

I would like to share with you a terrible experience I had on the 24th of January 2007, which ended well under the circumstances.

I live in 105 Koljander Avenue, Newlands in the Pretoria Eastern suburbs. Just another Wednesday night, and busy rounding up some work on my computer, when I see that my brother in law returns home after visiting his girlfriend.

After my brother in law has parked I notice some guys sneaking in just before the gate closes. I try and refocus, the picture I have just witnessed, thinking it cannot be.

When I realise the criminal act that is in progress, I recollect my thoughts and actions, I run towards my alarm console and activate the panic button.

Not to bothered by the sirens of the alarm, these criminals still struggle away with the gate and basically rip the entire gate off of it's rail.

Now all 4 of the criminals are on the premises. The first 2 that snuck in is busy holding my brother in law at gun point, taking his car keys, cellphone and wallet, and questioning him about the presence of more people on the premises (Just your typical armed robbery scenario according to Brooklyn Police officers). Luckily my brother in laws response is "No". At this time my 3 kids are sleeping not aware of any danger just happening outside of their bedroom windows.

My Neighbour next door starts to shout out towards my side, mocking the alarm, not aware that a crime is in progress.

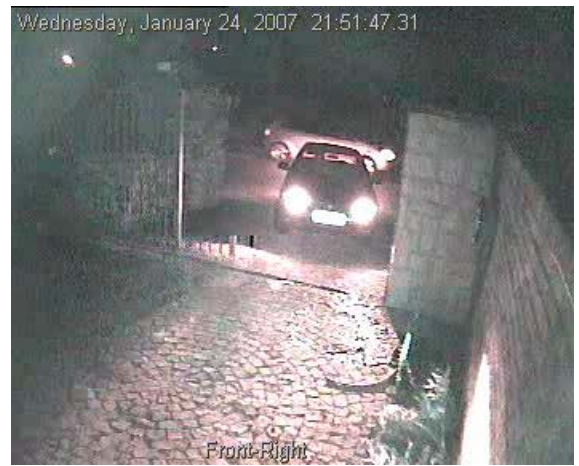
At this stage I had contacted one of my police friends, who immediately called in assistance.

My brother in law starts to shout out in a frantic panic, and this is when the criminals decide to head out. My neighbour realises what is happening and shouts out towards the criminals. They fired 2 shots in his direction in the breakaway run. One of the bullets traveled up to the second story window, where my neighbours son was standing watching the incident.

My neighbour across the road fired a warning shot which probably helped convince the criminals they are not welcome. The criminals got into the car seen in the very first picture behind my brother in laws car, and drove off.

In the very first picture, you can see the typical normality of just arriving at home, and wanting to continue with your every day evening events, not realising that a car that has just passed you are filled with hardened criminals, that is out to prey on the normal citizens of society. When the alarm was triggered they still continued with their act of crime, not too bothered by any possible consequences. (Probably because jail life in SA, is better than making your own living)

I thank God that he directed my eyes towards the camera's at that very moment seeing the incident happen, it could have gone very south for me and my whole family.



I raise a salute towards the SA Police of Brooklyn and ADT which arrived on the scene within 5 minutes from the initial call. "Well done!!!"

I am thankful for following my own premonition's a few weeks earlier to invest in a CCTV system, fixing my electric fence and alarm system, that had been out of action for a few weeks then. (Isn't this just sad how we are forced to live in the greatest country in the world?)

Now we just need to hope and pray that our country will start moving to action and implementing stricter rules and penalties to help protect the citizens that are making a difference.

In the last few months our media has been so filled with similar incidents and crimes, just many of them weren't as fortunate as we were. It is sad that our country wants to be a world class player in major events, but it doesn't even have the capacity to provide protection to its citizens. What about power, transport and a dozen other basic necessities.

What is the government going to do? is the question. People I urge all of you who are currently a part of this nation to apply pressure in all ways and means within your powers to ensure your voice be heard regarding this unacceptable lifestyle we have to be satisfied with, in the most beautiful country in the world.

Sandy Stoltz

