Law Enforcement
Community Services
Seniors

Triad Newsletter

A Waldo County Joint Venture in Senior Safety

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Look How They Are Scamming Us Now!

Another Scam Involving Tax Services

Now that tax season is here, scammers are looking to steal refunds. People are receiving texts, email and social media messages alerting them that a state or federal tax refund has been processed for them. The message directs them to click on a link and provide personal information to receive the refund. The scammer claims they need your Social Security number to verify your identity and they say they need your bank information to deposit the money in your account. None of this is true.

The website looks very much like the real federal or state tax site. If you give the information, the scammer may be able to collect your refund in your name even if you do not have one due, use your personal information to steal your identity, or open other accounts or to sell your details to other scammers.

You can avoid this scam by:

- Remembering government agencies do not use text messages, emails or social media to send notices. All communication begins with a letter sent through the postal service. Only scammers use other methods hoping you will click on the link without thinking.
- Never click on a link in an unsolicited message no matter where it comes from. In this case, to get any information you need, go directly to the IRS or State of Maine website for information.

Classic Car Scam

A man made an online purchase costing thousands of dollars for what appeared to be a beautifully-restored classic car. The vehicle did not arrive at the anticipated time so he tried contacting the company but got no response. The website said the company was located in Veazie and had been in business there for 15 years. He contacted the local police. They were not familiar with the name of the company. When they visited the address given, they found a building that had been abandoned for years. The police tried calling the classic car business using the number on the website and each time their calls went to voice mail.

The investigation is ongoing. It is suspected that the very nice photos on the website were generated by Artificial Intelligence (A.I.). The "business" may not be in this country. The seller may not even own any of the cars pictured on the site.

This same scam has been being used for some time for online sales of expensive breeds of dogs. It could be used to sell houses or land or other high-cost items that some people are willing to buy without seeing what they are getting. A.I. makes it much easier for scammers to produce very believable websites with very appealing photos. Consumers have to be even more vigilant to keep from being scammed due to the growing use of A.I.

Read about more scams inside ⟶

More Scams

ATM Scams

The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) has issued a warning to consumers about a sharp increase in ATM fraud. Criminals are using a new type of skimmer and wireless "overlays" to steal data from credit and debit cards. The new skimmers go deep into the card slot of an ATM machine so they are fully hidden and the overlay is ultra-thin and goes over the keypad. This allows all the information from the card to be captured. This technology does not alter the appearance of the ATM machine in any way. A single skimmer placed in a busy ATM can capture hundreds of card numbers in a couple of days.

The scammer can print fake cards or go on a spree at other ATMs. Also, the fake cards are easy for a scammer to sell to other thieves.

Although this can happen with any ATM, gas pumps remain the most frequent location for these devices to be placed. Scammers like gas pumps because often the doors to the pumps are not secured so a criminal can readily access the inside of the pump to insert the skimmer. Most pumps do not have modern tamper sensors. Busy gas stations might not even notice a person standing at the pump for a while. Many places with ATMs in the pumps are open 24 hours so there may be no one around all night.

What can consumers do to help protect themselves?

- If you notice a loose card reader, don't use it.
- If the keypad feels a little thicker than normal don't use it.
- Don't use an ATM located in a dimly-lit area.
- Use ATMs in bank lobbies, grocery stores, post offices or other high-traffic areas.
- Monitor your credit and debit card transaction reports.
- If you have the option, tap your card rather than inserting it into a machine.

Many banks are using high-tech fraud detection software to catch unusual transactions at ATMs. When suspicious activity appears, the bank can block the account, contact the owner, and report the fraud to the ATM manufacturer so they can work on strengthening the machines against theft.

The current challenge for scammers is to get a device that will steal information from tap-to-pay cards when used in a machine. They already have portable devices that can pick up the information from any card when they get close to a person carrying a card. Every card gives off a specific radio frequency known as RFID. Its purpose is to let a machine read it when you make a transaction. The portable equipment scammers use looks much like a cell phone. These devices can read card data from a short distance. The card can be in your wallet or pocket and still giving off its frequency. There are wallets that block the radio frequency and there are RFID-blocking sleeves to slip your card into so it is not readable by a scamming device. If you could use a sleeve for you card, Triad has them at all of its events.

Scam Involving the Apple Store

A reader received a text message claiming her Apple ID had been used recently at the Apple Store website for $149.59 through Apple Pay Preauthorization. The message reads: "We have placed those requests on hold to ensure "safest" and security. Not you? Immediately call Apple Support at 1-866-502-1012 to freeze it".

