

Buyer Beware
by Gil Ferguson

Scammers abound. I know, because twice someone has tried to sell a car I owned without my knowledge. The first time was in 2017 when I listed a 2014 Cayman S for sale on the PCA website and on cars.com.

I received a lot of interest in the car, most people wanting more information and or pictures. Nothing unusual, until a guy contacted me who said he was from Texas and was eager to buy the car as a gift for his girlfriend. He was even willing to pay cash. He asked for more pictures, including the back seats. I told him the last time I checked, Caymans didn't come with back seats. Then he asked for pictures of the title. I declined.

A few days later I received an email from a guy that had contacted me previously, asking if I knew my car was listed on eBay. I told him I had not listed the car on eBay, so he sent me the link. Sure enough, there was my car with my pictures and description, and the seller was asking much less than I was. I immediately called eBay and told them a scammer was at work. They pulled the listing.

Then last month I received a call from Randy Carter, service manager at Porsche of Huntsville, asking if I was selling my 2017 Carrera. I told Randy that I was not, and asked him what was going on. All he could tell me was that the car was listed for sale in British Columbia and he needed to get back to the caller.

I later spoke to Randy and Jon Cunha, the sales manager, and was told that a woman had called to get information on the owner of the car. She had obtained a car fax which listed the VIN and saw that it had been sold by Porsche of Huntsville. She said she wanted to buy the car as it was listed for \$26,000. Randy told her he would call me, and apparently, she tried to dissuade him from doing that. This raised suspicion that she might have been in on the scam.

Obviously, in both these instances, I had the car and the title, but the scammers could have gotten thousands of dollars in deposits from unsuspecting but well-meaning people, never to be heard from again. These are vivid examples of why it is important to do due diligence when looking to buy a car listed anywhere for sale.