From: Evo Alexandre, Jr.
To: Undisclosed-Recipient:;;
Subject: Publishers Clearing House Scam
Date: Saturday, December 15, 2007 10:39:21 PM

KASRA Members,

We received the following email from a fellow retiree outlining a scam, which used the Publishers Clearing House as a vehicle to try to extract money from his wife. There are many such scams that are being used to try to steal money from unsuspecting victims. Remember that if you have won a prize, there should be no need to send money to receive the prize. Do not send your money to anyone who calls with such a preposterous story. Our fellow retiree did exactly the right thing under the circumstances.

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My wife received a phone call yesterday from some one saying that he had been retained by Publishers Clearing House to get a $500,000 prize to her and wanting to come by on Thursday to give it to her. He then said that he needed that both of us be on the phone so could tell us what we had to do to receive it.

It sounded like good news until he asked how much we had in bank. (he did not ask for our account number, maybe because I gave him an almost zero amount of money in the bank.) He then told us that before he could give the prize to us we would have to pay $68,000 for government fees and capital gains fees. He would also arrange for a loan from American Bank to pay these fees if we would give him a verbal consent to do so.

When I questioned him on this he stated that the fees had nothing to do with income taxes and I would have to pay them on my own when filing tax forms. He never did have a good reason why there would be capital gains fees, just kept saying that was just the way it was. He gave me a phone number for his legal firm in Albany, N.Y. to verify he worked for them, (I never called it) as well as a number for PCH. Then he asked me to call him back and give him permission to talk to American Bank and start the loan process, which he said would come due 30 days after we received the prize.

My first step was to get PCH's phone number from one of their prize offerings. When I called, I navigated their answer machine menu until I got one for suspected scams. I then spoke with a live person who asked for our client number, (on all the junk mail they send to us). They came back and told me that it was a scam. Also for future reference they do not use a third party to give out prizes. Prizes under $10,000 they mail to the winner. Prizes over $10,000 they call to set up a time so that they can knock on the winner's door and give out the prize.

They have arrangements with the IRS for payment of income tax on large prizes. They took down all the information I had, but told me that in most cases when they went to check up on this, it was either bogus or they had moved on.

Just to see what the phone number for PCH (the one that the scammer gave me) would say, I called that phone number. A live person answered, with lots of noise of several people in the background. They did verify what the scammer was saying, however when I told him I had already contacted PCH he hung up, and not very gently.

I contacted the Washington State Attorney Consumers office to report it. They took the information I had and also told me the same thing as PCH had, that they were not having any success tracking them down.