

ATTEMPTED ROBBERY IN BRISAS

Gwen Manning

Sunday Dec 18, 2016

Last night, at about 1:45 in the morning, there was an attempted robbery at my home in Brisas Boquetenas, house # 46 on our community map.

First and foremost I want to tell you how grateful I am that I have a radio. It really saved me – I can't impress upon you enough, how important it is to have this kind of communication in our community. Every one of you should own one. I was in TOTAL PANIC mode and I ran for my radio and used it and those that heard it came to my rescue PLUS they called the police for me. You can call Austin Perry if you would like to order one. He can arrange to import in lots of 6, I believe.

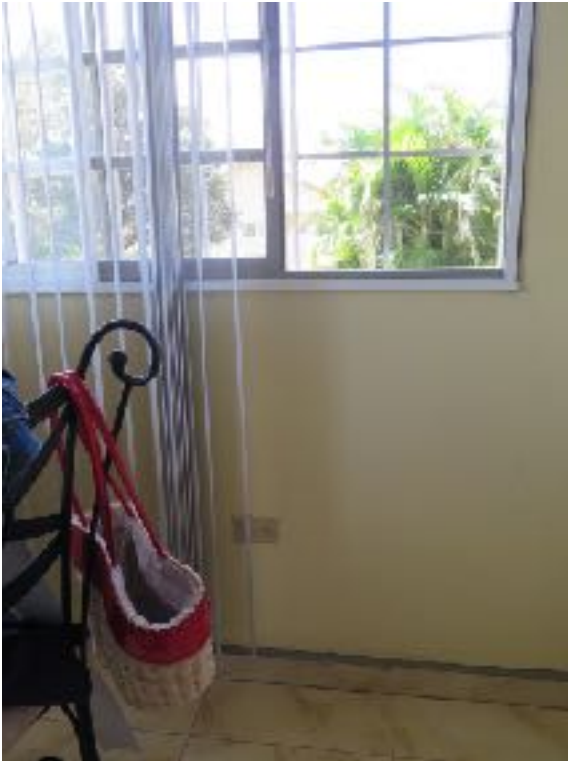
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I want to thank the people who heard my plea for help and who responded quickly and who came to my rescue – at this unbelievable time of the morning. I am ever -so - thankful that we organized this Neighbourhood Watch and everyone is taking it seriously. **THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU.** I'm not sure if I can remember all the faces but there was Ken Campeau, John Pazera, Tom Stearns, Donn Moss, Edie and Patti, and I hope I didn't miss anyone. I was pretty upset.

This, to me, is a whole new twist on how to rob a home and I want to share it with you so you can be more cautious and don't do what I did. It is Christmas time, and perhaps this person wanted some money or trinkets to give as gifts! Perhaps? **BE AWARE.**

- 1) I was still up at 1:45 in the morning. I was going between my office and the spare bedroom – trying to pack and do things before I leave for Canada on Tuesday.
- 2) I had many windows open in my house for air. All are barred. All have screens.
- 3) I believe I had my bedroom light on. The metal curtains were opened to allow the air to come in and I don't want them blowing if there is wind because they will fall off. I had other lights on too. Living room, dining room, probably the kitchen – I was trying to help Union Fenosa make more money.
- 4) I did not have all my blinds shut. Dining room, yes. But probably not in living room. I have sliding doors to sunroom from my living room – those curtains were open and you could certainly see in (into my living room) from the street. I have sliding doors to the area outside my office, which has bars on this area to outside backyard. Again, you could see me in office if I was sitting down.
- 5) I have a motion detector light, which comes on. It is situated at the corner of my house in the back. That light would shine on the backyard and on the window to my bedroom. But, if I'm not in my bedroom – I wouldn't notice.
(and I was not in my bedroom) AND I didn't have it switched on anyway.

- 6) I heard a noise in my bedroom. I thought the breezes had come up and was jingling my metal curtains. I went to check. I looked at the window. I SAW A MAN ON THE OUTSIDE REACHING IN WITH HIS ARMS AND REMOVING THE SCREEN. HE LET IT DROP TO THE FLOOR.



