheeler, Library Director

What's Happening:

Wednesday, March 6, 2013
9:30 A.M. Storytime @ Your Library

Library News:

We want your input!

The Dunkerton Public Library is here for your use and enjoyment. We truly want the community's input regarding improvements or desired services and materials. We can't always accommodate all requests - but when feasible, we will.

Recently, it was requested that we stay open later on early-out Wednesdays, to allow students to have a place to study until

sports practice. The Library Board listened and approved staying open until 3:30 on the five remaining early-out Wednesdays (March 6, 20, April 10, 24, and May 8).

We also are forming a Teen Advisory Board to help meet the library needs of area teens. We received wonderful feedback from a questionnaire filled out by jr. high and high school students, too. We look forward to a great summer, filled with lots of activities for many age groups.

Also on early-out Wednesdays, we open at 9:30 A.M. for Storytime. We spend a half hour, before regular library hours, reading great books that teach early literacy skills. Reading aloud to children is the single most important activity to help children succeed at reading and excel in language arts. Our next storytime is March 6.

Scams

Continued from page 3

* Don't give your credit card number or bank account details to any individual or organization you don't know or haven't thoroughly checked out.

* Same goes for your Social Security number. In fact, it's extremely unlikely that anyone, anyone at all, would legitimately need this.

5. Use official or reputable sources for information

* Don't click on links or open attachments supposedly relating to the disaster.

* Use TV, radio and well known media websites to find out what's happening. They will also broadcast emergency contact and support numbers.

* Be skeptical of reports from other sources predicting impending disaster — especially ones that are nearly impossible to predict, like earthquakes.

* If you get a call to evacuate your property from someone you don't know or can't positively identify, check it with emergency services.

* Don't send money in response to calls or email messages from supposed friends or relatives claiming to be caught up in the incident — check their whereabouts with other friends or family members.

6. Avoid sales solicitations

* Never respond to spam. You'll likely be conned and your name will end up on a list of easy targets. Your credit card details will also be stolen.

* Don't buy from door-to-door sales people whether they're selling insurance equipment, supplies, or contracting services. If you need something, shop properly for it.

7. Check grants and investment opportunities

* Don't pay someone who claims they can secure a grant for you.

* Check supposed grant availability with official sources — like your county, state and federal offices. Be especially wary of unsolicited incoming calls, letters and emails offering grants.

* Speak to a trusted financial advisor

SEE SCAMS/Page 6

Iowa's Homecoming Queen Contest

Janelle Rottinghaus, Dunkerton's Homecoming Queen, is competing for Iowa's Homecoming Queen in Des Moines March 10, 2013.

As a state finalist, she is also eligible to compete for the title of America's Favorite Homecoming Queen. As well as a title, the winner also receives a cash scholarship. You can vote for Janelle at www.americas-homecomingqueen.com. Each vote is \$1 and goes toward the AHQ Scholarship Fund. You can vote as many times as you would like. The contestant with the most votes wins.



PLEASE WRITE

The Dunkerton News welcomes letters to the editor from readers. We urge you to keep your letters brief and to the point. We reserve the right to edit letters for length, if necessary.

All letters to the editor must be signed and include a phone number or address for verification purposes.

Send letters to: The Dunkerton News, 3511 Lafayette Rd., Evansdale, IA 50707, email WdRoseLady@aol.com or fax 319-287-5941.

The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong.

— Mahatma Gandhi, *All Men are Brothers: Autobiographical Reflections*

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1/16-12

1/16-12

1/16-12

HVAAA Meals

Hawkeye Valley Area Agency on Aging has its March 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.

Meal location in Dunkerton: United Methodist Church (301 S. Washington Street) - Mondays and Thursdays, for reservations call 319-822-7910.

Home delivered meals are also available. For more information or to find a location near you, call 319-272-1767.

