

MAY 14, 2022

Well I was REALLY scammed this time & SO embarrassed I fell for it last week! Lost \$5,800 from my checking account all because I was following up on a suspicious charge at my Parkway Bank & Trust local bank. Norton Anti-virus posted a \$385 charge to my checking account which I did NOT purchase or authorize. So I called Norton Anti-virus (using the number on the emailmy 1st mistake). Following his instructions the vendor told me to download Cash App onto my cellphone (mistake #2) & then he took control of my phone. Then he indicated I needed to create a digital wallet to protect myself & he would assist me. Instructed me to send \$300 through Zelle to an individual & immediately we would pull the funds back. Well, didn't work so he told me to contact my Bank (Parkway Bank & Trust) & report it to their Fraud Department. I had Parkway's contact number handy b/c I had MANY fraudulent charges over the past year on my checking account so after calling the Parkway Bank & Trust corporate office in Harwood Heights, IL I was transferred to the Fraud Protection Unit OR SO I THOUGHT! Come to find out MUCH later I was transferred (or the call was illegally intercepted by a woman hacker who identified herself as a Parkway Bank & Trust Employee in their Fraud Protection Unit). I trusted her thinking she worked for Parkway Bank who had been my local bank for some 16 years! She said she was just now on a conference call with The Federal Reserve & I did hear another caller on the line. She & the person I thought was from the Federal Reserve gave me implicit instructions NOT to share this incident with my local bank telling me that they were currently investigating to find out if someone at Parkway Bank & Trust was scamming their customers (sounded logical to me....well it did!) Then, they instructed me to withdraw ALL of my available funds in the checking account & in order to create a digital wallet, I had to turn all this cash into individual gift cards, (BIG MISTAKE.... I KNOW NOW!), so the funds were protected & clean.... not a check or a cashier's check. This took me four hours to drive around locally to various grocery & drug stores to convert the entire \$5,800 to Apple Gift Cards, scratch or pull off the security numbers & take a photo of each one & text to her. I started to object here b/c it simply didn't sound legit however the person who said they were from the Federal Reserve on this conference

call assured me that this is how they know the money is clean & how it is done to create a digital wallet & when I do this my \$5,800, (BTW most all of these funds were earmarked to pay my April & May monthly obligations & a portion I was saving to live on when I would be in recovery during & after my scheduled Breast Reconstruction Surgery beginning June 8th. I was looking at a 6-12 week recovery post op), would immediately be returned within 24 hours once the digital wallet was finalized using my own money. I followed these instructions b/c I thought I was speaking with an employee from Parkway Bank & Trust Fraud Prevention Unit who had conferenced in an individual from The Federal Reserve (yet another naive mistake on my part). It wasn't until, (against their instructions), that I shared all of this with a BFF who questioned the whole "gift card" purchases that it finally hit me that this might be an elaborate scam! So I went back to my local Parkway Bank institution in Carpentersville, IL & shared my worried concern with the Branch Manager there who absolutely told me that this WAS indeed an elaborate scam to separate me from my money.....I was devastated! Then, to add insult to injury after being a Parkway Bank & Trust customer for some 16 years the following day Parkway Bank & Trust severed their relationship with me, refunded \$3,200 of my total loss of \$5,800 (apparently taking SOME BUT NOT ALL) of the responsibility b/c the hacker must have hacked Parkway's Phone Bank at their corporate offices b/c I was transferred not to the Parkway Bank Fraud prevention unit but I was transferred to a sophisticated hacker/criminal! Now before any of you start making comments to me here on FB on how stupid can I be to blindly follow this hacker's instruction.... I have already done a fine job of beating up on myself so please cut me some slack, okay? Now I have more instructions to freeze my credit through the credit bureau, file a police report & change ALL my confidential passwords because since the Norton Anti-virus hacker took control of my cellphone they have many of my passwords! Since last week someone opened a bank account at Citibank with my information & someone had already applied for a credit card using my confidential information.....at this point my confidential information is most likely on the dark web (as they say in the movies). I am sharing this NOT for any sympathy but rather to prevent anyone else falling for this scam going forward!