

Millie's a sweetheart. Always ready to help out. Help out with a bake sale, a school outing or community park clean-up.

She even helped out the nice man who called by sending him part of her life savings.

Millie didn't realize, of course, she was talking to a scam artist from outside the country who would wipe out her retirement savings. And that's not surprising.

Today, the Internet and international phone calls make it easy for victims—many of them older Americans—to be targeted from anywhere

in the world. Scam artists use false names and electronic tricks to hide who *and* where they really are.

U.S.-Canadian cross border fraud task forces are helping stop these crimes, but prevention still is the best medicine.

Fortunately, consumer fraud is one of the few crimes in which potential victims can say, "No!" If, that is, they recognize the warning signs:

Protect Yourself:

- Be wary of anything that promises large sums of money, such as sweepstakes or lottery winnings, in exchange for your advance payment, donation or investment.
- Don't be pressured into making a decision about an offer. *Check it out first!*
- Be cautious about businesses that try to conceal their mailing addresses and phone numbers and evade questions about their operations.

If the offer sounds *too good to be true*, it probably is.

To order *Nowhere to Run*, a free DVD on cross-border fraud prevention and other free DVDs, go to usps.com/postalinspector or call, toll-free, 1-800-782-6724. All the DVDs feature a Spanish-language option.

Cross-Border Task Forces: Atlantic Partnership–New Brunswick; Project Emptor–British Columbia; Alberta Partnership; Toronto Strategic Partnership; Project Colt–Montreal and the Vancouver Strategic Alliance.

