

Bank On It!

A publication of the Southern Good Faith Fund Asset Builders program

New Scams That Steal Your Identity And Your Money

Criminals are developing new ways to get your personal information allowing them to assume your identity and access your money.

Here are some of the latest scams to be aware of.

Child Identity Theft. Clean credit and no criminal history make children ideal victims. Criminals use children's names and Social Security numbers to ring up massive debts.

Work-at-Home Scam. After posting a job resume online, you receive an e-mail from a company who wants to hire you to test a money-wiring service. You'll get a check which you are to deposit in your bank account before wiring the money back—and you get to keep a “commission” of 5 to 20

percent for yourself. The company's check is counterfeit, and you're stuck owing your bank all the money you've wired.

Fake Jury Duty Identity Theft. You are called and told that a warrant for your arrest has been issued for not showing up for jury duty. Identity thieves trick you into revealing your Social Security numbers to clear up the matter.

Medicare Drug Discount Card Scams. Some con artists are posing as government officials to try to get your personal information. Others are trying to sell fake discount cards.

Pretexting. Someone calls you claiming to be conducting a survey on behalf of your bank and other financial institutions. Then they'll ask for your per-

sonal information, possibly a PIN number or a checking account number.

IRS Phishing Scam. A scammer sends an e-mail that appears to come from the IRS and claim that you either are due a refund or have tax problems. After redirecting you to a fake IRS Web site, you're asked to provide personal financial information.

Pharming. This is a new trend targeting people who surf the Web. Pharming hackers hack into your computer and implant hidden software that takes you to a copy cat Web site where the criminals have access to credit card numbers and personal information. Installing firewall, anti-virus, and anti-spyware software can help protect you.

Scholarship and Government Grant

Flimflams. Crooks capitalize on the hopes of students and parents alike by claiming that a student has qualified for a government grant or has won a scholarship. The only requirement for the grant or scholarship is you must pay a processing fee, give a Social Security number, or credit card number to hold the award.

Helpful Hints

Remember to keep Social Security numbers and other identification information in a locked file drawer, never in your wallet. To keep yourself from being a victim, follow these general tips:

- If you have to send money to make money, it's most likely a scam.
- Never reveal personal information to someone who has called you on the telephone.
- Buy a paper shredder and shred everything from checking statements to credit card offers.
- Don't respond to e-mails requesting personal information, even if they look official. And never click on a link from an e-mail sender you don't know.
- If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

Source: *Readers Digest Money Alert*, March 2006

A New Perspective Launches a Dream Business

Betty Gray has used both the Asset Builders program and the Business Development Center of Southern Good Faith Fund to launch her photography business, Photography by Betty Gray.

She learned about the Asset Builders Individual Development Account (IDA) from an employee at her bank, First Bank of the Delta. Betty wanted to start her own business, but was short on finances. She realized that a simple task like saving money required some skill and goal setting, so she enrolled in the IDA program.

The IDA economic skills classes helped her set goals and keep an eye on her spending. Her goal was to save enough to fulfill her dream of becoming a professional photographer—a dream given to her by her grandfather when she was a child.

“I thank my granddad who gave me my photographic inspiration and my dad who gave me my first whiff of the

chemicals in his dark room,” says Betty. “The IDA program is a wonderful program for those who dream of owning their own business.

“It gives you just enough to make you feel more confident about the decision

that you are about to make,” she explains. “However, it doesn't just hand you everything that you need, but instead gives you that boost to work harder at getting the things that you need for your business and making it successful.” Would she refer it to anyone else? “Most definitely!”

Betty used her IDA savings to purchase photographic equipment for her business,

Photography by Betty Gray. The vision of becoming a photographer seems to be inherited because Morgan, Betty's 10 year old daughter took her picture featured here.

For more information about Photography by Betty Gray, visit her web site at www.cc-photography.com, or call her at 870-817-0647.



Betty Gray launched her photography business with the help of Asset Builders and the Business Development Center.

Upcoming Classes

Pine Bluff

Classes are held at 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. at the Southern Good Faith Fund office, 2304 W. 29th Ave.

* Free child care at the 6 p.m. class in Pine Bluff on January 31, February 28, and March 28.

April

- 5 Information Meeting
- 13 Financial Services
- 24* Credit Management—Solving Debt Problems

May

- 3 Information Meeting
- 15 Renting, Leasing, or Buying
- 24* Asset Specific Training-Education
- 31* Savers Club

June

- 6 Information Meeting
- 15 Asset Specific Training-Home Ownership
- 26* Money Management

Helena

Classes are held at 10 a.m. (designated by **) and 5:30 p.m. at First Bank of the Delta, 502 Cherry St.

April

- 3** Asset Specific Training-Education
- 3 Money Management
- 13 Information Meeting
- 17** Spending as a Habit—Saving as a Goal
- 17 Financial Services

May

- 8** Credit Management—Solving Debt Problems
- 8 Renting, Leasing, or Buying
- 18 Information Meeting
- 22** Asset Specific Training-Home Ownership
- 22 Asset Specific Training-Education

June

- 5** Money Management
- 5 Spending as a Habit—Saving as a Goal
- 15 Information Meeting
- 19** Financial Services
- 19 Credit Management—Solving Debt Problems

Offices

Pine Bluff

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Helena

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