

# NATI NEWSWIRE

## SENIOR SAFETY ISSUES

### Man who cheated elderly gets 42 years in prison

By [Heather Ratcliffe](#)

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

St. Louis — Few crimes could be worse than preying on the elderly, Judge David Mason told a convicted con man Friday before sentencing him to 42 years in prison.

T.C. McGee, 67, of Memphis, Tenn., had posed as a police detective to cheat three victims out of money. A St. Louis Circuit Court jury convicted him Sept. 5 of kidnapping, robbery, impersonating police and stealing.

One victim had picked pictures of McGee and another man as the two who got into her car and coerced her to drive to multiple bank locations to withdraw money.

Mason heard testimony Friday from a frail victim who wept in her wheelchair at the loss of her life savings. She said her doctor doubled her blood pressure medicine because of the stress. "I lost thousands of dollars," she said, her voice shaking.

Another woman testified about her mother, a victim who is now afraid to leave her house. The judge told McGee: "You took advantage of the elderly's instinct to trust police officers. In this case, the crimes are severe." McGee told the court he wished he could apologize. "But I'm not the gentleman who perpetrated this crime," he insisted.

One of the victims was cheated by a man using the name "Callahan," officials were told. Detectives who arrested McGee in August 2005 found a fake police badge in his pocket and an ID card with his picture under the name "Richard Callahan."

McGee also carried a piece of paper with the name and phone number of an 81-year-old victim in his breast pocket, officials said.

A second suspect, 50, was acquitted in September by the same jury. Police said he had a "private detective" badge and handcuffs but carried nothing to link him to the victims.

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### Writing text for older adults

You know what you want to say. You've decided that the best way to say it is with printed material. Now you ask, "What do I need to know about writing for older adults?"

Researchers on cognitive aging say that as people age there may be changes in how they read and interpret information. Older people may have to work harder to:

- process information quickly, such as recalling new facts and interpreting charts;
- understand text that is densely packed with new ideas or contains complex syntax;
- draw inferences;
- solve new problems;
- manipulate different types of information at the same time; and
- focus on important new information without being distracted by irrelevant details.

Older adults also may be less able to change their long-held opinions to accept new information, a skill scientists call cognitive flexibility.

In addition, older adults may have a hard time remembering the context or source of information.

### Find out more!

To preview, download or print Making Your Printed Health Materials Senior Friendly go to:

<http://www.nia.nih.gov/HealthInformation/Publications/srfriendly.htm>

You can also order a free print copy:

\* Order online at:

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\* Call the NIA Information Center at 1-800-222-2225, OR

\* E-mail us at [NIAIC@nia.nih.gov](mailto:NIAIC@nia.nih.gov)

## Norfolk police charge 2 with scamming elderly on repairs

The Virginian-Pilot—NORFOLK

Police have arrested two people in connection with a home repair scam and are hoping to find people who may have been victims.

A man and woman approached elderly residents and told them that their homes had water or termite damage, according to a police news release.

The couple required the residents to give the money up front and accept a check for payment, police wrote in the release. The couple then cashed the checks and disappeared.

Timothy Shawn Levine, 31 of the 1600 block of Sunset Drive, and Keaton Taylor, 28, of the 2200 block of E. Ocean View Ave., both were charged with two felony counts of obtaining money by false pretenses and conspiracy to commit a felony. Police are asking anyone with information or who may have been a victim of the scam to call the Economics Crime unit at (757) 664-7018.

## Stop fundraising, N.C. group is ordered

Maryland's secretary of state on Thursday ordered the National Organization of Deputy Sheriffs to immediately stop all fundraising in the state, contending that the North Carolina-based organization has committed nine violations of state charity regulations.

According to the state, violations include misleading potential contributors, implying that the state has endorsed the organization, using unregistered professional solicitors, submitting false statements to the state and misrepresenting the reasons why funds are being solicited.

Citizens may contact the secretary of state's charities division at 410-974-5534 or 800-825-4510 to report suspicious charitable solicitations or to inquire about charitable organizations before they make contributions.

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## Web Site of the Month:

**National Crime Victims' Rights Week will be observed Sunday, April 13 – Saturday, April 19, 2008.**

The 2008 NCVRW Resource Guide is anticipated to be mailed to the field by the end of the 2007 calendar year. In it, recipients will find a variety of tools to enhance their communities' public awareness efforts regarding victims' rights and issues.

This year's Guide contains sample speeches, statistical overviews, customizable public awareness posters, camera-ready artwork on CD-ROM in black and white and in color, and the 2008 NCVRW Theme DVD, which underscores this year's theme: Justice for Victims. Justice for All.

OVC shares your mission and has a wide range of resources to help you accomplish it.

[Visit the National Criminal Justice Reference Service \(NCJRS\)](http://www.ncjrs.gov) online at [www.ncjrs.gov](http://www.ncjrs.gov) to register for services or to find out more.

