



Rest Insured

By **JEFF GELINEAU**
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Battling the Burglars

The worst feeling you can have on a Friday night is to come home late from the movies, and see that your house has been robbed, and your favorite things are gone.

According to the U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Statistics, property crime makes up slightly more than three-quarters of all crime in the

United States. Not only that, in about 84 percent of all burglaries, the offender gained entry into the victims' residence or other building on the property.

This month, I want to focus on protecting yourself and your loved ones from burglary and crime. How do you improve security at your home?

Here is a great story from *Good Morning America's* safety expert, Bill Stanton:



Ridgewood, N.J., schoolteacher Noreen Clark was sure her home was safe from an intruder invasion. The daughter of a retired police officer thought a security system she had installed when she purchased her home last December would prevent burglary.

She also changed all the locks, and if that didn't work, there was always her golden retriever, Jack.

"I feel very secure here. I feel that, on a scale of one to 10, I'm close to a nine or a 10," Clark said.

She was so confident that she agreed to let "Good Morning, America's" safety and security expert, Bill Stanton, come out and audit her home.

All she knew was that sometime over a two-week period – day or night – Stanton would come out and attempt to penetrate her home's security.

One Tuesday afternoon, just after 1 p.m., Stanton went to Clark's neighborhood to case her home while she was at work.

It took him less than two minutes to grab a ladder from the back of the house and make his move. He forced himself into a second-story window without any of Clark's neighbors noticing. No one called 911.

As for Jack, Stanton was able to subdue him with some doggie treats. Even though the home's alarm was set, Stanton found its weak point.

"The weakest link in this chain was the second floor – your bedroom where you have your heater air-conditioning unit. You gave me about six inches, and that's all I needed to open this house a mile wide," Stanton later told Clark. "I knew that window wasn't alarmed because you gave me that six-inch leeway. I also knew if it wasn't alarmed, you didn't have the motion on because you had old Jack here on the first floor."

He was able to go through the residence and find money and presents.

His accomplice moved the ladder when he was inside and staked out Clark's car at school.

When she arrived home, a shocked Clark screamed when the accomplice surprised her in her home by walking in behind her.

"I came in and I made your home my home. If I were a burglar, I would have been out and gone. If I was something more, it could have been a lot worse" Stanton said.

"I don't even know what to say," said Clark, who is now getting her window alarmed.

Home Burglary Prevention

Here are some tips to battling the burglars:

- **Use your locks.** Even the best locks can't protect you if you don't use them.
- **Do some yard work.** Trim hedges and bushes so thieves can't hide out.
- **Know your neighbors.** Neighbors who look out for each other are among the best, and least expensive, defenses against crime.
- **Secure your spare.** Leave your spare key with a trusted neighbor. Never hide it on the property. Burglars have more experience looking for keys than you do hiding them.

- **Guard your garage.** If you park your car outside of your garage, never leave the garage door opener in the car.
- **Let there be light.** Make sure all outside entrances – front, back and side – have good lighting so burglars can't easily hide.
- **Invest in an alarm.** An alarm system controls access points to your home and lets you know if someone has invaded your space.

Feel free to contact me or any of our agents if you have any questions about your homeowners insurance, or would like a quote on any of your insurance policies today!

Be safe and have fun!

About United Agencies

United Agencies is the Club's Partner in helping members with their home and car insurance, and related products. Feel free to call us with any questions about rental cars, auto insurance, or any other topic. We specialize in creating personal relationships with our customers, and serving their needs in a prompt, efficient and friendly manner. Call our office today at (888) 801-5522. Check out the City Employees Club page on the United Agencies Website: www.ua-insurance.com/city-club

Have a question?

Is there something about insurance that you've always wanted to know, but were too ashamed to ask? Maybe something that you've just always been curious about? Feel free to send me an email at jeffg@ua-insurance.com, and I will try to answer your question in one of our monthly columns.

Airports

Story courtesy Airport Police; Photos by Madeleine Flanagan, Airport Police



TSA Officers in formation.



An Airport Police Officer at the LA Sports Arena.

Joining, in Sadness

Airport Police Honor Guard helps honor fallen TSA Officer Gerardo Hernandez.

The Airport Police Honor Guard – along with units from the LAFD and LAPD, and the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), U.S. Coast Guard, and U.S. Customs and Border Protection – participated in a ceremony to honor fallen TSA Officer Gerardo Hernandez. Hernandez was killed in the line of duty Nov. 1 as a lone gunman opened fire in Terminal 3 at LAX.

The Honor Guard ceremony took place Nov. 6. The Airport Police Honor Guard unit helped welcome the U.S. Honors Flag to LAX, present the flag to the TSA Honor Guard, transport the flag via motorcade for two laps around LAX, and then deliver the flag to a memorial ceremony at the LA Arena just south of downtown. The LAFD executed a water cannon salute to the arriving plane that carried the honors flag to LAX.

Alive! offers its condolences to the family and friends of TSA Officer Hernandez.



An Airport Police representative accepts the honor flag at LAX.



A TSA Officer stands guard at the L.A. Sports Arena.



Airport Police Officers in formal dress march in formation at the L.A. Sports Arena.



A TSA Officer.



Airport Police, airline employees and other safety officials stood shoulder to shoulder to honor fallen TSA Officer Gerardo Hernandez.

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