

Jewelry store owners' home security system alerts cops

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Two men who held a Colorado Springs couple at gunpoint in their home Monday evening apparently planned to force them to drive to their jewelry store before being scared away when police arrived.

The would-be robbers didn't take anything, foiled in part by the home security alarm company that quickly notified Colorado Springs police.

"I'm grateful they didn't harm us," Charlie Neugebauer said Tuesday of the men wearing ski masks.

The home invasion took place shortly after 6 p.m. at the home of Charlie and Amy Neugebauer on Jacks Fork Drive in the Wolf Ranch subdivision northeast of Research Parkway and Powers Boulevard.

Shortly after leaving the couple's 3-month-old store, The Gilded Artisan, Amy Neugebauer pulled into her driveway and opened the garage door. Two armed men came up behind her and ordered her inside the house.

Opening the door set off the security alarm, and the company called the residence. She answered the phone, but she didn't directly answer the company's question and sounded stressed, Charlie Neugebauer said.

The company summoned the police.

Several minutes later, Charlie Neugebauer came home. Tired after putting in long hours to get the business started, he was looking forward to a relaxing evening watching his favorite football team on TV, the Minnesota Vikings.

Instead, he found his wife being held at gunpoint.

The men grilled the couple, telling Charlie Neugebauer they recognized his name but not his face. "They were asking a lot of questions about people we didn't know," he said.

The men were quizzing the couple about their jewelry store when they heard the police approach. They fled before officers arrived, said Sgt. Chuck Rabideau of the Colorado Springs police robbery unit.

The Neugebauers don't know the would-be robbers, they said. But the men may have known them, police said. Police are still investigating the incident, Rabideau said, and aren't sure what the criminals' intent was.

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