

Dear friends in hunting!

Worldwide, people are reconsidering the true value of things: social contact, having a job, beer (in Namibia the selling of alcohol was prohibited during lockdown), our health... and simple things we took for granted – such as toilet paper. Services can be divided into ‘essential’ and ‘non-essential’. COVID-19 has pressed the reset button on many intricacies surrounding our modern-day culture. We have to ask ourselves, what is important to us, what do we really need to survive, and, where do things come from? Is the monetary value we assign to almost all commodities really a true representation of their significance, their value in our daily lives?

Global economy has optimized production such that many items have become available and affordable to the masses, but the truth is, we almost never know where anything comes from in a modern society and thus fail to appreciate commodities in terms of labor, resources spent, ecological impact and sacrifice. To us at Jan Oelofse Hunting Safaris, the best example of this discrepancy may be the Vietnamese nobleman serving tea in a beautifully crafted cup made from rhino horn. We angrily wonder: does he know how much pain, suffering and injustice the illegal obtainment of such a trinket has caused here, on the other side of the world? It is the same principle applying to any common household thoughtlessly discarding surplus food, while in another, someone has spent many working hours planting, watering and nurturing the same. Was it worth it? How much happiness will the reckless Korean nobleman truly gain from his little cup, and how grateful should the housewife throwing away surplus food have actually been for what she received?

RIGHT: Annette, Alex and Steve with good friends at SCI 2020! We hope that we will see you all again at the next show, if the COVID19 situation permits!

NEWSLETTER June 2020

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TOP: Alex with Jan (4) and Keira (2), going on a meat hunt for springbuck. Both kids enjoy the outdoors, adventure and simply being with their dad!



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It is the disconnectedness between our consumption and the origin of things that does not allow us to feel the gratitude that we should as modern humans in a society that is so incredibly rich. This separation from the source of all our life's wants deprives us of the appreciation and the happiness we should experience upon the receipt of any gifts – be it the coffee from Uganda, the Swiss chocolate, the German beer... and the meat on our table.

It is probably the best answer to why the hunter hunts: he allows himself to appreciate the gift of food, along with the exhausting, fulfilling experience that honors the taking of an animal life. It bestows upon him a feeling of accomplishment and most importantly gratitude, which in itself is the highest form of happiness, for something that is truly essential to his own survival. A good hunt momentarily relieves the hunter of the modern-day disconnectedness, the wanting of non-essential goods in the pursuit of something that is more valuable and honorable. The hunter who has chosen a responsible outfitter knows that the meat from his hunt will not go to waste, that every morsel and the money spent will become a part of a cycle to sustain and honor the balance of life – without ever taking too much or anything for granted.

To our dear hunting friends: in this difficult time, we wish you all the best! Thank you for all the support. We hope that when the worst is over, the world will be a more mindful one in which humans learn to fully appreciate once again the things which are essential and make us happy!

RIGHT: we have had extremely good rains this season! After 7 years of ongoing, relentless drought, most parts of Namibia were awoken to their former beauty. Flowers that we had not seen in so many years were blooming for weeks on end, the grass reaching waist-length!



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RIGHT: Annette makes a great grandmother! Although she doesn't fit the cliché description of a granny in the slightest, Jan and Keira could not wish for better 😊

On our rhino orphanage

Much has happened at the rhino orphanage. A new resident found her way into Annette's care during October 2019, her mother having died at the hands of poachers on another reserve. She was given the name 'Tatuleki', meaning 'frail one'. Tatuleki was basically newborn and had never received colostrum, the antibody-rich first mother's milk that serves to strengthen the sensitive gut flora of a rhino baby. Raising such young rhinos comes with great challenges, but Annette has been there before countless times. Once again, Annette and her team sacrificed many sleepless nights, feeding Tatuleki at least every three hours at first, and spending pretty much all the hours of night and day with the tiny, helpless calf. And Tatuleki did well! She quickly filled the once sunken folds in her skin and evolved into a playful, friendly little soul. She was joined by 'Cato' when she was about 8 weeks old (see previous newsletter!). Things could not have been more perfect for these two little calves!

