

# Chippewa County Sheriff's Office

Travis Hakes, Sheriff

Curt Dutton, Chief Deputy

Date: March 4, 2025

On the evening of Monday March 3<sup>rd</sup> 2025, I, Sheriff Travis Hakes, received a phone call from a concerned citizen who now lives out of State. The citizen brought to my attention there was a website claiming to have classic automobiles for sale in Cadott Wisconsin. The citizen then shared the website.

I was unable to view the website on my County issued device due to known spam filter. I was able to view the website on my personal device(s). The website claims to be [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Cadott WI 54727. On this website I observed several collector classic cars, at prices far below the market value. One example was a 1969 Camaro, listed for sale. I immediately noticed that in the first paragraph of the vehicle description, they state, "here at Skyway Classics." The website indicated it was at a business, not called "Skyway Classics."

On Tuesday March 4<sup>th</sup> 2025 I called the business phone number listed online of 534-210-1060, and spoke with an "Andrew" who indicated he worked for the dealership. While speaking with Andrew informed me that the dealership found good deals on classic cars and then resold them to the public. Andrew informed me that the dealership would "hold" the vehicle for me for up to two weeks if I wired them 20% of the purchase price as a down payment. Andrew informed me that if in two weeks, I did not complete the purchase of the vehicle they would refund my deposit. Andrew informed me that for a mere approximately \$250 they would ship me the car to an address in Illinois (I provided them with a Zip code).

Andrew sent me a video of what appeared to be the Camaro running, and a walk around while the car was running. Andrew and I discussed what 20% would be, Andrew stated that \$4,000 would be a deposit required to hold the Camaro. Andrew seemed to answer questions about the vehicle in a generic form, but when he answered specifics, it appeared to conflict with the information posted online.

I notified the Eau Claire FBI Field Office and we discussed the matter. At the time of this document, I am unaware of any victims that have had a financial loss. This website was reported to the Federal Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3). It was determined the best course of action was to document this matter.

I then contacted Andrew to obtain the bank information on where to wire the deposit to. Andrew stated that they have an account with Bank of America, with an account name of [REDACTED], account number 5 [REDACTED] 7, routing number 1 [REDACTED], company address [REDACTED], Cadott WI 54727, and bank address of 100 North Tryon Street, Charlotte NC 28255. Andrew texted me this information so I would send a \$4,000 deposit to place a reserve on the 1969 Camaro. I later notified Bank of America about the suspected fraudulent activity associated with this account. I spoke with their fraud department at 1-800-900-9044.

I then called Andrew and informed him that I knew he did not have dealership, he assured me that he did. I informed him that I lived locally and had driven by, and I confirmed the dealership did not exist as

32 East Spruce Street Chippewa Falls, WI 54729-2542  
Phone: (715) 726-7701 FAX: (715) 723-6471

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he claimed. Andrew then hung up on me. I informed Andrew via-text message that I was the local Sheriff and that I was disappointed he was attempting to scam people in our area.

I contacted [REDACTED] who owns [REDACTED] and was informed that the address provided was actually a residence in the area, but not the business address. [REDACTED] informed me that his business does not have a website, nor much social media presence. I informed [REDACTED] that based on the fact that the business name was being used, they were a victim, and the business information would be redacted from any press release. [REDACTED] was cooperative, and appreciative that I informed them of the matter.

I think it is imperative that we share this information with the public. Scams come in all shapes, sizes, and formats; just last week I had to get a new personal Debit Card because mine had been compromised. This particular scam involving the Camaro was fairly detailed, however there are a few key things to watch for while looking for a scam:

1. Does it seem too good to be true?
2. Would a reasonable person educated in the area believe it?
3. Pay attention to the details. Verify names, addresses, phone numbers.
4. Ask for specific details you can verify with an outside source.
5. Contact Law Enforcement, your bank, or someone you trust to ask their opinion.
6. Do not send money, or personal information unless you've verified it with a trusted person.

I spent several hours of time on this matter with no identified victim in an attempt to proactively raise awareness to these types of scams. The concerned citizen lives on the opposite side of the Country, who just happened to have a friend who knew me. Sometimes the scams happen to our residents, and sometimes the scammers pretend to reside here. Either way, our Office is committed to proactively addressing public safety and grateful we could raise awareness in this matter.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to our Office to report anything you feel is suspicious.

*Sheriff Travis Hakes*

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