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Date: February 19, 2014
Time: 4 P.M.
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Pigeon Drop – Alive and Well

WINTER HAVEN – The Winter Haven Police Department is warning the public that schemes involving a found wallet in parking lots containing large sums of money is a scam and innocent victims are being taken for a their own hard-earned dollars. Dubbed the “Pigeon Drop”, this crime targets elderly people, mostly who are alone walking through a parking lot. These victims want to help the supposed owner of the “found wallet”, but end up being conned by these criminals.

On 2-14-14, Winter Haven Police detectives opened an investigation concerning an elderly victim who was approached near her car at Big Lots in Winter Haven. The 68 year-old female was approached by two females who said they found a wallet containing a substantial amount of money in front of the victim’s car. The suspects are described as follows: suspect one-black female, 55-68 years old, 5’02”, 150-160 pounds with a medium complexion and partially gray hair; suspect two-black female, 25 – 35 years old, 5’04”. 140-160 pounds with black hair.

The older suspect went back into the store in what she said was an attempt to contact store employees to see if anyone asked about a lost wallet. The younger suspect stayed with the victim in an apparent attempt to confuse her. When the older suspect exited the store, she told the victim that nobody reported a lost wallet and that the store called Police, but no report of a lost wallet was received.

The suspects ended up convincing the victim to withdraw money from her bank through the ATM. They ended up at Belk’s (Citi Center) supposedly to speak with the younger suspect’s boss to get advice on what to do with the wallet. The younger suspect walked up to the building. When she came back, she instructed the victim to go meet with a man, who she described as her boss. The victim complied and when she exits the store, the suspects are gone – along with the victim’s money. The man described by the suspect was not located inside of the store.

Citizens must always question any motive of someone who supposedly found property and needs help in order to “locate the owner.” An easy thing for citizens to do would be to offer to contact Police right then in order to make a report so the rightful owner can be located immediately. More than likely the suspects will flee. Spread the



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word – don't fall victim to these scams. Winter Haven Police Detectives continue to investigate this incident.

Anyone with information is asked to call Detective Larry Brooks at 863-291-5620.