

Is this the end of the trailer story?

Letter to the Editor:

Several articles have been written in the FAN about a stolen dump trailer that was located but could not be returned to its rightful owner. I am the rightful owner. Several individuals have asked me about the situation, and I would like to explain.

I bought the trailer several years ago from Bowen-Fischer Motors and used it for my lawn care business. I registered the trailer with the Secretary of State's office and purchased a "lifetime" license plate for it, using the VIN number supplied by the seller.

Four years ago, the trailer, my boat, and much of my lawn care equipment was stolen from my yard in Crockery Township. There were several witnesses in the neighborhood, and the thefts were reported to the Ottawa Sheriff's Department.

Then last fall, I was driving along Airline Road with my wife, and saw a dump trailer for sale at Landscape Supplies. Both of us thought we recognized the trailer as the one we had purchased, so I got out of the car to look it over more carefully. A person came out to talk to me (I assume it was the owner of the business.) about the trailer. He said he had taken it in trade from a contractor who was unable to pay his bill. He said he had put new tires on it, painted it, and that the trailer had been taken to New Orleans for awhile.

Several identifying features about the trailer convinced me that it is the one I had owned. The trailer has a complete roll-back cover across the top. My nephew had had to weld a section of the roller for me, and he can recognize his own welding job. My son, my brother-in-law, and several others can also identify it as the trailer I owned. The VIN number had been scratched off, however.

A few days later, I saw two Norton Shores police officers sitting in their car in the parking lot at Landscape Supplies, which was closed. I spoke with them about the trailer. They said they could not do anything, but I should contact the Ottawa County Sheriff's Office since that's where the theft occurred.

The next day, I contacted the Ottawa County Sheriff's office. The deputy took my complaint and she spoke with the owner of Landscape Supply. She told him that it had come back as stolen.

He moved the trailer to the back of his property, removed the tires (putting them on some trucks) and put the trailer up on blocks. I do not know if he also removed the battery.

My son, a State Police Trooper, told me that there is another location for a VIN number that manufacturers put in a special place. I told the deputy about that and she contacted H & H, the trailer manufacturer. When she went back to Landscape Supply to verify the number, the VIN in that special location was different from the one on my title.

The deputy then told me that there is nothing she can do, because the man who owns the trailer now needs it for his business.

Remember, he had the trailer for sale in front of his business.

Meanwhile, I lost the use of the trailer for my own business for four years. I also lost the license plate and the lawn care equipment (which neighbors had seen loaded into the trailer at the time it was stolen.)

We read about stolen merchandise having been recovered, we read about thieves being apprehended. We also need to read about victims with no recourse.

— William Weimer, Fruitport

Township board approves DPW building

By Mary Weimer

At the February 27, 2012 township board meeting, the Fruitport Township board approved the bid for a new public works facility. Lowest bidder, Hughes Builders, was awarded the contract at a price of \$537,847. The facility will be constructed on East Broadway Avenue. •

Jury duty scammers

(Courtesy, North Ottawa County Council on Aging)

"Enough people skip out on their civic duty that a new and ominous kind of fraud has surfaced. The caller claims to be a jury duty coordinator. If you protest that you never received a summons for jury duty, the scammer asks you for your social security number and date of birth so he can verify the information and cancel the arrest warrant. If you offer any of this information, your identity has just been stolen.

"This fraud scheme has been reported in 11 states. The perpetrators use intimidation to bully people into giving information by pretending they are with the court system. The FBI and the federal court system have issued nationwide alerts on their websites warning consumers about the fraud. Check it out at www.fbi.gov or www.snopes.com.

"PLEASE, NEVER, EVER give financial information out over the phone if the call was generated by someone else." •

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babies online

Your Baby - 11 Weeks Pregnant

Your baby's organ systems are now functioning and he has a skeleton, nerves and blood circulation. Your baby's tiny feet are fully formed and shaped and could stand on an adult's fingernail. The most critical part of baby's development is now over, and the remainder of the pregnancy is about rapid growth, organ maturation and getting ready for delivery. In fact, your baby grows so quickly now that he will start out this week being approximately 21 - 25 mm or 0.85 - 1.0 inches and by the end of the week will be 44 - 51 mm or 1.75 - 2.0 inches and weigh approximately 7 grams! Your baby's head is about 1/2 of his body length. The baby's eyelids are fused now and the irises are developing. Your baby will begin to get baby teeth, fingernails, toenails and hair follicles this week, too.

Information taken from:
<http://www.babiesonline.com/pregnancy>

This time next year your baby will be 23 Weeks Old!