



Paraglide

Provost Marshal: Protect yourself from becoming a victim

by Spc. Ryan Smith

Paraglide – 24 June 2004

While the number of crimes on Fort Bragg isn't increasing, that's no reason Soldiers should not know how to protect themselves from becoming victims, according to the Fort Bragg provost marshal. Lt. Col. Susan Danielsen, Fort Bragg provost marshal said that although the military police and gate guards are there to prevent crime, individuals also must take an active role.

"People are responsible for protecting themselves," Danielsen said. "(If a crime is committed), call the MPs (396-0391 or 911 for emergencies) immediately. It's important to get a timely response." Danielsen said that property crimes such as smash-and-grab thefts are the most common crimes on Fort Bragg, while the most common crime involving juveniles on post is shoplifting.

She said that the best way for people to protect themselves against crime is by being prepared for it. "Be aware of your surroundings," she said. "Travel in pairs or groups, and stay away from areas that are not well-lit or are known to harbor unsafe activities. Danielsen also added that Soldiers should keep records and photographs of their valuables.

"If you have property that comes without a serial number, engrave it with your name, or something that identifies that piece of property as yours," she said. "A lot of people don't consider renter's insurance," she added. "That gives you some monetary compensation if your property is stolen."

Greg Jackson, deputy director, Public Safety Business Center, said that there are also ways for Soldiers and civilians to prevent criminals from burglarizing their homes. "When you're traveling, make sure somebody knows the route you're taking (so you can be reached in case of emergency)," he said. "But don't broadcast (the fact that you're traveling. Have someone pick up your newspapers and your mail." Jackson said that vacationing Soldiers and civilians can also notify the Provost Marshal's Office of their plans, and MPs will do security checks of their residence during their absence.

Danielsen also warned against identity theft, a crime which she said was becoming more common. "Identity theft is the fastest-growing crime in America," she said. "A lot of identity theft occurs when people are making transactions over the Internet." Jackson also

warned against giving too much information out over the Internet. “We’ve gotten used to automation and using technology,” he said. “But sometimes ‘snail mail’ is best.”

Jackson added that many identity thieves also work by calling people in their homes on the pretext of collecting for charities or selling something. “Beware of people calling on the phone and asking for personal information,” Jackson said.

Danielsen said that people should research any agency that they are thinking of giving any information to. “Only disclose your personal information to legitimate agencies,” she said.