This is my bedroom window. The man obviously saw that little basket hanging from my chair and thought it was a purse. I had the light on. He could see everything in my room. (*Damn – wish my bed was made. I feel terrible about that – how messy*)

When I arrived he had his arms through the window removing the screen. He got that basket somehow, after I screamed at him and ran down the hall to get my radio. I found the contents outside the window and a leather waist wallet around the side of the house. No money in it – I was airing it on my table to get the mould off the leather.

I ran for the radio, which was in my living room – always charging. My thoughts were to get out of the bedroom and get help. What if he had a gun? Or knife? Or there were 2 of them or more and they could rip the bars down?

While running in my panicked state I tripped in the hallway and fell down and hurt my knee. I grabbed the phone and my keys, as there is no way out of my house without those keys. I held my finger on the talk button of the radio and I think I forgot to take it off. I just yelled for help over and over and finally remembered to say it was Gwen. When

someone talked to me I told them I was being robbed and they called the police and came right over to my rescue.

Meanwhile I looked out the front of my house. The intruder was also in a panic. He heard me calling for police. He ran as fast as a gazelle running from a lion. He was dressed all in black from head to toe. (had a black toque on) . He was VERY tall and thin. Didn't fit my idea of our native Panamanians. I couldn't see his skin colour. He was probably at least 6 ft tall. He took off in the direction of the road, which leads to the gazebo – probably running to the hwy. Maybe there was a car waiting for him – or maybe he lives near our community.



This is the window to my bedroom. Do you see how convenient I made it for him to see in – I just let him use the chair to get up this high and peak in and attempt to rob me. That chair is now locked in the shed.



This window is on the side of my house. See the long stick. I found this stick this morning laying on the walkway. It had been cut from my tree. This man slid open the screen and tried to grab something from my dining room table. I guess he didn't think the wrapping paper was worth it. Maybe he heard me coming and just abandoned that idea and hit the bedroom next.



This is my dining room table. He had a long stick hoping to snatch something valuable. There is quite a distance from the outside to the table. Thus the 6 foot stick.

NEVER LEAVE YOUR PURSE OR WALLET IN SIGHT. IT APPEARS TO BE TOO TEMPTING FOR THOSE THAT ARE VIEWING YOUR CONTENTS FROM THE OUTSIDE.

What have I learned?

- 1) Be careful , even if you are home, about windows with screens. Be sure to close and lock all windows when you leave the house and at night.
- 2) Do not leave any thing outside your home that can aid a person to get into your home – chairs, ladders, stools.
- 3) Do not leave anything in sight that resembles a purse or money. Place it in a spot in your home where you can REMEMBER where it is and out of sight from those who are looking through your windows.
- 4) Have the number for the police pasted in many areas. In my panic I couldn't remember where to find them. I also couldn't remember where I put my cell phone.
- 5) I have a landline phone. You might want to consider one too. It's a valuable tool when electricity goes off – the phone line stays connected. (don't purchase one that has to be plugged in to electricity). I now have the Police number taped to the handle of the phone. I went to use it to call police last night and I hadn't programmed their number into my phone. I put the letter A in front of name Police so that it is the first address that shows up. It is now programmed.
- 6) Keep my pepper spray right by my bedside where it is accessible. It was suggested that if I hadn't panicked, I could have sprayed this guy in the face and the police would have found him in agony on my lawn. I am now prepared.
- 7) I have a can of wasp spray. It can go 15 ft or more. I have also taken it off the shelf in my laundry room and moved it to a place where I can easily get it. (I buy mine back from Canada. I'm not sure it is available here in Panama).
- 8) I always lock my doors when I am home or away. I don't want surprise visitors

MY NEXT STEP IS TO CHECK THE CAMERA SURVEILLANCE THAT WE HAVE IN PLACE IN BRISAS.