Karen Velazco

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How safe is Long Beach?

Songs, heels, and dresses all around Long Beach. Cal State Long Beach’s sorority recruitment brings hundreds of young women to the seven different sorority houses, but for one house there was an unexpected visitor.

After the second day of recruitment the ladies of Alpha Phi remained in their backyard to discuss the day when a stranger wandered in.

“I thought he was someone’s boyfriend, so I didn’t say anything,” said Jessica Michel.

Everyone soon discovered that there was a stranger wandering in the backyard, barefoot.

“He kept asking if he could ‘join the party’ and then he jumped on a table,” said Cassandra Menendez, Vice President of Risk Management.

Not only was this strange man jumping on tables, he was stomping all over personal property as well as kicking things over.

“I was scared, but mad at the same time, we worked hard to put everything together, so I went up to him and asked him what his problem was and he asked me if he could ‘join the party’,” said Michel.

The stranger then started to let himself fall when Michel caught him.

President Erica Hsu called the Long Beach Police Department as the advisors of the chapter attempted to escort the man out of the backyard.

He crossed the street without looking as he yelled undistinguishable words. “As the advisors got him to leave I yelled out what he was wearing and repeated it to myself,” said Allison Standish.

“As VP of Risk Management, I always want to make sure my sisters are safe and I have told them to always yell out details of the person so they can remember later, I was really happy to see it come into play,” said Menendez.

Surrounding neighbors of the Alpha Phi sorority house haven’t had similar experiences, but tend to see a lot of homeless people wandering in front of their yard or near by.

Officer Doby has been with the Long Beach Police Department for eight and a half years and said these cases are common.

“We get a couple of a calls a week. People get drunk and wander into places, people get high and wander into places,” said Doby.

Some areas of Long Beach are more prone to these cases than are others.

Long Beach in general has a high rate of homeless people that can possibly be connected to some of these wanderings as well. The 2013 Homeless Count Summary Report for the city has a grand total of 4,387.

There is also a high rate of sexual assaults and robberies in Long Beach and it is very spread out threw out the city.

As dangerous as Long Beach might sound, it is safer than some surrounding cities.

In surrounding cities, there is a lot more visible and noticeable gang activity. The crimes range from assault, robbery, grand theft auto, rape, murder; all of them happening just blocks from each other.

So the question seems to be, how do we protect ourselves as residents of Long Beach?

“Grow paranoid and even become skeptical,” said Doby.

Carrying pepper spray, being more conscious and aware of your surroundings and even taking a couple of self-defense classes in order to feel more confident walking alone was recommended by Officer Doby as well.

Cal State Long Beach is rated one of the safest campuses around and that is very known to many. A lot of students were in shock when they found out that the city itself isn’t as safe as the school they attend.

Although, with a couple of simple steps suggested by the National Crime Prevention Council, it is very possible to avoid harm.

People are often unaware of their surroundings when they encounter a dangerous situation. The more aware you are the less likely you are to be in an unwanted situation.

It is suggested to walk with friend if it is late at night.

If you suspect you are being followed, try crossing the street or changing directions. If the person you are suspicious of does the same, get to a store, restaurant, or anywhere with light quickly. It is okay to also yell for help.

If someone tries to rob you it is best to just give up whatever they want. It is better to keep your life rather than materialistic items; you can always buy them again.

And it is very important to always report the crime; you can prevent another victim.

Long Beach has definitely seen a decline in robbery, sexual assaults, and crime in general. Every year the numbers continue to decrease.

It is impossible to live in world without crime, but it is possible increase your safety through simple steps.