March 4:

A: Creole Steak, Garlic Whipped Potatoes, Fiesta Vegetables, Wheat Roll, Mandarin Oranges, and Margarine

B: Chicken A La King, Garlic Whipped Potatoes, Fiesta Vegetables, Wheat Roll, Mandarin Oranges, and Margarine

March 7:

A: King Ranch Chicken Casserole, Confetti Rice, Country Tomatoes, Cornbread, Peaches with Pineapple, and Margarine

B: Ham & Bean Stew, Tomato Wedges, Carrot & Raisin Salad, Cornbread, Peaches with Pineapple, and Margarine

March 11:

A: Cranberry Dijon Chicken, Oven Roasted Potatoes, Seasoned Carrots, Multi Grain Bread, Fruited Lime Gelatin, and Margarine

B: Grilled Pork with Mushrooms, Oven Roasted Potatoes, Seasoned Carrots, Multi Grain Bread, Fruited Lime Gelatin, and Margarine

March 14:

A: Italian Pork Loin, Rice Florentine, Winter Vegetables, Wheat Bread, Chocolate Pudding, and Margarine

B: Sliced Roast Beef, Spinach Salad, Corn Relish Salad, Wheat Bread, Chocolate Pudding, Assorted Salad Dressing, and Mustard

March 18:

A: Western Pork Patty, Rosemary Potatoes, Seasoned Green Beans, Multi Grain Bread, Rocky Road Pudding, and Margarine

B: Potato Soup, Chicken Salad, Carrifruit Salad, Multi Grain Bread, Rocky Road Pudding, and Margarine

March 21:

A: Chicken Rotini Casserole, Sliced Carrots, Broccoli, Multi Grain Bread, Fresh Banana, and Margarine

B: Chef Salad, Orange Juice, Multi Grain Bread, Fresh Banana, Assorted Salad Dressing, and Margarine

March 25:

A: Hamburger Patty, O'Brien Potatoes, Corn with Limas & Carrots, Hamburger Bun, Pineapple Tidbits, Mustard or Ketchup

B: Turkey Chili, Marinated Carrots, Mediterranean Salad, Cornbread, Pineapple Tidbits, and Margarine

March 28:

A: Potato Crusted Fish, Oven Roasted Potatoes, Green Peas, Wheat Bread, Mandarin Oranges, and Margarine

B: Beef with Pepper Gravy, Oven Roasted Potatoes, Green Peas, Wheat Bread, Mandarin Oranges, and Margarine

Easter Goodies for the 125th Transportation Company

by Lisa Shook

Kaleb Shook son of Bill and Lisa Shook of Dunkerton is currently deployed in Afghanistan with the 125th Transportation Company. This is his second deployment. I am putting together Easter bags for each one of his company of 160 men and women. If you would like to donate snack item, cash to mail them, purchase girl scout cookies or just a letter of Thank you for your service, all would be greatly appreciated. Girl Scout cookies are \$3.50 a box and can be ordered from me at 822-2529. Kaleb says there are a lot of

them that don't even get a letter from home. Thats sad to feel not appreciated. These men and women are fighting for our freedom they deserve to feel appreciated. If you have any questions or would like to donate call 822-2529 thank you.

Matt Hosford also will be deploying end of March for Afghanistan. He has a wife Brittany and 3 small boys. Keep our Dunkerton boys and their families in your thoughts and prayers. Kaleb will be getting married next May 10, 2014 his fiance, Ally, lives in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

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Lee's Cell: 319-939-2160

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Just In!

"If you want to forget something or someone, never hate it, or never hate him/her. Everything and everyone that you hate is engraved upon your heart; if you want to let go of something, if you want to forget, you cannot hate."

— C. JoyBell C.

First Baptist Church



101 W. Sycamore
Dunkerton, IA

Making Christ Known

Sunday School
Adult and children
9:00 a.m.

Worship Service
10:00 a.m.

www.fbcdunkerton.com

"We are only as strong as we are united, as weak as we are divided." — J.K. Rowling

Scams

Continued from page 4
before investing in activities linked to the disaster aftermath. Don't make hasty decisions, especially if you're pressured to do so.

8. Don't pay to get a job
* Job lists connected with the disaster may be genuine but don't pay for them. Find out about opportunities for free from your local or state labor department.

* Be skeptical of disaster-related jobs advertised on sites like Craigslist.

* Don't pay upfront for things like background checks, travel, equipment or kits from supposed employers unless you have thoroughly vetted them.

9. Use common sense
* Stay calm and avoid impulsive actions. Think them through and discuss them with others.

* Be skeptical of things that your instincts tell you are difficult to believe, and be suspicious of people you don't know who contact you about something that will cost you money.

* Don't pass on chain letters and emails that are intended to invoke fear or incite hatred.

* If you receive hate mail or abusive social network postings tell the police.

10. Be prepared
Always maintain emergency supplies with reserves of water, canned food, batteries, candles, a portable radio, candles and matches. (See below for more information.)

If you have to buy equipment or supplies, it may be difficult to avoid price gouging, but when it's appropriate you should report it to your local consumer protection office.

