

## **CROOK COUNTY AND PROSECUTING ATTORNEY**

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### Scam of the Week

The Scam of the Week is a scam that was actually received or reported to this office. The scam worked like this.

An elderly person received a phone call from a young man who said, "Grandma, do you know who this is?" She mistakenly thought she knew and said, "Of course, it's Jim."

"Jim" went ahead to explain that he was in jail in Canada and needed her to wire him some money for bail. The grandmother was obviously confused because she just saw "Jim" over the weekend and he hadn't mentioned a trip to Canada. When she said that, "Jim" explained that he and some friends had taken a road trip to Canada to go fishing and got into some trouble after drinking too much.

She added that she doesn't have any money (Jim has lots of money!) so why hadn't he called his wife Mary? He said he could only make one phone call so he'd called her. When Grandma said, "Give me Mary's number and I'll call her for you", "Jim" hung up.

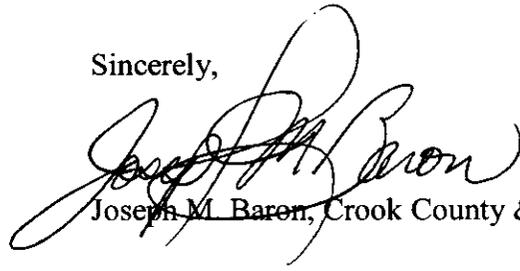
Another very similar scam is a call that the grandchild needs money wired by Western Union, a credit or debit card number or a certified check Fed Ex'ed to pay for a surgery before they will operate, to get a car out of being impounded for a traffic ticket, or car repairs. They will say anything to get you to send money as quickly as possible before you have a chance to think about their story and take advantage of your willingness to rescue your grandchildren.

In this case Grandma protected herself from being defrauded by asking questions, but in other cases like this grandparents have sent money by Western Union to "Jim." By the time they start asking questions and figure out what happened the money is long gone. It is almost always neither traceable nor recoverable.

You can protect yourself from this type of fraud by contacting a local law enforcement officer to verify if "Jim" is actually in jail and by calling "Jim's" parents and family. If Jim is really in jail he will go to court within 72 hours and has the ability to talk to a bondsman to bail him out of jail. When the bondsman calls and is legitimate he will provide you with court documents and the telephone number of the court so that you can verify the charges and the amount of bond necessary for "Jims" release. (If you ever really do post a bond for someone else, read the documents first before you sign them and pay the non refundable bond fee since you could be liable for the entire amount of the bond if the person you bonded out violates the terms of the bond.)

In addition to this scam, I have posted many other scams on the Crook County web site at: <http://www.crookcounty.wy.gov/attorneyscamalerts&information.html>

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph M. Baron". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "B".

Joseph M. Baron, Crook County & Prosecuting Attorney