She did not have an Apple ID so knew this was a scam. Note the word "safest" rather than safety in the text. This is likely to have come from someone whose first language is not English. That increases the probability the text was initiated from a foreign country, making the perpetrator hard to find and prosecute.

Thank you

to **Tarratine Tribe #13** for their support in helping Triad to keep Waldo County seniors safer.

More Scams

Grant Scams

There are loads of government grant scams circulating. They may come by phone, email, text or social media. They have some things in common. They may say:

1. you qualify for free money from the government. They will help you apply for it.
2. you can use the money for anything you want including home repairs, personal needs, education, or debts.
3. you need to provide personal information such as your Social Security number.
4. you need to give your bank account number. They say they need this so funds can be deposited.
5. you are required to pay processing or other fees to get the grant.

Here are some things about government grants:

1. They are not awarded to individuals but to organizations.
2. An organization must go through a lengthy process to apply for government funds.
3. Government grants are awarded to an agency for very specific purposes and the organization must provide evidence they are capable of fulfilling all of the requirements of the grant.
4. The government does not go looking for people to award grants to. Organizations must seek grants where their work fits the grant requirements.
5. These grants can never be used for personal needs. However, a government grant may be made so an agency can help many people with personal needs such as food, heat or transportation.
6. This type of grant will require detailed reporting regarding how the funds were used. If funds are not used as originally stated, they can be withdrawn.
7. Government grants do not require payment for processing to receive them.

Package Delivery Scams

Americans are buying a large percentage of their goods online. This provides a new opportunity for scammers. There are a few types of package delivery scams currently being tried.

One is a text claiming to be from a delivery driver working for FedEx or UPS trying to locate your home. They give you a number to call. That should sound odd as the navigation system used by these companies should let them know just where your house is.

Another scam is a text saying the postal service cannot deliver a package because the address used is incomplete. The message instructs you to go to a link and put in your name and address and other information.

Another package delivery scam begins with a text or email saying the postal service needs to reschedule the delivery because there is postage due and they cannot bring the package until the payment is made.

In a fourth example, you get a call the call or text message stating the postal service cannot deliver your package until you pay the delivery tax of $1.99. There is no such thing as a delivery tax.

In all of these instances, there is no package. A con artist is trying to get you to give up personal information and sometimes money, too.

It is important to keep track of what you have ordered, from whom and when it is expected to arrive. Never give out personal information to a stranger even if they say they are from a company you trust. Call the company back using the official customer service number. You need to protect your information and money.

Something To Keep In Mind

If an offer sounds too good to be true, it probably is!

More Scams

Out of Stock Scam

You see a product on social media. You click on the website, order, and pay for it. Soon you get a notice saying the item is out of stock. When you get your credit card bill, you see that it was charged but no refund was given. You call the company but there is no response.

The truth is, the product probably never existed. The scammer hopes you do not notice they did not refund your money.

If you used a credit card, call the card company and tell them you want to contest the charge. They should put the funds back on your card.

If you are not familiar with the company, do some research to learn about it. You can google it and add the word "review" and you may get information about the experiences others have had with the business. Also, you can check the Better Business Bureau website to see if there are complaints.

Know that social media has become the place where you find the most con artists offering products. From some of these sites, you may not get the item shown or you may not get any item at all. Watch for offers that seem too good to be true as they probably are.

Recovery Scams

More and more Americans are falling victim to scams as scammers get more and more sophisticated about their approaches. That means that more and more people are looking for help in recovering from scams. Scammers are ready to help. There are websites claiming to be able to help you to recoup your losses for a fee. Often they pretend to be from a government agency or consumer advocacy group. In reality, they may be the same scammers who took the money in the first place. People are signing up for these recovery services and sending money only to get no service. Now they have lost money twice!

Before you sign up with a recovery service, do some research to find out about the company.

We Will Buy Your Home Scams

If you own your home, you have probably gotten a notice saying "We want to buy your house". The offer might sound appealing, but often it is not in the best interest of the owner.

These operators often target older homeowners. They begin by checking public records for foreclosures, divorces or deaths in an attempt to identify people who may be under financial or emotional stress. They often rely on high-pressure tactics and misleading claims. They will try to create a sense of urgency by saying the time is perfect to sell but this situation won't last long. They also try to develop a sense of security in dealing with them, making the homeowner think the company is really in the know about all things related to selling homes in your area.

