

## How to survive a scam

Changing Times magazine

What do columnist Jack Anderson, writer Erica Jong, comedians Woody Allen and economist Arthur Laffer, the gurus of supply-side theory, have in common? They're all victims of the nation's latest epidemic — investment fraud. Estimates of the losses go up to \$40 billion a year.

The North American Securities Administrators Association (NASAA) calculates that from 1982 to mid-1985, Americans had been robbed of \$750 million by Ponzi schemes alone, in which promoters use the money of new investors to pay high returns to earlier investors, thus creating the illusion of a lucrative deal and drawing in still more investors.

Scammers are hawkking gold, silver, platinum, rare coins, commodities contracts, tax shelters, oil and gas deals, gems, real estate — you name it.

Investment rackets often originate from telephone "boiler rooms," where squads of high-pressure salespeople canvass the nation with get-rich-quick propositions. The usual message is: A lot of money can be made — or taxes saved — by taking advantage of this rare opportunity, and you better act fast.

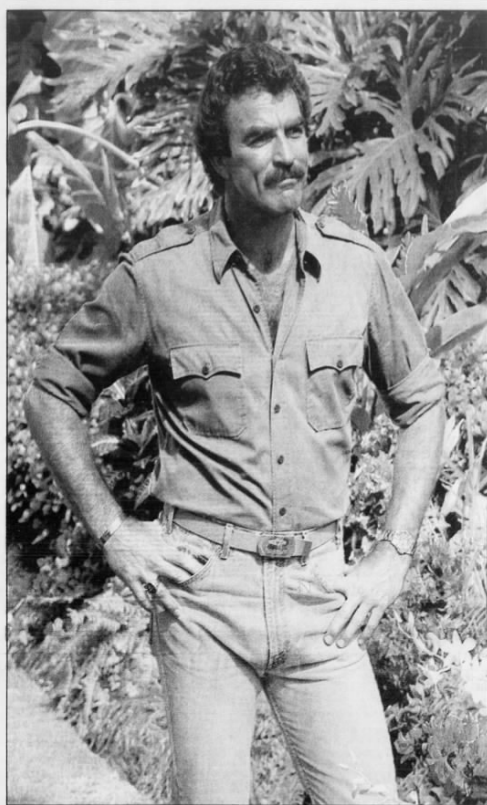
Officials suggest many ways to protect yourself, but none are foolproof. It's imperative you apply all the tips you can, not just one or two.

— Don't buy inflated promises. One mark of a scam is its promise of big-buck results with little or no risk. For returns of 15 percent or more, the risk is stepped up considerably, and anyone who says otherwise is kidding you — or hoping to rob you.

— Deal only with established businesses. If possible, deal with local or national firms that have a permanent office in your area. The only exception should be a nationally prominent financial institution that does most of its business by mail or phone, such as a major mutual fund or discount brokerage. Never send money to a stranger attempting to show you anything over the phone.

It isn't enough for a firm to have the trappings of respectability. Apparatuses can be deceiving, and an elegant office or life-style might be more cause for suspicion than simple quarters. Fancy brochures and ads in prestigious financial publications are no assurance of legitimacy.

— Check credentials. You should always verify  
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Tom Selleck is putting movies on hold for a while so he can concentrate on his TV series.

## Selleck

Under the nice-guy image there lurks... well, a nice guy

By BOB WISEHART  
McClatchy News Service

LOS ANGELES — Tom Selleck is not ugly. I was having a drink with a couple of television critic friends a few days ago when one of them snuffed that while the star of "Magnum, P.I." was "good looking, sure," he was not at all her type.

The next day, Selleck showed up to thump the publicity tom-tom on behalf of "Magnum," which CBS finally moved away from "The Cosby Show" monster on Thursday night. At 6 feet 4 inches and about 200 pounds, he was wearing moccasins, white pants and a blue pullover shirt under a light-brown sweater vest despite temperatures in the mid-80s.

Selleck ambled past, stopped, crinkled a smile that was equal parts mustache, teeth and dimples, then eased into a chair. My friend tapped me on the shoulder, leaned forward and whispered, "I take it back."

All successful actors and actresses either learn how to project themselves or it comes naturally. The 41-year-old Selleck projects an informal, ramped charm that seems to come naturally. By all accounts, beneath his nice-guy image there lurks a nice guy.

