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NEWS FEATURE

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**Our Biggest Challenge**

*Three tips on how to promote safety in the Rexburg Bubble*

As you leave your apartment to go to class or work, you ask yourself, “Should I lock the door?” You weigh the chances of an intruder storming through your apartment and taking your belongings. “No. It will be OK. It’s Rexburg! What could possibly happen here?”

“One Sunday, I had a roommate who was sick so I went home after sacrament to see if she was OK,” Morgen Willis, a senior studying psychology, said. “Our door was unlocked so I didn’t need to get my keys out. As I walked in and turned towards the window, I heard a man going throughout the complex trying to break through apartments. I quickly locked the door and window and sat on the couch with a knife. The man jiggled our door handle and walked on. I have made sure my door was locked ever since.”

Garth Gunderson, university security director and officer of 35 years, said that the main purpose of campus security is to promote the safety and wellbeing of others. He offers three tips to be safe and keep others safe as well.

First, “Feeling safe is our biggest challenge…our biggest false sense of security,” said Gunderson. As students at BYU-I, we trust others. We live by the honor code and follow Christ’s teachings. Unfortunately, not everyone is perfect and students may often forget that. Gunderson advises us to be aware of what is around us and that even in Rexburg, things can happen.

“There are 60 sexual offenders in Madison County alone…and sexual offenders stick to college campuses like metal does to magnets,” Gunderson said. This is just one example of the many problems students need to be aware of in being safe.

Second, Gunderson said, “If you can’t bring Mom and Dad to college with you, then you need to take on the responsibility of calling the police when you see something.” As adults, we have a responsibility to report crime like our parents would have when we were children.

Third, “If you see something, don’t ever be afraid of being wrong. Don’t feel like you are imposing. Call right after it happens. Don’t wait or question it,” said Gunderson. There are students who often wonder when it is appropriate to call Campus Security vs. the Rexburg Police. According to Gunderson, the students of BYU-I should call with any crime, noise, parking or medical problem. “It is our job. We can transfer you within five seconds.”

“We have only so many sets of eyes,” Gunderson said. “If we can get everybody watching, it would be hard for anyone to get away with anything.”

Students can reach Campus Security at ext. 3000. For more information, go to www.byui.edu/security.