

## **THE CYBERSPACE CLEANERS: DON'T GET TAKEN!**

**S**eems like every month there's a new effort by cyberspace thieves and marauders to steal something that is yours.

In the last few months, I've received (and perhaps you have, too) e-mails telling me I have been pre-approved for loans in large sums at ridiculously low interest rates "or lower," to quote one message.

The e-mail goes on to say that this money is being offered as a second mortgage, extended to me "unconditionally," and that my "credit is in no way a factor." I get two to four "pre-approvals" per day.

I'm no cyberspace fraud expert nor am I a rocket scientist, but it appears to be impossible for anybody to offer me half a million dollars as a second mortgage at below-market rates.

It should be apparent that nobody is going to offer you half a million dollars without any consideration to your credit standing. Nobody is going to offer you half a million dollars at far less than market rates. That is, unless they are up to no good.

What do these people really want? I don't know. They obviously want my name. But they likely want my social security number and credit card numbers and probably intend to steal those, and, with them, my identity.

If you want to borrow mortgage money or second mortgage money, check out the rates in the daily newspaper. Call neighborhood banks, compare their rates and deal with people you know.

That's the best you can do 'til these thieves are in the peep-out.

If you have questions about cyberspace fraud and identity theft, call us at 704.372.8322. Ω