

Center gets bizarre visitor

By Nancy Perkins

Deseret News correspondent

ST. GEORGE — A bloodied, naked man was found lying at the feet of the Christus statue in the visitors center at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' temple grounds this morning.

The man, whose identity was not released early today, was the subject of numerous 911 calls around 7:50 a.m., said Craig Harding, St. George police spokesman. Police say the man is a 24-year-old from St. George.

"People were calling saying a naked man was running down 600 South toward the temple," Harding said. "We got more 911 calls when he got to the visitors center and began pounding on the glass."

Officers hurried to the scene and found broken glass, a lot of blood and a man inside the visitors center, which was not yet open to the public. When officers approached the man he yelled something and lunged at them, Harding said.

Officers used a taser gun and energized it twice before the man could be restrained, he

said.

"He was severely lacerated from breaking the glass on the front entrance to the visitors center," Harding said. "At this point we don't know why he did what he did."

The man was taken to Dixie Regional Medical Center, which is directly across the street from the temple grounds.

Calls to the visitor's center early Friday went unanswered. Dale Bills, LDS Church spokesman, did not immediately return calls.

E-MAIL: nperkins@redrock.net