

A Program with the  
Colorado Attorney General  
and the AARP Foundation

Winter 2008

Issue 18

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*Our mission is to provide education and assistance to older consumers who need help with fraud, scams and financial exploitation.*



*Special thanks to the Colorado Attorney General's Office and the AARP Foundation for their ongoing commitment to consumer protection*



Allison Carver

Prior to joining our team Allison was a policy analyst for Florida's Agency for Health Care Administration, she worked in the Florida Legislature, and was a case manager for adults with developmental disabilities. However, Allison grew to love AARP while completing her graduate internship with AARP Florida. Allison has a degree in International Affairs and Political Science from Florida State University.

Prior to joining the ElderWatch team, Darnetta worked for AARP in Washington, DC with the Integrated Voice Management Department. She enjoys volunteering for various programs such as Bread for the City and Meals on Wheels. She organized transportation activities and general assistance for the elders and home-bound members of her church in Washington, DC. Darnetta has a degree in Business Administration from Strayer University. Please help me welcome Allison and Darnetta, we are very lucky to have them at ElderWatch.

**New Year! New Staff!** *By Program Leader, Amy Nofziger*

I'm so excited to announce the addition of two new AARP ElderWatch team members. Allison Carver joined us as the new Program Coordinator and Darnetta Adams as the Program Assistant. They both bring excitement, valuable experience, and a passion for making a difference in the lives of older Coloradans.

Prior to joining our team Allison was a policy analyst for Florida's Agency for Health Care Administration, she worked in the Florida Legislature, and was a case manager for adults



Darnetta Adams

## AARP ElderWatch 2007 Highlights

- Volunteers donated over 900 hours and provided direct service to over 6300 consumers
- ElderWatch hosted 5 free *Fight Fraud-Shred Instead* shredding events across Colorado
- Distributed over 1500 *Secure your Signature* pens and brochures
- ElderWatch educated seniors about the February 17, 2009 digital TV transition
- Educated more than 3500 consumers on recognizing signs of fraud
- Received 30,000 hits to the AARP ElderWatch website
- More than 200 consumers signed up to receive fraud alerts

1-800-222-4444

[www.aarpelderwatch.org](http://www.aarpelderwatch.org)

AARP ElderWatch  
1301 Pennsylvania St. Suite 280, Denver, CO 80203  
1-800-222-4444  
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## If It Sounds Too Good To Be True, It Is!

*Fred Joseph, Colorado Securities Commissioner*

In 1920, Charles Ponzi promised investors a 50% return on their money in 45 days or 100% in 90 days. Today, we have individuals that offer outrageous returns in order to steal other people's money.

- In December, Ronald McLain was convicted for cheating investors in Pueblo out of more than \$500,000 and sentenced to six years in prison.
- Also in December, Mark Blakemore pled guilty to securities fraud and theft and was sentenced to nine years in prison. He stole \$1.8 million from a group of schoolteachers in Boulder.

Here are some other techniques that are used:

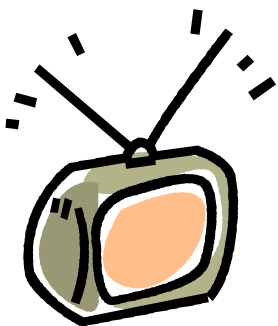
**Expectation of Large Profits.** Con artists will often tout great returns that will interest an investor, but not so large as to make the investor skeptical.

**Low Risk.** Some scammers are so blatant as to suggest that the investment involves no risk.

**Urgency.** "You have to invest right now." "This opportunity will not exist tomorrow." These statements are made in order to convey urgency and to separate an investor from his money as quickly as possible.

**Confidence.** That is why they call them "con men." They sound confident about what they are talking about and they gain an investor's confidence.

Sign onto the Colorado Division of Securities' website at [www.dora.state.co.us/securities](http://www.dora.state.co.us/securities) and play the *Avoiding Investor Scams Game*. It is informative and entertaining.



### Digital Television Transition Update- February 17, 2009 is coming fast! Are you ready?

As you may know, on February 17, 2009 federal law requires that all full-power television broadcast stations stop broadcasting in analog format and broadcast only in digital format. This change will affect those who receive free over-the-air television through either a rooftop broadcast antenna or "rabbit ears" attached to their sets. In order to continue watching over-the-air television after this date, viewers will need either a television with a digital tuner or a digital-to-analog converter box connected to an analog TV.

TV converter box coupons are now available! For more information log on to [www.dtv.gov](http://www.dtv.gov) or call 1-888-CALL-FCC.

### Play it Safe- Test your Consumer Smarts!

**Q. The three day cooling off rule allows a consumer to cancel a contract within three days for the purchase of the following:**

- A. Automobile
- B. Anything sold to me in my home under \$25
- C. Real Estate, securities, or insurance
- D. None of the above

**A. None of the above- In Colorado, the rule does not cover automobiles, contrary to popular opinion.**

**And it only covers items over \$25.00 in value that are sold in your home.**

**Q. Once you subscribe to the Colorado No Call or National Do Not Call list, all calls from solicitors must cease.**

*True or False*

**A. False- There are four exemptions from the No Call List:**

- Charities and non-profits
- Politicians and political parties
- Anyone conducting a survey
- Anyone with whom you have a business relationship, or with whom you had a business relationship in the previous 18 months.

**Q. As long as you don't send any money, playing sweepstakes is harmless entertainment.**

*True or False*

**A. False- Every time you play you put your personal information into more hands and on more marketing lists.**

For more *Play it Safe* quizzes, please visit our website at [www.aarpelderwatch.org](http://www.aarpelderwatch.org)



A Program with the Colorado Attorney General and the AARP Foundation

**Sign up for free Fraud Alerts**

Phone: 800-222-4444 - Option 2

Fax: 303-831-6217

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