Being liked doesn't stop that after six years "Magnum" is popped out and Selleck has missed The Moment, that elusive period when an actor can parlay fleeting celebrity into a lifetime career that keeps him out of the "whatever happened to?" category.

In that goofy, adolescent, Wally Cleaverish voice that sounds like his shorts are too tight, Selleck acknowledged that he worries about how quickly perception can become reality in his line of work.

"I'm a little concerned that by the end of the seventh year there'll be a feeling that I've kind of had my shot," he conceded. "But I know by the offers I get that my stock is still good in this business. I must be doing something right because there are maybe 20 people in the world who make what I make for a movie."

"Magnum" has always been more than a show with a red Ferrari, some dogs, and me taking off my clothes. Cosby may be the most popular show ever, but I never felt that it was a reflection on our show. I may be tired from it ("Magnum"), but I'm not tired of it."

Selleck's comment about his moviemaking wage is revealing because he is sensitive to criticism that the films he made since "Magnum" went on the air "High Road to China," "Lasting" and "Runaway" have been critical failures. If profit defines success, with the exception of "Runaway" — ironically, his best — then he's had more successful movies, though the reviews

See SELLECK/D2

## A fuchsia is a fuchsia is a fuchsia? No bloomin' way!

McClatchy News Service

FORT BRAGG, Calif. — Howard Berry smiles when he recalls the day a customer entered his nursery saying he wife had sent him to buy a fuchsia.

"Come inside and we'll see what we can do for you," Berry replied.

The man stepped into Fuchsiarama's 7,000-square-foot shade house and stood rooted in his tracks. Some of

the plants sported tiny blossoms ideally suited for bonsai. Others had blossoms as large as six inches across.

"Oh, no," he said. "I'm in deep trouble! I thought there was only one kind of fuchsia!"

What he saw was roughly 1,200 varieties of fuchsia, and some 35,000 mature plants.

"In a case like this we ask people to look around and see what flowers appeal to them most," said Berry, who owns and operates the business with his wife Linda.

Fuchsiarama supplies plants to such far-flung locations as London and the U.S. Embassy in Beirut. The Berrys hope to put the nursery, which fronts on State Highway 1, on the map as a tourist attraction.

Anyone from June through October visitors are likely to see plants in full bloom. But a particularly good time for a visit would be Aug. 29-31 during Paul Bunyan Days. At that time the Mendocino Coast Branch of the American Fuchsia Society puts on its free show in the Pentecost Hall, Fort Bragg.

## Fried: peace and quiet

EDITOR'S NOTE: "Close encounters" is a weekly Living Section feature spotlighting nearby opportunities for recreational outings.

By CINDY YINGST  
Sun Staff Writer

Today's Morongo Basin resident probably isn't as rugged as his predecessor — most have never mined the craggy hillsides or braved scorching summer heat without adequate supplies or shelter.

But most of the 69,000 residents choose to live in the arid High Desert communities for the same reasons their predecessors did. Here they find pristine beauty, solitude, clean air and a place to live the way they want.

"It's really nice up here. The peace and quiet is unsurpassed," said Doreen Thompson, postmaster of the Pioneertown Post Office. "You get used to this relaxed area and when you get out back down below it really scares you."

Pioneertown, with an in-town population of about 20 characters, "is one of the Morongo Basin's many gems."

Located six miles north of Yuca Valley on Pioneertown Road, the town sprang up in 1946

### CLOSE ENCOUNTERS

when a group of movie actors, including Roy Rogers and Gene Autry, bought 22,000 acres and built a "camera-ready" 1980s western town for movie making.

They built homes and businesses with false fronts along "Main" Street, which was strictly for movie cars.

Movie greats like Rogers, Autry, Hopalong Cassidy and Leo Carrillo made more than 100 cowboy movies here and the town was the setting for the Annie Oakley and Judge Roy Bean television series.

But the last movie made in Pioneertown was about a donny years ago. An occasional commercial or music video is all that is filmed here anymore.

Most of the old wood and adobe buildings are private residences now. Main Street businesses include the post office, bowling alley, a motel and three bars. A general store just opened in June.

A flyer from Pappy & Harriet's Pioneertown Palace reads, "This is not a commercial center and you won't find souvenir shops at every turn ...

See MORONGO/D2



More than 100 cowboy movies were filmed at 'camera-ready' Pioneertown.

ALTA RUTHERFORD

