

UPD takes a bite out of crime

Prevention unit educates community about safety

By Pam Mooman

Of The Battalion Staff

There are three elements to a crime: desire, ability and opportunity, a University Police Department officer said.

"It's we, as citizens, who provide the opportunity for a crime," said Lieutenant Bert Kretzschmar, head of the University Police Department's Crime Prevention Unit.

The University Police are fighting student and faculty carelessness that could lead to crime, and the Crime Prevention Unit is at the core of the UPD's education program.

"It's a service organization," Kretzschmar said. "We're dedicated to education."

The Crime Prevention Unit was founded in May of 1989 to make A&M faculty, students and guests aware of precautions they can take to avoid being victims of crime.

"What we're trying to do through this is raise the level of awareness," Kretzschmar said. "Personal safety and property protection are the two biggest areas that people want to know more about."

Bob Wiatt, director of Security and University Police, said that often people are careless, making themselves easy targets for criminals.

Property crimes primarily occur because of the carelessness of the victims," Wiatt said. "Locks were made by the dear Lord for the purpose of locking. It's those basic things we're trying to hammer through. Carelessness will make them the victim of property crime."

Wiatt said that students will fail to lock their bikes or cars and leave their backpacks, books and purses unattended and then expect them to be there when they return.

"The type we have are opportunistic thieves," Wiatt said. These kinds of criminals do not plan the crime, but when they find an unattended backpack, they take advantage of the situation, Wiatt said.

Wiatt also stressed the danger for women in being out alone after dark in poorly lighted

areas. But a companion does not always provide safety.

Wiatt, founder of the Date Rape Crisis Center, said that 75 percent of date rape cases go unreported.

"Those are probably underreported for a variety of reasons," Wiatt said. "In the past year, we only had three sexual assault reports on campus. All were date rape scenarios."

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A&M campus, making it safer than the "real world."

"We are trying to educate (the students) that the A&M campus is no different than the neighborhood they grew up in," Wiatt said. "They're becoming aware that this isn't 'Alice in Wonderland' entirely."

However, an encouraging drop occurred in total criminal offenses reported between September 1988-August 1989 from the year before, Wiatt said. The number of reported offenses decreased from 1688 to 1668.

Kretzschmar and Officer Betty LeMay, who is also involved with the Crime Prevention Unit, take their message to the students, faculty and community through speeches, lectures, luncheons, presentations and films.

"We're expanding rather quickly," Kretzschmar said. "We get calls every day from professors who want to know how to make their offices safer. We're getting more and more people out of town who are affiliated with A&M calling us."

The Crime Prevention Unit is involved in several safety programs on the A&M campus and in the community, Kretzschmar said.

Kretzschmar and LeMay were involved in the National Night Out in married student housing this summer.

"Nobody knows each other," Kretzschmar said. "They knew they were their neighbors, but they hadn't met them in a year or year-and-a-half."

The unit also conducts Aggie Watch, a neighborhood watch program for the residence halls.

The unit oversees another program called Operation Identification, Kretzschmar said.

"Every residence hall director will be given an engraver," he said. Residents in the halls can use the engraver to mark their belongings.

Kretzschmar has also started a phone service called Crime Line. The number for Crime Line is 845-6500. Students can call this number and hear a prerecorded message that gives them the latest information about crimes committed on the A&M campus.

"They can listen to a prerecorded message of what's going on in the police community," Kretzschmar said. "I'm trying to use it for crime prevention."

Locking cars and offices and making sure backpacks and purses are not left unattended are simple acts that are effective protection against crime, Kretzschmar said.

"We're trying to reduce the opportunity for a crime to be committed," he said. "A lot of it is basic, common sense. There are criminals that no matter how secure it is, they're going to steal it."

However, Kretzschmar said that in general, a criminal will be discouraged if he has to take time to pry open a lock.

But if you become a victim of crime, you should take action.

"Report it," Wiatt said. "Report it to the law enforcement agency that has jurisdiction where the crime occurred. Try to give an idea of what you lost. It helps us establish a pattern of criminal activity."

Southwestern Bell recruiters give tips on how to interview

By Andrea Warrenburg

Of The Battalion Staff

"How to Sell Yourself in the Job Marketplace" was the topic of a presentation given Tuesday by recruiting representatives from the Southwestern Bell Corporation.

Sponsored by the Texas A&M Cooperative Education Office, Southwestern Bell representatives from the corporate office in St. Louis, Mo., gave students helpful tips on resumé writing, interviewing and things to do to help start a career while still in school.

"Students can never be as refined as they would like to be in this process," Walter Odum, assistant director of cooperative education, said. "You can never have enough information."

Becky Lampkin of Bell's college relations department said the resumé is the first step in the process and sometimes the only chance people get to "sell" themselves.

"We process 10,000 to 15,000 resúmes every year, so you must do something to stand out because there is so much competition," Lampkin said.

Being neat and creating a different way to present your resumé help gain attention, she said. Also, resúmes should not be more than one page and should

include grade point ratio, permanent and school addresses and phone numbers, career objectives, willingness or unwillingness to relocate, extracurricular activities and a cover letter.

"Extracurricular activities are probably the primary thing companies are looking at now," Lampkin said.

When the resumé phase is successful, the interview phase is next.

Christie Gillison, corporate recruiting manager for Bell said, "Think about the interview as a fun, positive experience so you can relax and be yourself."

Gillison said appearances and eye contact are important but so is practice. An interviewee should do their homework about the company, make a list of possible questions to practice with and in the actual interview, not assume the interviewer knows what they are talking about.

While still in school the representatives suggested using the placement office, co-op and internship opportunities and informational meetings and career fairs to help gain an edge.

"And don't get discouraged; set realistic goals and you'll get the job you want," Lampkin said.

The co-op office videotaped the presentation for future reference. The tape will be on reserve in the LRD on the sixth floor of the library.

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