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# TWO ARRESTED FOR SCHOOL BURGLARIES

**Sunrise Park/ Rustenburg** – Two suspects linked with a series of school burglaries in various locations within the North West province were arrested on Monday 15 June. The police caught up with them in Sunrise Park, Rustenburg. Some of the items believed to have been stolen from the schools have been recovered by the police. Police recovered a projector as well as six cellphones from one of the suspects, a 32-year old Mozambican national. Police have also established that the suspect is in

South Africa illegally. The other suspect was apprehended after police discovered another projector and 12 cellphones inside the bakkie he was driving. Further investigations led the police to Modderspruit near Brits, where a laptop was recovered. North West premier professor Tebogo Job Mokgoro has commended the police for these arrests. He also urged community members to assist with any information that may lead to the arrest of more suspects.



# ANDREA'S JUSTICE IN SIGHT

**Rustenburg** – After seven years in hiding, Gerhard Jansen van Vuuren was tracked down and arrested on Thursday 18 June 2020 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, for the murder of his ex-girlfriend Andrea Venter on 2 May 2011. Before the murder, Andrea had taken out a protection order against Gerhard and after her studies at Potchefstroom, she relocated secretly to Johannesburg. The obsessed Gerhard called 34 accounting firms before tracking her down.

He stands accused of stabbing his girlfriend Andrea Venter to death at the entrance to her housing complex in Fourways, Johannesburg, before attempting suicide by cutting his throat and laying down next to her body. Paramedics arrived on the scene and were able to save Gerhard, but Andrea was declared dead on scene. Gerhard was supposed to stand trial on 20 May 2013 in the South Gauteng High Court and had been denied bail twice by the Randburg Magistrates' Court on grounds of being dangerous and a flight risk. Gerhard's legal team again applied for bail, this time at the High Court... where his bail was granted. Four days before the start of his murder trial in May 2013, Gerhard fled the country using false documentation. A warrant of arrest was issued by Interpol Pretoria wherein a process to trace and track him down was expedited. In August 2013, he was arrested after being spotted by a retired local police officer in Brazil and charged for having false documentation. In an interview with *Platinum Weekly* in 2013, Andrea's father, Dries Venter, said: "For three months and nine days we prayed that Gerhard would

be found and arrested". Regrettably, Gerhard was released in 2015 in Brazil after serving the sentence for false documentation. In the meantime, Interpol Pretoria had been in contact with Brazilian authorities to locate him. Venter's family was shattered after their daughter's murderer was released and he once again disappeared. Since then, Venter's mother Annatjie passed away in 2016. "After the death of her miracle daughter and the escape of her killer, my wife was heartbroken and five days after her 63rd birthday, she passed away," Dries said. The loss of his daughter and his wife was devastating. Mercifully, Dries remarried, his new wife Daleen Venter – supporting and helping him to continue forward. For the last seven years, Dries never gave up hope that his daughter's killer would be found. He printed out photos of Gerhard and placed them in the windows of his car just in case someone recognised him and had information. He never gave up the search. There were many tips supplied – but nothing ever turned up solid.



Dries Venter looking at a pencil drawing of his daughter.



Gerhard Jansen van Vuuren was finally recaptured seven years after jumping bail while standing accused of murdering his ex-girlfriend.

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Photos of Annatjie [mother] and Andrea [daughter] Venter are on display in Dries and Daleen Venter's home.