But when Tatuleki was about 6 weeks old, she started having bouts of diarrhea. By adjusting her milk formula, Annette had some success of getting it under control at first, but it slowly got worse. Although her condition was not too bad at first, Annette knew that the ongoing loss of fluids and nutrients were perhaps a sign of something more serious. She consulted with rhino orphanages in South Africa, vets and other experts, tried cooking rice and various other remedies, but Tatuleki was very slowly deteriorating. Stool and blood samples were tested but came back negative. Nonetheless, Tatuleki was put on antibiotics – perhaps risking the destruction of healthy gut flora – but the vet saw no other option.

Nothing worked. From one day to the next, the little baby rhino was emaciated from weeks of ongoing illness, and

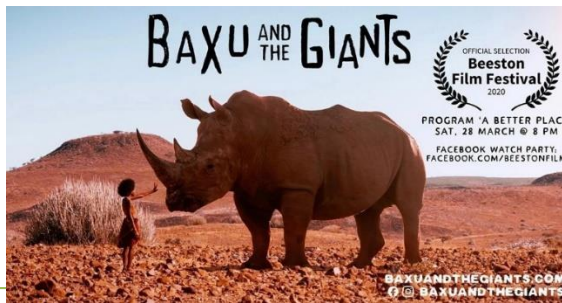
we could watch as the strength and will to live left her. The vet was still half a day away and so it was up to us to try and attach an intravenous drip into the collapsed, cold veins in one of her ears. It is like trying to find a needle in a haystack, and perhaps we were clutching for straws, but hope is the last to die. Alex, perhaps through sheer luck and relentless persistence, managed to insert the needle and Tatuleki received the fluids she so desperately needed. Tatuleki was still alive for a few hours when the vet finally arrived, but we had only briefly been able to extend her life. She died quietly at 02h00 am, Annette, the vet and her dear friend Cato by her side.



TOP: heartbreaking – Cato never left Tatuleki's side, not even in her final moments.

Some rhino calves are doomed, it may seem. The chances of their survival in the long run are slim to start with. So many calves have arrived at the orphanage that were

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LEFT: This beautiful short film was shot in Namibia, and vividly brings to life the social difficulties that underlie poaching in communities. Some of the footage was shot at our reserve.

dehydrated, sick with disease, emotionally traumatized or even with bullets in their bodies. They are almost beyond saving, but again and again, Annette will always give her best. At the same time this means humbly accepting that we as humans are not always in control and need to be mindful of the frailty of life, even in an animal which is the symbol of indestructible strength.

The arrival of 'Mr T'

When Tatuleki left his side, Cato lost his only friend. It was heartbreaking to see him mourning, searching and calling out to her... but then, just recently, Cato would find a new friend in an eight month old rhino bull who lost his mother on another reserve due to kidney disease. Annette's grandchild Jan chose a name for the new rhino: 'Mr T', who is almost the same age and size as Cato. The two of them have become friends instantly, both benefiting from each other's company emotionally. Mr T has already learned from Cato to trust his surrogate mother and to bottle feed! Both of them are allowed to roam a big area freely, exploring together. May their friendship last even when they will one day be released into the wild, together, where they belong!

BELOW: Cato and Mr T during their first week together! Immediate friends!



RIGHT: Annette celebrated her birthday on 20th March 2020 with a cake made by Carola (Alex's wife), honouring her tremendous work with rhinos! Happy birthday, Annette, and all the best for the new year!



Ryan - making the most of life

Ryan is barely 16 years old and has cancer. A tumor is pressing on his spine, slowly making it almost impossible for him to use his right arm. Yet, Ryan is admirably strong, enjoying the outdoors and sharing his enthusiasm with all those around him. Ryan and his family were donated a hunt by Jan Oelofse Hunting Safaris, allowing him to enjoy his passion as much as possible. He managed to get several animals, just before the COVID19 situation forced him to leave a day earlier. It was an honor to have such a young, optimistic hunter share the love for the wilderness with us! We wish you all the best, Ryan!



