

**What You'll
Find Inside
This Issue:**

2 4 Steps to Take if Your
Identity Has Been Stolen

Glossary

Financial Facts

Financial Funnies

3 Recipe for Success

Tapping into the Power of
Technology to Boost Security

Notable Quotables

4 L&M is Helping in
the Community

Resources to Help You

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information
about L&M's
services or to
schedule an annual
review, just fill out
the enclosed,
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L&M Profile



L&M "We Show Up!"

L&M Financial representatives have been providing benefit programs and financial services to individuals, families, and small businesses since 1972, and through their affiliation with Securities America, Inc. since 2007. But we're not simply a team of financial planners managing money. We are trusted advisors, life coaches, and loyal partners. We truly care about our clients' well being. And we strive to build long-term relationships with each and every one of them. In other words, "we show up." By showing up, we help our clients make smart financial decisions – so they can enjoy life and focus on what matters most.

Through our offices in Buffalo and Rochester, our nearly 100 employees and representatives, and the latest in technology, we offer our clients guidance that is consistent with their goals for the future. For more information, contact us at 716-839-1234 or 800-326-8410, or visit us online at www.lmfs.net.

How to Protect Yourself Against Identity Theft

An estimated 17.6 million people ages 16 or older were victims of identity theft in 2014, according to the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics. Most victims discovered the theft when a financial institution contacted them about suspicious activity, or when they noticed fraudulent charges on an account. Unfortunately, the majority of identity theft victims didn't know how the offender obtained their information.

How can you guard against this happening to you? While you can't eliminate the risk of identity theft, there are some steps you can take to protect yourself:

Step #1: Secure information offline.

- Keep your financial documents and records locked in a safe place at home. Also, lock your wallet or purse in a safe place at work.
- When you go out, take only the identification, credit, and debit cards you need. Leave your Social

Security card at home.

- Before sharing personal information at work, at a medical office, or with your child's school, ask why they need it and how they will protect it.
- Tear up or shred credit card statements; ATM, credit, or debit card receipts; bank deposit receipts; loan solicitations; and other similar documents.
- Destroy labels on prescription bottles before throwing them out.
- Take outgoing mail to the post office and promptly remove mail when it arrives. Request a hold on your mail if you'll be gone for several days. Don't have new checks mailed to your home.

Step #2: Secure information online.

- Shop only on secure websites.



To ensure a site is secure, check the bottom of your browser for an image of a lock or look for "https" in the address bar.

- Never give out personal information on the phone, through the mail, or over the Internet to someone claiming to represent your bank, credit card issuer, a government agency, a charity, or other organization. If you're skeptical, contact the company directly to confirm their claims.
- Use encryption software that

Glossary

Credit Reporting Agency

A company that collects and maintains historical information pertaining to credit experiences on individuals or businesses.

Federal Trade Commission

A federal agency that administers anti-trust and consumer protection legislation in order to establish free and fair competition in the marketplace.

Identity Theft

The unauthorized use or attempted use of existing credit cards; the unauthorized use or attempted use of other existing accounts; or the misuse of personal information to obtain new accounts or loans, or to commit other crimes.

Identity Theft Resource Center

A nonprofit national organization that educates consumers, businesses, and agencies on best practices for fraud and identity theft detection and protection, as well as provides assistance to identity theft victims.

National Criminal Justice Reference Service

A federally funded resource offering justice and drug-related information to support research, policy, and program development.

U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics

A federal government agency within the Department of Justice responsible for collecting, analyzing, and publishing data relating to crime in the U.S.

4 Steps to Take if Your Identity Has Been Stolen

Identity theft is a major concern for many Americans. What should you do if yours is stolen? Take these 4 steps immediately:

Step #1: Call the companies directly affected.

For example, if you know your credit card was stolen, report the theft to the credit card issuer. Ask for their Fraud Department and explain that someone stole your identity. Also, change all your user names and passwords for online accounts.

Step #2: Put a fraud alert on your credit reports.

Contact one of the three credit bureaus. By law, that company is required to tell the other two.

- Equifax.com, 1-888-766-0008
- Experian.com, 1-888-397-3742
- TransUnion.com, 1-800-680-7289

Also, go to annualcreditreport.com or call 1-877-322-8228 to get your free credit report.