They may offer to buy the house "as is". In many cases, they come back demanding that costly repairs be made before the sale can be completed. Late in the game, they might tell you the windows or the heating system must be replaced before the sale can be completed.

If you are thinking of selling your home, find out its true value. Have a lawyer help you before you sign any agreement. Many of these 'we will buy your house" businesses are a way to legally steal your property. Be sure just what you are getting into before you sign anything.

This same type of deal can happen with land, as well. You may get a letter offering to buy a parcel for a given price. When you check the actual selling value, it is likely to be considerably higher than the amount offered.

Pass It Along

People who know about scams are more likely to be able to spot them. Triad asks you to share what you know about scams with your family and friends. Additionally, The Triad board of directors would be pleased to add them to the newsletter list if they have an interest.

Things to Know

Public Health Nurse

Waldo County has a new public health nurse, Megan Harvey. She will provide education for disease prevention, help connect people to various types of health and social services, and conduct community health clinics and screenings. She will work with all age groups from newborns to the elderly. Although Megan has the titled of Belfast Public Health Nurse and is affiliated with MaineHealth-Waldo Hospital, she is available to residents of all towns in Waldo County.

Megan has worked in a variety of capacities within the Belfast hospital including surgery, recovery, and anticoagulation and she is familiar with Waldo County and its services. For more information about services, google Belfast Public Health Nursing or call ***505-4940***.

Shredding and Drug Take-Back Event

Waldo County Triad will hold its annual shredding event on Saturday, April 25 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 pm. at the Belfast Public Works facility on Crocker Road in Belfast. Bring up to three banker boxes of papers containing personal information. That includes old bank and credit card statements, income tax records that are more than 7 years old, and unwanted medical records. If you wish, you can watch them being shredded.

Additionally, bring any outdated or unneeded medications for proper disposal. These can be prescription or over-the-counter drugs. We cannot accept needles or liquids.

The Belfast Lions Club will join Triad. They will be collecting unwanted eyeglasses (in the frames) and hearing aids. They will have these items refurbished and donated to people who cannot afford to buy them.

This is your opportunity to rid your house of things that you no longer need. Also, depending on which items you bring, you may be helping another person or the environment.

The event is free. Donations are accepted.

Triad Board of Directors Meetings

Waldo County Triad is looking for a few new board members. The group develops and carries out programs to help improve the safety of area residents who are 50 years of age or older. If this sounds like something you might like to check out, we invite you to visit the meetings.

Date: Second Wednesday

Time: 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.

Location: Sheriff's office, Belfast

Improving Fitness

If this past long, cold winter kept you sitting more than usual, you might like to consider doing something to improve your level of fitness. If you have access to the internet, you may want to check out the **free** classes available by Zoom from AARP. There are different classes scheduled throughout the day. There is a wide range of offerings. These include:

- Aerobic Workouts
- Improving Balance
- Meditation
- Chair Yoga
- Zumba Dancing
- Strength Training
- Stretching and Flexibility
- Brain Health
- Building Stronger Bones
- Tai Chi

On the website you can find a calendar giving the dates and times of the presentations. The class leaders are all older people and the level of activity is designed to meet the needs of the person who is at least 50 years of age.

You can find the class listings by going to:

seniorplanet.org/fitness

In addition to physical activities, you will find some discussions on topics of interest to older people. Check it out!

Things to Know About Triad

Reflective House Number Signs

Triad sells reflective house number signs at cost. Signs are helpful to first responders as they look for a particular house, especially at night. It also helps delivery persons.

You can set the sign beside the road on a post or you can attach it to a rural mailbox. The cost for the sign is $15.

Send your order to:

Waldo County Triad
6 Public Safety Way
Belfast, ME 04915

Include your phone number so someone can contact you when the sign is ready. If it is helpful, someone can deliver it.

Contact Triad

If you want more information about Triad or its services, visit our website, call or email.

Website: ***waldocountytriad.com***

Phone*: 322-4149*

Email*: triad@waldocountyme.gov*

Friendly Caller Program

Many older Waldo County residents live alone without much contact with others. Triad offers the Friendly Caller program to give seniors a daily connection with the outside world and the opportunity to let someone know they are okay.

Participants call the County Communications Center every morning to have a chat with someone. If the person does not call in, the dispatchers will try calling the house. If there is no answer, they will contact the person designated by the individual to go to the house to check on them. Over the years, several enrolled people have fallen and been unable to get up. This program has been credited with saving lives. To register or to learn more about the program, call ***338-2040***.

