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New scams, old forms of elder abuse topic of Watch meeting

If someone calls saying they can help with the new Medicare Part D if you give them your Social Security number or if someone claiming to be from Visa says you need a new credit card and they have your credit card number but want the three-digit pin number on the back, hang up.

That's the advice from Anne Goodwin of CRIS Senior Services.

Goodwin was the featured speaker at Monday's Hoopeston Neighborhood Watch meeting. She is coordinator of Project SILENT, which increases public awareness of elder abuse.

Medicare Part D and Visa are two new scams targeting senior citizens, Goodwin said. In each case, the caller hopes to get information that will allow him to steal a senior's identity.

"Make sure you know who you're giving (information) to," Goodwin said. "Preferably not someone calling you."

In Vermilion County, 250 elder abuse cases were reported last year. Of that, about half were substantiated.



GOODWIN

This year, in March alone, 19 reports were made. Statewide, 8,600 reports of abuse were reported in 2005.

The number of elder abuse cases is rising, in part because of unemployment and also because of substance abuse, Goodwin said.

The typical abuser is most often an adult child of the victim. Often, the abuser lives with the victim. While abusers tended to be predominantly men, now an almost equal number of women are abusers, too.

The average victim is a white woman, in her mid-70s, who suffers some type of impairment, whether she is not ambulatory, is incontinent, has hearing or vision problems or dementia. Goodwin said.

Often, there is a history of abuse in the family. Caregivers who were abused as children become abusive to their elderly parents or a wife who lived with an abusive spouse may abuse him when he becomes incapacitated.

Abuse comes in many forms. The one most people think of is physical abuse - inflicting pain or injury on

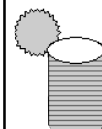
See ABUSE on other side

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If you're interested and you have a great customer service attitude, please apply in person at Hoopeston Regional Health Center, 701 E. Orange Street, Hoopeston, IL 60942.

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Abuse continued from other side

the elderly - but one that is becoming more common is financial exploitation, misusing or withholding an older person's money.

Other types of abuse include sexual abuse (which has a low incidence of occurrence in Vermilion County); emotional abuse, which includes verbal assaults, threats of abuse and intimidation; confinement, restraining or isolating a senior; passive neglect, which is failing to provide life's necessities to an elderly person; and willful deprivation, denying medicine, medical care, shelter, food and other services.

There are indicators for each type of abuse, Goodwin said. For example, passive neglect and willful deprivation may result in the elderly person being disheveled, soiled, malnourished. A senior citizen who is the victim of financial exploitation may say they are unable to afford medicine or food when they seem financially able to pay for them.

Seniors often do not report abuse or do not admit to it when someone else reports it. Often, Goodwin said, seniors are afraid of retribution from the abuser or that they will be put in a long-term care facility.

Abuse is often reported by someone outside the family. In 1999, Illinois passed the Mandatory Reporting law which requires certain people to report suspected abuse. Among those required to do so are those in social

Obituaries

HOLT - Janice M. Holt, 67, of Hoopeston died at 2:20 a.m. Monday, April 3, 2006 at home. Memorial services will be at 11 a.m. Thursday at Brown-Alkire Funeral Home. Burial will be in Floral Hill Cemetery. Visitation will be one hour before services at the funeral home. Memorials are suggested to First Christian Church, 502 E. Main St., Hoopeston, IL 60942.

TESKE—Kenneth P. Teske, 64, of Amarillo, Tex., died at 10:05 a.m. Friday, March 31, 2006 at Odyssey Health Care, Amarillo. Services will be at 11 a.m. Friday at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Woodworth. Burial will be in St. Paul's Lutheran Cemetery, Woodworth. Visitation will be 4-8 p.m. Thursday at Knapp Funeral Home, Cissna Park and 10-11 a.m. Friday at the church. Memorials are suggested to Alpha-1 Association, 275 West St., Suite 201, Annapolis, MD 21401.

work, law enforcement, education and nurses, physicians, psychologists, veterinarians and state employees not covered under any other category.

Anyone may report a suspected case of abuse and may do so anonymously. Those who make reports in good faith are immune from civil and criminal actions and professional disciplinary action.

"It's better to report it and have nothing going on than to have abuse and not report it," she said. "We're not out there to drag people off to jail. Don't be afraid to call."

Attorneys and bankers are not mandated reporters and, in Goodwin's experience, bankers often do not report abuse when they could.

Locally, bankers are good about reporting suspected abuse, said Hoopeston Police Chief Mark Drollinger. "I can think of four cases brought to our attention by bankers," he said.

To combat abuse, CRIS offers several programs including in-home care, transportation, home-delivered meals, victim assistance program and its elder abuse investigation services.

Abuse services are available to any Vermilion County resident who is 60 years or older, who live in a domestic living situation, with allegations that have occurred in the past 12 months and where the abuser is known. Situations like fraudulent telephone scams are not covered, Goodwin said.

For more information, call CRIS Senior Services at (217) 443-2999.

Police News



Donald E. Underwood, 50, of 827 E. Seminary was arrested at 4:54 p.m. Monday at Second Chance Saloon, 102 N. Market. He was charged with disobeying a police officer after police asked him twice to leave. Underwood was released on a notice to appear.

Weather



Mostly sunny today. High 61. Tonight, chance of thunderstorms. Low 42. Tomorrow, thunderstorms. High 65, low 49.

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Andrew, 6 and Kristopher, 1.**

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