Once you get the report, review it and note any accounts or transaction you don't recognize. This will help you in the next two steps.

Step #3: Report the theft to the Federal Trade Commission.

Complete the FTC's online Identity Theft Affidavit at www.ftccomplaintassistant.gov (the complaint form is not available on mobile devices), or by calling 1-877-ID THEFT (877-438-4338). If you complete the affidavit online, print and save it. Once you leave the page, you won't be able to access it again.

Step #4: File a police report.

Contact your local law enforcement office and report the theft. Be sure to get a copy of the police



report and/or the report number. Both your police report and the FTC Identity Theft Affidavit combine to create your Identity Theft Report, which you will need when working with credit reporting agencies or any other companies involved in the theft.

After the theft has been reported, also be sure to:

- Close new accounts opened in your name by contacting the companies involved and explaining that your identity was stolen. Be sure to ask them to send you a letter confirming the account was closed.
- Get fraudulent charges removed from your account. Again, contact the companies involved and explain the situation. Ask them to remove the charges and send you a letter confirming the charges were removed.
- Correct your credit report by writing to each reporting agency (Equifax, Experian, TransUnion). Include copies of your Identity Theft Affidavit and the police report. Ask them to remove the information that resulted from identity theft.
- Consider an extended fraud alert or credit freeze. An extended fraud alert permits creditors to get your report as long as they verify your identity, while a credit freeze stops all access to your credit report unless you lift or remove it.

The Financial facts

- Of the complaints received by the Federal Trade Commission in 2013, identity theft accounted for 14% of them.

- Government documents/benefits fraud (34%) was the most common, followed by credit card fraud (17%), phone / utilities fraud (14%), and bank fraud (8%).

- The number of elderly victims of theft went from 2.1 million in 2012 to 2.6 million in 2014.

Source: National Criminal Justice Reference Service



The Financial funnies

A local charity never received a donation from the town banker, so the director made a call.

"Our records show you make \$500,000, but don't give to charity," the director said. "Don't you want to help the community?"

The banker replied, "Did your records also show that my mother is ill, with expensive medical bills? Or my brother is blind and unemployed? Or my sister's husband died, leaving her broke with four kids?"

"I ... I ... I ... didn't know," stammered the director.

"So," said the banker, "if I don't give *them* any money, why would I give any to *you*?"

Recipe for Success

Brussels Sprouts with Bacon & Cranberries



Ingredients

- 10 cups water
- Salt
- 4 lbs. Brussels sprouts
- 5 or 6 pieces bacon, minced
- 1 red onion, medium dice
- 4 tbsp. butter, divided
- 1/4 cup red wine vinegar
- 2 tbsp. brown sugar
- 1 cup dried cranberries
- Freshly ground black pepper

Directions

Salt water and bring to a boil; add Brussels sprouts. Cook to medium tenderness, 8-10 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a large pan over medium heat, fry bacon until crisp. Remove from pan to a plate lined with a paper towel.

Add onions to bacon fat in pan, along with 3 tbsp. butter. Sauté until translucent. Stir in vinegar and sugar, cooking until liquid is slightly reduced.

Drain Brussels sprouts and add to pan with onions. Stir to coat; add remaining butter. Stir in bacon and cranberries. Season with salt and pepper.

Tapping Into the Power of Technology to Boost Security

"The human imagination and creativity are endless when it comes to stealing things," said Peter Keane, dean emeritus and professor at the Golden Gate University College of Law. The good news is that the companies you do business with are working to reduce the likelihood of identity theft through the power of technology.

For instance, after several costly large-scale data breaches, U.S. credit card issuers are moving to a new type of card to protect consumers. The new cards look exactly like the previous ones with one key difference – a computer chip. The chips, technically called "EMV" chips, make in-person transactions far safer by creating a unique signature for each transaction.

In contrast, the traditional magnetic strip is easier to counterfeit. Hackers use a relatively basic device and attach it to an ATM, credit card processing machine, or gas pump to copy – or skim – credit card information. Once the information is stolen, they reproduce it on other cards. This kind of fraud accounts for 37% of all credit card fraud in the U.S.



Besides credit cards, another target for hackers is mobile devices where sensitive information is often stored. Biometric technology available from companies like Apple and Google can offer an important means of protection. It works by recognizing your unique physical traits – i.e. fingerprints, iris, face, or voice – and then uses them as a means of authentication.