Sign up by December 31 to ensure that you receive your free copy of the 2008 NCVRW Resource Guide and 2008 NCVRW Theme Poster, please sign up at [http://puborder.ncjrs.gov/listservs/subscribe\\_NCVRW.asp](http://puborder.ncjrs.gov/listservs/subscribe_NCVRW.asp).

For more information about the 2008 NCVRW, visit [www.ovc.gov/ncvrw](http://www.ovc.gov/ncvrw).

## Funding Opportunity for your Program

RMS and NATI provide funding opportunities for Triads, Domestic Violence, and other projects.

To participate, RMS requests that your organization collect used cell phones and contact them at:

**911CellphoneBank.com or [terrih@sheriffs.org](mailto:terrih@sheriffs.org)**

RMS pays for shipping phones to them and returns usable cell phones to: law enforcement, senior programs, and domestic violence organizations—to provide cell phones to those in need in your community. Salable phones are recycled, with funds being returned to your organization. Contact RMS or NATI today.

1450 Duke Street, Alexandria, VA 22314  
800-424-7827 phone 703-519-8567 fax  
[triad@sheriffs.org](mailto:triad@sheriffs.org) [www.nationaltriad.org](http://www.nationaltriad.org)



More Senior Safety related articles are located at [www.nationaltriad.org](http://www.nationaltriad.org); e-news section

TRIAD's Guardian Alert systems keeping seniors safe

Heather Bell

RADFORD - Guardian Alert systems, which allow seniors to alert and speak to emergency personnel with the touch of a pendant worn around their necks, are making their way into the homes of Radford senior, thanks to the city's TRIAD program.

TRIAD, a consortium of Radford agencies and organizations providing services to seniors, was recently awarded grant funds to provide 20 of the alert systems to seniors free of charge, but Sheriff Mark Armentrout, who heads up Radford's TRIAD group with Radford Department of Police Chief Gary Harmon and others, said Wednesday he found additional funds to cover 10 more units.

"The need was definitely there, and we wanted to make sure everyone who needed one of these units got one," Armentrout said. "We are so grateful we were finally awarded these funds after three years of trying."

Radford's TRIAD program was recently awarded \$2,750 in grant funds from the Virginia Office of the Attorney General to pay for the Guardian Alert systems.

"It's terrific we were able to provide this service for people who need it," Armentrout said, adding he and other members of his department are personally installing each system in the recipient's home.

"It takes just a few minutes, so we're going to each of their homes and getting them set up and installed properly and making sure everybody knows how to use it," Armentrout said.

Jerry Viers, one of the recipients of the Guardian Alert pendant system, said Friday he is very grateful for it, and for the Radford City Sheriff's Office for coming to his home and installing the system. Viers said since he suffered a stroke last April, and has no family or friends to rely on, having the Guardian Alert system has given him something to depend on. He recalled a time a few months ago when he fell in his bathtub and it just barely got himself righted and out of the tub.

"I've had a hard time since my stroke, and having this really gives me peace of mind," he said. "I could never have afforded this myself, so it is really nice that I was able to get it for free. This is really so helpful, and having it installed for me

was extra nice. They showed me how to use it, and I can just put it around my neck and help is there if I need it. The sheriff's office does a wonderful job."

Viers is also a recipient of daily Good Morning Radford calls from the RCSO, a well-being daily phone call check of some of the city's seniors. RCSO Administrative Assistant Shonna Williams, who makes the majority of those daily phone calls, said installation of the Guardian Alert systems began last week and should be completed by the start of the New Year.

Armentrout leads a monthly TRIAD meeting at the Radford Senior Center with seminars for senior on issues including fraud, scams, identity theft and elder abuse and says about 15-20 seniors now attend each month's meeting, and the number of attendees has risen each month since the meetings began.

According to the Virginia Office of the Attorney General, the TRIAD partnership in Virginia "protects our growing elderly population. With the support of the local sheriffs, police chiefs and the AARP, TRIAD works to keep older Virginians informed of their rights."

"A major purpose of TRIAD is to develop, expand and implement effective crime prevention and education programs for older Virginians," states a synopsis of the program on the OAG website.

"TRIAD works at the local level to improve the quality of life for seniors by providing an active exchange of information between local law enforcement and seniors. The program was established when three national organizations - the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), and the National Sheriffs' Association (NSA) - agreed that the elderly could better be protected by cooperative efforts."

The Radford TRIAD group meets monthly at the Radford Senior Center on the second Wednesday of each month at 10:30 a.m. All senior citizens are welcome to attend.

1450 Duke Street, Alexandria, VA 22314  
800-424-7827 phone 703-519-8567 fax  
triad@sheriffs.org www.nationaltriad.org



More Senior Safety related articles are located at [www.nationaltriad.org](http://www.nationaltriad.org); e-news section