



BUSINESS WATCH NOTIFICATION



There have been several incidents of criminals attempting scams around the Richmond Metro area in the past several months. The scam is known as the "pigeon drop" and usually targets the senior population. Some of them have been successful, but most of them have not. The scam has been presented in several different variations but most recently the attempted scam was conducted like the following. It occurred in the parking lot of a Hanover Retailer near the intersection of Bell Creek Road and Mechanicsville Turnpike.

A white Lincoln Navigator with chrome rims and a large sunroof entered the parking lot and stopped. One black male exited the vehicle (suspect 1). The driver of the vehicle (suspect 2) parked two rows over, exited the vehicle and walked toward suspect 1 as he approached a female (victim) as she was exiting her vehicle, suspect 1, a well dressed black male in his 30's to 40's, approached her stating he found a package but was unable to read the writing on the package. Suspect 1 asked the victim several times what he should do with the package and finally unzipped it exposing what appeared to be a "big stack of \$100 bills". At that time, suspect 2, a black male in his 30's to 40's, walked by the victim. Suspect 1 told him to come over and asked him what he should do with this package that he had found. Suspect 2 advised them that he was in the "financial business" and that his office was just up the road. He suggested that the victim take the two black males to his office where they could all split the money. The victim declined.

The scam could be attempted like the ones below have where the possible victims have been approached in retail parking lots:

A black female stated she found a purse with a large amount of cash. The victim gave the suspect a ride to another retail store. After which she found \$550 stolen from her wallet when she arrived home.

A black female stated she found \$100,000 inside a wallet and wanted to know if it belonged to the victim. The victim gave the suspect a ride to unknown location.

A black male helped the victim place bags in her vehicle and stated he found \$175,000 inside a wallet. The victim gave the suspect a ride to another retail store where the suspect asked her if she wanted to split the reward for finding the wallet. The victim declined.

An unknown male stated he found \$89,000 inside a wallet and wanted to know if it belonged to the victim. When the victim declined the money, the suspect wanted the victim to prove that he did not need the money.

The attached link describes the original "pigeon drop" scam very well.

http://www.crimes-of-persuasion.com/Crimes/InPerson/MajorPerson/pigeon_drop.htm

Please understand there are many variations to scams and criminals are modifying their tactics every day. Please remember if it sounds too good to be true it probably is and you never get something for nothing. Follow your instincts and remove yourself from the situation sooner versus later. Later might be too late. Just say no!

Investigator Dover investigates these types of crimes if you have any information you would like to pass on please contact him at 804-365-6281

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