RFID Sleeves

RFID card sleeves block the transmission waves that come from credit/debit cards that allow a card reader to take payments. Scammers have a device that can read the data stored on debit/ credit cards. Triad will have protective RFID card sleeves available at coming events. Be sure to pick one up.

Supporting Waldo County Triad

Triad is an all-volunteer organization. Funds are used entirely to support programs. Most services are free so that everyone can take part. If you would like to donate to Triad to help support a particular effort, below are the costs of three Triad services:

- Newsletter - $6 per year
- File of Life - $1.50 each
- Carbon monoxide/smoke detectors - $40 each

The cost of Triad's drug collection, daily call-in and 911 cellphone programs are all donated by member agencies.

To make a donation to help continue what Triad does, make a check payable to: **Waldo County Triad** and send it to:

Waldo County Triad
6 Public Safety Way
Belfast, ME 04915

File of Life

Triad offers a free medical information packet called a File of Life. It should be kept on your refrigerator door in the event of a medical emergency. It comes with a smaller version to keep in your wallet. Emergency responders are familiar with the File and look for it upon arrival. This packet can save the responders time as all the information they need to start helping you is in that packet. To receive a File of Life,

call: ***322-4149*** or

email: **triad@waldocountyme.gov**

If you have a File of Life with many edits, we can provide both large and small replacement inserts.

Community Opportunities

Triad Shredding and Drug Collection

Save the date of Saturday, April 25, 2026 and start gathering unwanted medications and all that paper that should be shredded.

Saturday, April 25
Belfast Public Works Building
Crocker Road, Belfast
10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Bring any unwanted hearing aids or eyeglasses, too. The Belfast Lions Club will have these items refurbished and given to those who could use them.

Dining at the YMCA

Date: Last Wednesday of the month
Start Time: 11:30 a.m.
Location: YMCA
157 Lincolnville Ave., Belfast
Registration: Call ***338-4598***
(Please register so they have the right amount of food for those attending.)

Waldo County Pet Food Pantry

To help older people keep their pets, the Waldo County Pet Food Pantry accepts donations of pet food, new or used leashes, bowls or other pet items. There is a drop box located near the door of the VFW hall on Field Street in Belfast.

To receive pet food, the pantry is open on the **first** Wednesday and the **third** Saturday of each month from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. (Come only once per month.) A rabies certificate is required for each cat or dog.

The Commons and Colorbridge

The Commons is hosting a **free** drop-in art and craft opportunity for adults. Choose to work with their materials or bring your project. All abilities are welcome. Bridget Matros will be on hand to help with expressive art activities. This is a chance to strengthen your skills, relax and meet new friends.

Date: Second and fourth Thursdays
Time: 10:00 a.m. - noon
Location: The Commons, 15 Main St., Belfast

Searsport Senior Drop-In Center

The Searsport Senior Drop-In Center is open to anyone. There are games, Bingo, a free light lunch and a presenter offering information of interest to seniors.

Date: Third Wednesdays
Time: 9 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Location: Former Lions Clubhouse
44 Prospect St.
Searsport

Belfast Community Works' Repair Cafe

Volunteers offer to repair items free of charge or at cost if you need new parts.

They have sewing machines and can repair clothes or other fabric items that need mending. They work on small appliances and bring commonly needed replacement parts. (If you have the replacement parts, bring them.) They also do basic bicycle repair and maintenance.

Date: Third Saturday of the month
Time: 9 - noon
Location: YMCA
157 Lincolnville Ave., Belfast

Winterport Senior Citizens Group

The Winterport Senior Citizens Group invites all seniors for socialization, fun, information and a potluck lunch.

Date: First and third Tuesdays
Time: 10:00 a.m.
Location: They have moved their meetings to a different building. The new location is:

Winterport Baptist Church
100 Coles Corner Road

Contact: ***713-1716*** for questions
For Information on events: go to Winterport Community and Event Group.

Waldo County Triad is a partnership of
seniors, law enforcement, and local organizations dedicated to
improving the safety of people 50 and older in their homes and communities
through education and service.

Triad Phone Number: 322-4149
email: triad@waldocountyme.gov

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Spring 2026

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- Owen Smith
- Jessica Sullivan
- Evie Tinker
- Hillary Waterman

Waldo County Triad programs are open to all residents who are age 50 or older.

To change your mailing address or to add or remove a name to this mailing list,
call Waldo County Triad at *322-4149* or email at triad@waldocountyme.gov

Change Service Requested

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6 Public Safety Way
Belfast ME 04915

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