Where to Get More Information and Help

We've already stressed the importance of using official sources, like state and local authorities, getting information from broadcasters and reputable websites, and checking out other organizations and individuals you're not familiar with.

And we've mentioned the Federal Trade Commission, an invaluable source of information on fraud and scams:

<http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=OtAeW&m=JeXs.riZ1GtWf o&b=zhKVMDNFLWAwLO-qAVdQhfQ>

Another useful source of help is the National Center for Disaster Fraud (NCDF), a Department of Justice agency set up after Hurricane Katrina. It's a sort of clearinghouse for frauds relating to emergency incidents.

http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=OtAeW&m=JeXs.riZ1GtWf o&b=sjnOAvnjICC_1WIp5_vRQ

(Although this address curiously includes the words "oil spill," the site deals with all manner of disaster scam reports.)

NCDF works hand in hand with the FBI, whose site can also be searched with the words "disaster fraud" for more guidance:

<http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=OtAeW&m=JeXs.riZ1GtWf o&b=nllCOpmkMQm6rJvi3WDlwg>

If you're concerned for your safety or the victim of intimidation or abuse, contact law enforcement.

For more information, both on disaster preparedness generally and specifics like building a kit of emergency supplies, see the government's official readiness help site at http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=OtAeW&m=JeXs.riZ1GtWf o&b=._Ab5jAoApYab3h_J1cTkQ

That site is operated by the key government agency involved in dealing with emergencies and disasters, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), which oversees disaster recovery.

It's a key source of information on disaster scams, grant availability and incident specific contacts. Its home page also features an "Active Disasters" map by state.

Start at <http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=OtAeW&m=JeXs.riZ1GtWf o&b=mACcZ.kU1m110ZwS->

St. John's Lutheran Church Bennington

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

March 10: Lutheran Christians Today - No. 6: The ELCA

March 17: Christians in the First Century/Acts of the Apostles - Paul's Arrest & Trials



4110 E Mount Vernon Rd. • 291-6225

e-mail: stjohnsbenn@myapplemail.com
web: <http://www.stjohnsbennington.com>

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

DSIorg
Depending on the nature of the incident, a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) may be involved in providing additional support.

You can search for a local team by keying in your zip code at: <http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=OtAeW&m=JeXs.riZ1GtWf o&b=OeLiQyv1qwAnkMX18LfMEA>

Finally, of course, here at Scambusters we already have a database of issues dealing with all of the tricks outlined in this two-part disaster scams report.

See these, for example: <http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=OtAeW&m=JeXs.riZ1GtWf o&b=VikrejDO6jNNJgrslIn.0A>

http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=OtAeW&m=JeXs.riZ1GtWf o&b=.TUB4Dd62e_3fJHOayZqNQ

During Hurricane Sandy, we also published a list of useful information sources that might prove useful in other disasters.

<http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=OtAeW&m=JeXs.riZ1GtWf o&b=GjW.lZyN4M945APvytMrmQ> You can search the Scambusters site for more. And we have our own guides on preparedness:

<http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?>

<http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=OtAeW&m=JeXs.riZ1GtWf o&b=1G0Wcg0sFpRbZ0ZMHfCVA>

http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=OtAeW&m=JeXs.riZ1GtWf o&b=vOD1zMam8KcTMH-gino_7Q

Being prepared is a key element of coping effectively with the effects of a disaster.

And knowing how to spot the con artists and their tricks is the key to avoiding disaster scams.

By Scambuster Keith
Issue #533 February 27, 2013
Snippets Issue: Photo Theft, Bogus Property Watch, Fake DMV and More

While you take steps to protect your computer data, are you doing enough to protect your PC from photo theft?

And what else might you unknowingly give away to crooks — like your upcoming travel plans?

Or how about falling for a simple con trick that uses an official name to sell you auto insurance?

For all this and more, read on in this week's Snippets issue.

Photo Stealing Hackers
You've "locked up" all your computer data to keep it safe from hackers, but what about

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Scams

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your photos?

According to Internet security firm ESET, crooks now have software that can steal images off your hard drive — and they're using it.

Why would they steal your pictures? Well, increasingly we use our smartphones to capture pictures of documents, like receipts, which we then transfer to our PCs.

Plus, photos may carry useful personal identification information, like street addresses and property ownership.

Hackers could also be looking for images to use on "adult" sites or even to be used for blackmail.

Of course, first they need to get their photo-stealing software onto your PC. Keep them out with strong security software, avoiding visits to unsafe sites, and ignoring attachments on emails (especially from people you don't know).

