

## Your grandson is in jail

by BRIAN LOCKHART

Some people have no soul.

When you lock a door, it's for a reason ? it's for honest people.

An honest person, upon finding a locked door, will realize it means that they should not enter. A dishonest person will find a way to get past that lock.

An honest person will come to your home and admire that new gadget you purchased. A dishonest person will come to your home, and think of a way to steal it from you.

Years ago I worked with a guy of questionable virtue. He was an okay guy to work with but at the same time, he had a kind of creepy vibe about him.

One day near quitting time, I asked him if he had plans for the weekend.

He replied that he had to go out that night to steal a car battery because the one in his car had died.

I suggested he go to Canadian Tire and buy one like any normal person would do

His response: ?Why should I pay for one when I can get one for free??

I don't know whether he actually stole a battery and I didn't ask him.

I did, however, make sure to distance myself from him as if he couldn't be trusted around someone else's property, I didn't trust him at all.

I'm pretty sure that guy has been in and out of jail several times over the years and probably complains every time he is arrested ? rather than just making an effort to live a quality life.

Scams have always been a thing, but over the past decade, maybe a little longer, they have been taken to a new level.

Much of the time, it doesn't take a lot to realize someone is trying to pull the wool over your eyes and steal your money.

When you get a call from Revenue Canada, but the official ?agent' is speaking with a thick Indian accent, you're probably not fooled.

I received a call from a lawyer demanding funds for an imaginary fine be paid immediately, or the ?FBI' would be paying me a visit, I laughed and said, ?wrong country', and hung up.

Recently I received an official call from Microsoft, informing me that my computer had been infected with a serious virus and I would need to let him take over my computer and pay a fee to have the virus removed.

This guy, I jerked around a little.

I told him he was calling the maintenance shack at the local golf course. I then pretended to follow his directions, having a little fun myself. Finally, I called him a few inappropriate names and hung up.

The problem is that some of these scammers have taken things to a very sophisticated level.

The 'grandparent scam' is a particularly egregious method of trying to steal someone's money. The criminal calls an elderly person and poses as one of their grandchildren, telling them they have been arrested and need money for legal fees.

Sometimes another person claiming to be someone in law enforcement gets on the phone and says if a sum of money isn't paid immediately for legal reasons, the grandson will be heading off to jail.

Many people have been victims of this scam. They pay the money because they are worried their grandchild is in serious trouble.

It's thought many cases haven't been reported because some people are too embarrassed to admit they fell for it.

What kind of creep would try to scam a senior citizen out of their hard-earned life savings? That's about as low as you can get.

The OPP announced they had arrested 14 members of an organized gang that was targeting seniors with this grandparent scam.

An arrest is not enough. It may temporarily stop this gang from operating, but others will step in and take over.

Unless the courts start taking these cases seriously, it will continue.

The information on the arrests does not say what charges were laid in the case, but presumably, they are fraud-related.

The courts never seem to do much about fraud cases. A slap on the wrist and the criminals are free to roam.

It is horrible that a person is fooled into giving up their life savings in a scam of this sort.

The courts need to set a precedent and slam these 14 fools with some serious penalties and let others know that this will not be tolerated in our society.