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ABOVE and RIGHT: little Jan is helping Annette, Alex and Dr HO Reuter treating the infected shoulder wound of a pregnant rhino cow. In total, the cow had received 14 such treatments before succumbing to a lung infection.

Rudie – up and running!

You would probably have to see it to believe it... but Rudie, who had been severely wounded by an elephant in the DRC last year August 3rd, and struggled with illness, infection and hospital visits ever since (see previous newsletters), has made an almost full recovery!

He is already cycling, driving, and sometimes walking without his crutches. It truly is a miracle. Sheer will power and good Karma must have kept this resilient man alive, and we are incredibly thankful!

Hopefully the tattoo on his arm (roman numerals spelling the date of his accident – or, the day he was given a second chance), will one day be the only physical reminder of the turmoil that he went through.



The October 2019 elephant-rhino fight

A rhino cow was badly hurt from a fight with an elephant at a feeding station last year when the drought was still having its toll on all animals. The cow, who had suffered a ghastly flesh wound on her shoulder where the elephant tusk had entered, had been receiving treatment, wound cleaning, every 14 days since the

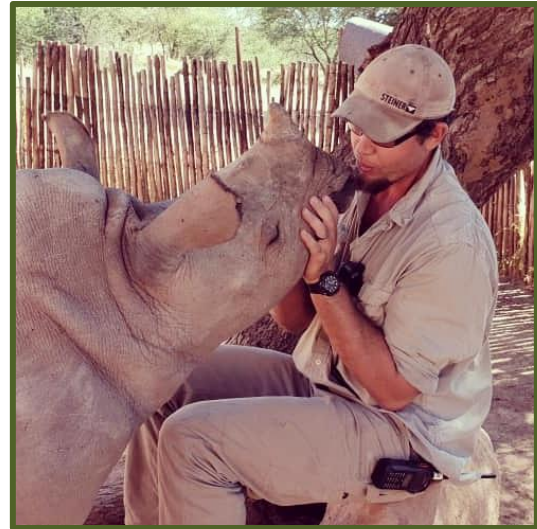
incident. Needless to say, the veterinary treatments were incredibly expensive and time consuming, since every time the cow had to first be tracked by Naftalie and Flippie on foot, then darted and tranquilized by helicopter, and treated with various antibiotics. The location of the wound was such that the wound could not drain to the outside, leaving infection within her body. Although our ingenious vet, Dr HO Reuter, had thought up many different ways of treating the wound, the infection persisted... when finally, in May this year, the wound seemed to get smaller and to be healing well.

But then, at the next vet appointment beginning of June, Flippie and Naftali found the cow they had so diligently followed around for months on end, whose footprint they had become to know so well, submerged in one of the dams, her body still warm. She had finally succumbed to the wound that she had suffered more than half a year ago. The autopsy revealed that the infection had reached her lungs. But the saddest revelation was the unborn calf inside of her belly, fully and perfectly formed, a month away from seeing the light of day. We take comfort in the knowledge that we had done all that was in our power to

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try and save the mother and her calf. Accepting that some things are just not meant to be, is the key to psychologically surviving the harsh order of the wilderness as a human.



Some more photos we would like to share: Alex going hunting for jackal with little Jan, the lodge after a rain storm, Annette's new puppy (Cara), Jan and some giant Omajova mushrooms, Alex playing with rhino baby Cato and a lion feasting on a gemsbuck kill!

In these strangest of times, we are still doing ok. Thanks to good rain and thanks to the foresight and good financial planning by Annette, we can still fund the Mount Etjo School, support our staff and take care of our animals (the rhinos in particular). But if it had not been for the ongoing support from the hunting community, none of this would have been possible! We wish you all the best and hope to see many of you again soon, when the worst is over!!!



Greetings from all at Jan
Oelofse Hunting Safaris!