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Annual Shred Event Includes New Cyber Security Seminar
Town Center Bank sponsors September 20 event at Aurelio's in Frankfort

- In the spring of 2017, a huge, gaping hole was blown into existing strategies for cyber security. That's when technical hacking tools were posted on the internet, available for downloading to every person around the globe. According to Jeff Reiter, owner of RWK IT Services, that event triggered a waterfall of events.

"Ransomware had been around for years, but since the second quarter of 2017, its use is epidemic. Everyone has this tool available to them now and everyone is a target, whether you're an individual, a small business or a massive corporation. Every human being on the internet can now hack into computer systems," said Reiter.

Recent events confirm this epidemic. Earlier this year, the City of Atlanta, Georgia was the victim of a ransomware attack. Hackers accessed their system by guessing weak passwords, encrypted the City's data and demanded an enormous sum to restore the system. It's estimated that Atlanta is spending in excess of \$17 million to recover.

To help the community in the escalating battle against cyber threats and online hackers, Town Center Bank is sponsoring their Annual Shred Event with a CyberSecurity Seminar, presented by Reiter, on Thursday, September 20.

"You have to step up your game with cyber security", warns Reiter. "Today, not paying attention to your online security is like leaving your car windows open with your purse on the seat." Reiter is a thirty-year veteran of cyber security and has owned RWK IT Services in Frankfort for twenty of those years. "The most significant thing about putting safeguards into place is the outcome. If nothing happens to you, we know we're doing our job," says Reiter.

The seminar will cover the Top Tens Ways to Protect Yourself and Your Business. Jen Varney, Vice President at the Bank, says, "We know that business owners have the most to lose when their systems are not protected, but when individuals have their data hacked, that's devastating too. You could lose all your customer data, your bookkeeping, everything including the pictures of your children, in just minutes."

It's worth noting that Atlanta knew they were vulnerable to attack. They were repeatedly warned that they had multiple vulnerabilities and that employees were increasing lax with passwords and security. That, says Reiter, is his number one top tip.

"Change your passwords often. Studies show that 50 to 70% of people use the same password over and over again. So if hackers get into your email with that password, they know their chances of getting into other online accounts with that same password are very good."

Reiter will also have information about protecting any home security systems and voice response devices such as Alexa or Hello Google. He will discuss the "dark web" which does

exist, used primarily by criminals and those wanting to fly under the radar with their internet usage. He will explain security for text messages, email and other online accounts and activities.

The free event will be held Thursday, September 20 at Aurelio's Pizza, 9901 W Lincoln Highway in Frankfort. Shred X will have a truck onsite from 6:00 to 7:00 pm and participants are encouraged to bring up to 5 boxes per person for free shredding services. The seminar begins at 6:30 pm and includes complimentary pizza and soft drinks. Registration is required and can be made by calling 815-806-7001.

Varney hopes individuals and businesses consider this seminar their very own warning to avoid a situation like Atlanta experienced. "This presentation will help mitigate that risk with simple steps," says Reiter. "If you are connected to the internet, you are at risk."

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