



Latest attack fits pattern of muggings in Lincoln Park

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CHICAGO - This morning's strong-arm robbery of a couple in the Lincoln Park area fits the pattern of other attacks in that neighborhood based on the location, time of attack and the fact there were several offenders, a Chicago police source said.

Detectives from the Belmont Area were still interviewing witnesses but the link to four other robberies in Lincoln Park "looks pretty good," the source said.

If connected, this would be the fifth attack in a string of muggings in the North Side neighborhood that are marked by a swift assault followed by a beating and robbery.

In the latest incident, a couple was robbed at 3:30 a.m. today near 410 W. Deming, police said. The couple told police three men got out of a dark four-door car - a fourth stayed inside - and approached them from behind.

The man struggled with one of the muggers as they took the man's wallet, which contained several credit cards and \$45 in cash. They then got back in their car and drove west on Deming.

Near the robbery scene, police found a black T-shirt they said belonged to one of the robbers.

"There was a struggle between the victim and the bad guys and during the struggle his wallet was taken forcibly by one of the offenders," said Police News Affairs Officer Robert Perez. "They approached him from behind."

The couple provided a good description of one of the attackers.

The attacker was described as black with a dark complexion, about 18 years old, 5-foot-9 inches tall and

weighing about 140 pounds with dark eyes and hair and wearing dark clothing, police said. His companions also were wearing dark clothing.

Also on Friday, police released a sketch of a possible robber from an earlier attack.

The other four attacks that police have so far linked to one group of robbers happened last week. On July 30, two separate assaults happened, both minutes apart at about 2 a.m. in the 600 block of West Fullerton Parkway and the 2100 block of North Stockton Drive.

On Saturday, the crew struck again at 3 a.m. in the 2000 block of North Cleveland and at 3:30 a.m. in the 300 block of West Webster.

An older model small maroon car was also believed to have been used in at least one of those attacks, police said.

Today a group of Guardian Angels donned their red berets and as they patrolled the neighborhood where the latest mugging occurred. The men were distributing community alert fliers warning residents in the area to be alert.

Thomas Hunt, a spokesman for the Angels said they plan to spend 24 hours canvassing the area on foot and bike patrols in the area in response to the attacks. He called on residents to contact Chicago police if they see suspicious activity and also said the Guardian Angels were also available to escort people who may it later tonight.

"We're just being a visible deterrent so people see that there is some protection in the area," said Hunt. "They need to be the eyes and ears of each other...they need to watch over one another, keep their eyes open."

Alex Marion, 25, who has lived in the area for the last year and a half, said the latest attacks have made him more vigilant and tries only to go out in a group in the evening. Marion, who lives about a block from where the latest attack happened, said he was out late Thursday evening.

"I'm going to go with a bunch a guys and we are going to cab it everywhere we're not going to walk around here late at night," said Marion. "It's probably one of the nicest areas of the city, it's really bizarre you never hear about muggings."