In addition, companies like Visa are working on integrating biometric authentication into EMV chip card technology to boost security even further. Through this solution – which is still being tested – palm, voice, iris, or facial biometrics would be scanned, encrypted, and then validated during each transaction.

"Notable Quotables"

"The police can't protect consumers. People need to be more aware and educated about identity theft. You need to be a little bit wiser, a little bit smarter, and there's nothing wrong with being skeptical. We live in a time when if you make it easy for someone to steal from you, someone will."

— Frank Abagnale, Cybersecurity Consultant

L&M by any other name...

Many companies offer insurance, financial planning, or advice on investing in the stock market. But representatives of L&M are experienced not only in these three areas, but in many more as well. L&M Financial representatives have been providing a broad range of financial planning and benefits programs to many people across New York State since 1972.

Available products and services are:

- Financial and estate planning
- Long-term care planning
- Pre- and post-retirement counseling
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- Funding for education
- 401(k)
- 403(b) Tax Sheltered Annuities
- 457(a) Deferred Compensation
- Individual Retirement Accounts
- Third party administration / payroll deduction services

L&M representatives offer workshops, seminars and, of course, individual meetings in an effort to educate you about effective ways to help establish a secure financial future.

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Resources to Help You

L&M hosts regular Shred-It events to give our clients a chance to properly discard old tax returns, statements, bank receipts, computer disks, expired credit cards, and other legal, financial, or personal documents. By shredding these documents, you can help reduce your risk of identity theft!

Our next Shred-It event is scheduled for **Saturday, May 14, 2016** in the parking lot of our Amherst office at 3820 Sheridan Drive. We hope to see you there!

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L&M is Helping in the Community



Members of the L&M team who participated in The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's "Light The Night Walk" in Delaware Park included, l to r: Sarah Flattery; Wendy Mednick; Greg Brown; Amy Lipsitz; Richard Cole; Leah Palumbo; Julie Rembold; and Cathy LaPenna. Not shown is our photographer, Karen Allen.

L&M employees helped raise money and spirits for a variety of good causes over this summer and fall. In August, financial advisors Julie Murphy and Tim DiGiulio chaired the *Gerry Gentner '66 Memorial Western New York Golf Tournament*, with more than 100 golfers raising more than \$10,000 to benefit Roswell Park Cancer Institute. In September, the L&M team (photo at left) raised more than \$3,800 for the *Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's Light The Night Walk* for research to find blood cancer cures. And on Thanksgiving, L&M volunteers including Nancy Holmstrom, Wendy Mednick, Karen Allen, and Renee Halifax delivered dinner for *The Buffalo City Mission*.

How to Protect Yourself Against Identity Theft

Continued from Cover

protects your online transactions.

- Use strong passwords. Be creative: Think of a unique phrase and use the first letter of each word as your password. For example, "I Love to Go to Disney" could become 1L2G2D.
- Be careful of what you share on social media. If you post too much, an identity thief can find information about your life, use it to answer 'challenge' questions on your accounts, and access your money and other information.

Step #3: Secure your Social Security Number.

Keep a close hold on your Social Security Number and ask questions before sharing it. If you do need to give it out, ask why they

need it; how it will be used; how it will be protected; and what happens if you don't share it.

Step #4: Secure your devices.

- Before disposing of a computer, get rid of all personal information on it. Use a wipe utility program to overwrite the hard drive.
- Before disposing of a mobile device, check your owner's manual, the service provider's website, or the device manufacturer's website for information on how to delete information permanently.
- Install anti-virus software, anti-spyware software, and a firewall and keep them up to date.
- Don't open files, click on links,

or download programs sent by strangers. Otherwise, you could be exposing your system to a computer virus or spyware.

- Be careful about WiFi. Make sure information sent over your device or laptop is protected.
- Avoid keeping financial information on your laptop. Don't use the automatic login feature and always log off when you're done.

It's also a good idea to obtain and review your credit report once a year to check for suspicious activity. You can request a free copy of your report at www.annualcreditreport.com or by contacting any one of the three major credit reporting agencies (listed on P. 2 of this newsletter).

Visit the L&M website at:

www.lmfs.net