

Staying Safe Doesn't Get Any Easier

An Anniversary of sorts

June, 2023 - A neighbor calls, asking for help with a computer issue. Responding, it's clear that the PC has been compromised. Our friend has fallen victim to a Tech. Support scam. Money has been lost, trust violated and personal security shaken. Having recovered the PC to safe operation, we were asked to write up an anonymous version of the event. It became the first in this ongoing series.

Since then

At least one senior threat article a month has been published in *Solera Connections*. Still others have appeared on the *Solera Today* website. While the author is pleased to share information regarding the increasing number of senior directed threats, it's regrettable that this should be necessary.

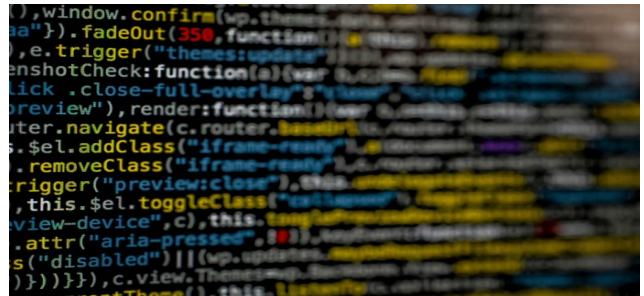
In that 24 month period, those whose job it is to gather such information tell us that perhaps \$50 billion has been stolen from folks who trusted too much and talked to strangers. It's easier to ignore these numbers than the ones we know about personally, e.g. the \$600 a Solera neighbor recently had stolen via a Venmo scam, the \$800 lost to a tech. support scam and the \$1,600 sent as part of a grandparent scam, etc. Are there others? (Rhetorical question).

An Ugly Reprise

The Tech. Support Scam, while onerous, is usually easy to defeat if the scammer's chief weapon, **URGENCY**, is disarmed. A deep breath, a call to a trusted friend or vendor and things are easily resolved. If contact with the scammer is made, not so much.

The Grandparent Scam remains one of the most insidious of attacks. Relying on the love we have for our offspring, those without souls

have put together an ever more effective set of tools to make our lives miserable. Briefly, when a call comes in from your *grandson*, requesting bail money and begging you not to tell Mom & Dad, you've been targeted by the Grandparent Scam. Protection from this requires some proactive steps. Check here for some sound advice.
<https://solera.today/scam-lib/gp-scam.pdf>.



The Pig Butchering Scam, a morphing of the Elder Romance Scam makes one wonder how humans(?) can consider themselves human while inflicting this kind of pain. And there are victims on both ends of this crime against basic decency. The author urges readers to visit <https://solera.today/safe.php>.

Now, we are inundated with scam attempts that seem silly but must work for someone. The Unpaid Toll, the Tariff Fee, the Brushing scam are all part of what it's like to be a senior these days. A Las Vegas woman started logging scam calls and as of this writing, has amassed 948 of them this year. Yes, that number's correct. Probably well over 1,000 as you read this.

Stay tuned, it's unlikely we'll run out of material.

Do we need to say it? Don't talk to strangers!

Any Comments, clarifications or questions should be directed to the author at jgf6217@gmail.com.
Written by Joe Fitzpatrick