

MATWETWE SAFARIS

2020 NEWSLETTER



Returning from my annual marketing trip in mid-March 2020, I made it with 3 days to spare before the worldwide lock down started. Who will not remember the year of 2020? The best thing about it is that it is almost gone. Dissecting this period there were much to learn from these brutal months that passed. Firstly, that one cannot believe most of the alleged news you see or read, but most importantly it made us stand still and do a thorough analysis on what is really important in life. Much needed quality time were spent with family and friends that made one realize how important it is to do so, even in a normal busy year.

With not even a single client on safari with us this year it made me think about how much I love my work and how badly I missed doing it. After some serious thought and strategic planning, we decided that waiting for the pandemic restrictions to pass will not pay the bills. We ended up taking a few cull animals out with some local meat hunters. With Hennie away at University, Harm and I seriously started culling and processing meat on a contract basis. As father and son, we had some fun hunts together, which made up for lost time in the bush.

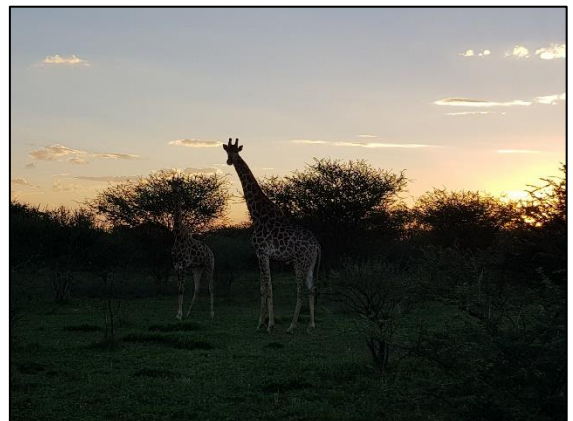


This impala needed to be culled as per contract, but Harm seized the opportunity and took a once in a lifetime, 26" impala that will live forever on his wall.

One landowner needed to get rid of all his blue wildebeest. On the second day of the cull during the first hour of daylight, Harm and I had 6 wildebeest bulls on the ground... all head shots. I will surely miss these moments when Harm goes back to University again next year.



We could still appreciate the spectacular sunsets but this year... we took a few minutes more to think about all our blessings!





The Center of Hope also faced its own Covid-challenges.

Thanks to Dave and Jane Owen, we could still provide them, all year long with much needed protein in the form of venison.



Between cattle farming and the meat processing we kept busy, but sure hope that Covid will soon be a thing of the past.

We just heard that our annual marketing trip for 2021 is cancelled. All the major marketing shows cancelled their 2021 events. For the first time in 21 years, I will not be seeing snow and visit all my American friends in February/March of 2021.

As if the pandemic was not enough bad news, we heard about the passing of three of our long-time friends from Michigan. Dave Graham (Flushing), Joe Judnick (Sterling Heights) and Jo Ann Blaauwkamp (Hudsonville). We are thinking of you and your families in this difficult time and mourning the loss with you.



On the bright side of things...

Hennie got elected to his dormitory at university's House Committee 2020/2021 and he received his degree in Cost Engineering this year. He will continue his studies, doing his Honors degree during next year.

He is now nursing a beard... apparently to look more intimidating to the new first years arriving in February 2021.

To my families' relieve I can stomach that better than the long hair Hennie had to grow in his second year in the dormitory.



Annie and her school (for children with academic and/or emotional needs), are doing exceptionally well. With generous contributions from Matwetwe Safari Hunting Clients and even their grandchildren, the kids from Annie's school had the privilege to continue their curriculum even in these challenging times. They adapted and did not even skip one lesson or assessment during the January to December academic year. No other school in this area can claim the same.



Annie wishes to sincerely thank each and every hunting-family client that made this possible. With your help, Annie and her team of passionate people change the lives of children... one child at a time as Annie always say.

With their successes speaking for themselves, they have now expanded to such an extend that the premises are getting to be too small for them all.

The year ended on an exceptionally high note for me. I was called up by the local government vet a few weeks ago to help with a problem buffalo bull that was a threat to a local community. I called up my old hunting buddy Albert and with Jimson by my side, the 3 of us went looking for what looked like a needle in a haystack...one buffalo on 90 000 acres. We started off by gathering information from the local cattle herders and managed to narrow it down to the waterhole where the buffalo drank the previous day. As tremendous luck would have it, the old bull came in as we were standing around the waterhole. A short stalk and a good 450gn Barnes out of my .458 Lott through the top of the heart, did it. As the bull did his death run, I was able to put a solid with a follow up shot at the base of the neck and spined him. He came down in a spectacular way in a cloud of dust. It was a huge privilege to take my own buffalo, having a great hunt, not paying a trophy fee and still being able to keep the trophy and also helping the community out. Sounds like a win-win to me!



We are looking forward to an exciting hunting season in 2021. Hopefully, things will be back to normal by the end of March for the first hunters to come in. Maybe then next year's newsletter will be much longer and more interesting than the infamous Covid-year.

I want to use this opportunity to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a happy 2021. May you enjoy this precious time with your loved ones. May you also experience the true meaning of Christmas, where all of us received the biggest Gift of all gifts when our Creator send His Son Jesus Christ to this world.

Until next time!

Hendrik Botha