You can also prevent your PC from running downloaded software without warning you. Find out how to set this up online or in your user guide/manual.

And don't forget to vet your own photos for personal info giveaways before posting them online.

Bogus Property Watch

Police Property Watch programs are a great supplement to neighborhood security — provided they're genuine. But that's not always the case.

Posing as law enforcement officers, scammers in Indiana have been phoning residents asking if they plan to leave town, so police can keep an eye on their property.

In reality, they're scoping out information on when a property will be empty, so they can burglarize it.

This crime likely will spread to other areas. The solution is to not give out details of your travel plans to an incoming caller or email message, no matter how genuine it seems.

If you want to use Property Watch services, phone your

local Police Department yourself.

Not the DMV

Dubious, high-pressure sales people have come up with a sneaky new trick to sell auto insurance — posing as officials from state DMVs (Departments of Motor Vehicles).

Victims receive phone calls saying they've been identified as overpaying for their car insurance. The caller then offers to put them in touch with an insurer who will charge much less.

Sometimes, the scammer also requests additional information about vehicle ownership.

Action: Hang up on this type of call. DMVs don't advise people on insurance rates, don't disclose information to insurers, and don't ask for personal details over the phone.

Watch out too for websites that try to pass themselves off as the DMV or connected with it. They're mainly used for phishing or selling phony services, and they may even turn up in online searches.

Your local DMV office will have an Internet address that ends in ".gov." Anything else is a fake.

And when we say "ends in," that's what we mean. If it ends with something like ".gov.org," it's not the genuine item.

Dating Extortion Threats

Internet dating has turned out to be a great way of meeting new people and potential partners for many people, but, as we've previously highlighted, it's also a flourishing front for scams.

<http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=OtAeW&m=JidIo8p49GtWfo&b=25Xdg3FuoVy69FQZk-PIPOQ>

http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=OtAeW&m=JidIo8p49GtWfo&b=_i1bScaWwtcODB67kAZIQ

Now the Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) says criminals are using dating sites to lure victims into making explicit statements they later regret.

Then the crooks send text messages to victims with links to

what appears to be an unconnected site where their comments have been reproduced.

In some cases, the site appears to be a list of people who cheat on their partners. It may include photos and phone numbers.

In other instances, the site only gives a hint of the information but offers to show what it's got on you for \$9.

Victims are then offered the opportunity to remove all the information for \$99.

Action: First, avoid the sort of online conversations that would land you in this kind of trouble.

But if you do receive this type of threat, report it to IC3 (<http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=OtAeW&m=JidIo8p49GtWfo&b=eq0ag.BEQb7oCk-siTsWVjw>) or local police.

Paying up is unlikely to remove the listing. The crooks will just keep on asking you for more money.

UK Fraud Haul

A frightening indication of the scale and growth of online fraud comes in a recent report from the UK showing that more than \$50 billion is lost to Internet scammers every year.

This accounts for about half of all fraud, according to the (London) Daily Telegraph, and it hits retailers as much as it affects individuals.

In fact, the newspaper reports that the crime is soaring so fast

that police are struggling to stem the tide of online fraud.

The report also highlights a scam feature we frequently report on: crimes targeting older folk.

Seniors forked out over \$5.5 billion on investment scams alone in the past year, says the Telegraph, quoting London Police Commissioner Adrian Leppard.

Finally...

Want to know how easy it is to get information about you on the Internet?

One very popular YouTube video shows some of the ways (caveat: this page is not necessarily G rated):

http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=OtAeW&m=JidIo8p49GtWfo&b=NWtbRgF_U9eZ55Hf_mYoIg

If you want to see it, you can go to YouTube.com and search for: Amazing mind reader reveals his 'gift.'

It's sobering, isn't it?

In a way it takes us back to the item we opened with — photo theft. Not only is the stuff you post online unsafe, but so too is the material on your PC, unless you protect it properly.

That's all for today — we'll see you next week.

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"Life will break you. Nobody can protect you from that, and living alone won't either, for solitude will also break you with its yearning. You have to love. You have to feel. It is the reason you are here on earth. You are here to risk your heart. You are here to be swallowed up. And when it happens that you are broken, or betrayed, or left, or hurt, or death brushes near, let yourself sit by an apple tree and listen to the apples falling all around you in heaps, wasting their sweetness. Tell yourself you tasted as many as you could."

— Louise Erdrich, *The Painted Drum LP*

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— Mahatma Gandhi

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