

## Dear Friends

Two years after the pandemic first hit, we are still feeling the aftermath, but essentially, the take-away message for us is still: appreciate! We have a multitude of things to be thankful for, little luxuries which in the grand scheme of things suddenly fall away because of their insignificance. A few hundreds of years ago, and in some geographic regions this time span may be even less, nobody concerned themselves with toilet paper, it did not exist. Now, should we be fighting wars over... nothingness? We find ourselves wondering if we are male, female, something in between... after all this, humanity on an individual level still struggles to define itself, to prioritize what is the essence of a good human. Are we perhaps distracting ourselves from the real issues? Uproars go through society because of incidences which are not in the least life-changing, which have no impact in the grand scheme of things. We would like to believe that in this madness the hunter is a beacon of hope, representing a mindset which is more grounded, which concerns itself with the actual problems and struggles of our time. The hunter – being the human connected to the world that sustains us, the actual world, not the virtual one. The world which has also become dependent on us as much as we depend on it. Regardless of your gender, or whatever you believe defines your existence, your fight for recognition and individual justification, is trivial in the face of your own survival. The world out there is so full of beauty for those who dare to see. If we had one wish, it would be to grant some of the lost and forlorn souls out there some insight into the complexity and mind-boggling, truly worthwhile intricacies of the natural world – that we ourselves come from. One can find oneself there.



"I sincerely want to thank you and your entire team for an incredible experience at your Safari Lodge! Renee and I were completely in awe with everything! I must admit that we had the Luck Of the Irish as Steve, Nakongo, Lucky, Rocky, Renee and I wandered through the bush. Amazing for sure! Also, the house keeping staff and daily meals were incredible for sure! Again, Amazing! I got to foot hunt, ride in incredible vehicles, water hole hunt which is special to me, and just relax with my two newest friends, Steve Tors and Nakongo! Please feel free to share this with both of those guys! I hope they thought I was a good hunter and client. And Bridgette and her staff was OUTSTANDING! Rude, you and Alex and his incredible family were such hosts!

## NEWSLETTER June 2022

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**NEW HUNTING VEHICLES!** Our Uris have served us well, driving through tough terrain every day for 20 years. It was time to upgrade to two customized Land Cruizers, brand new! Alex is busy fitting a heavy-duty winch to the second vehicle. His design already proved efficient when Alex loaded an Eland bull off the ground with ease!



Top: Annette's reputation as a rhino whisperer has already crossed borders. In April, she was invited by Akagera National Park in Rwanda, to assist them in raising an orphaned white rhino, which was prematurely born. The little one did survive a few days, but eventually succumbed to an infection. Annette greatly enjoyed visiting another park and learning about their conservation efforts and their legendary anti-poaching strategies.

Right: the 600 solar panels are conveniently located just behind Mount Etjo Safari Lodge. They will require regular cleaning to maintain maximum efficiency.



Left: the milky way, over the hunting camp, this amazing photo was taken by Jan B. during their stay!

## Solar Power

In the past year, our electricity bill in Namibia has increased by as much as 100%. The pressure is on to contribute to sustainability on several facets. It was an obvious choice for us that the switch to solar power would need to be made, rather sooner than later, depending on the state of battery technology. Alex went full steam ahead, found and purchased, dismantled, transferred a second-hand solar power unit from the North of Namibia and re-installed it within the shortest time at Mount Etjo Safari Lodge, producing an amazing 200 KW power during the day, and even producing a substantial surplus which will be fed back into the grid. Without batteries, however, we still rely on power provided by the government when the sun is not shining. Still, the power savings will be enormous.

Using his experience from his home-base project, Alex intends on building a few more, much larger units, to facilitate better power usage for some big companies in Namibia. Within the next months, another unit will be erected at a sub-station on one of Annette's cattle farms. We are extremely proud of Alex, the ultimate McGyver within our midst (or, the equivalent of "Chuck Norris" to those who are not familiar with the clever McGyver), whose problem solving skills go beyond anything!



Top: Photo of all six rows taken by Alex with his drone from the air. Even 5 rows would have been sufficient to power the entire facility.

## Game Capture

With some Kudu again showing rabies symptoms, and the antelope species showing some signs of malnutrition on one side of the reserve, it was decided to vaccinate and relocate some Kudu as quickly as possible. Alex set up the capture pen and veterinarian Dr HO Reuter vaccinated about 30 Kudus on their way over to the other part of the reserve. During the dry seasons of 2014-2020, almost half of our Kudu population was lost due to rabies, other parts of the country reporting even greater losses. Nonetheless, one of our clients was able to get a 60 plus inch Kudu this year in May 2022!



## Dehorning

Just in June, Etosha National Park has reported the finding of 11 carcasses of black rhinos, all poached, dehorned, dishonored, their massive bodies discarded uselessly so that someone elsewhere may hold a souvenir of a life that is condemned because of it... it brings us to our knees to hear of the massive, relentless poaching that is claiming countless more rhino lives in the Kruger National Park. As the survival of another endangered species is becoming seemingly impossible, we are preparing for the war that will soon



reach our doorstep, too. Fellow private rhino owners are dehorning all their rhino, to deter the poachers from killing them. In the past months, Alex has offered his services as a helicopter pilot to several dehorning operations, assisting the veterinarians in tranquilizing the rhinos from the air.



Left: Alex, holding a huge rhino horn of an animal that was dehorned at the request of the owner of another reserve. Dehorning is one option. At our reserve, we hope to insert a tracking device into the horns which will allow us to monitor ALL animals 24/7. This operation, though, will cost a lot of money... with each tracking device costing around N\$10 000. We are hoping to get some financial support for this project from outside sources.

## Rhino Orphanage

At the beginning of 2022, Annette hit a record of 5 orphaned baby rhinos that simultaneously needed her attention, all of them requiring different feeds. Fortunately, by now, two teenage boys have already been released into the wild. Kamshona and Cato have



Left: time is running out for the rhinos. If poaching continues at the current trend, we will not have rhinos left in the wild within the next 10 years.

grown big and are successfully integrating into the wild herds. At the orphanage now is white rhino lady Malaika, black rhino lady Mwezi and feisty little white rhino bull Kalakwa. Annette finds herself bottle feeding rhino 1, while attaching the bottles to a casket in her car for rhino 2 to reach, while pouring milk into a bucket for rhino 3, who prefers this means of feeding over the bottle. Both little Jan and Keira greatly enjoy joining "Otutis" (as they lovingly call Annette), on these feeds sometimes, so that Annette sometimes multitasks between 3 rhino and 2 human children – but none feel at any loss!



## Happy Birthday, Annette!

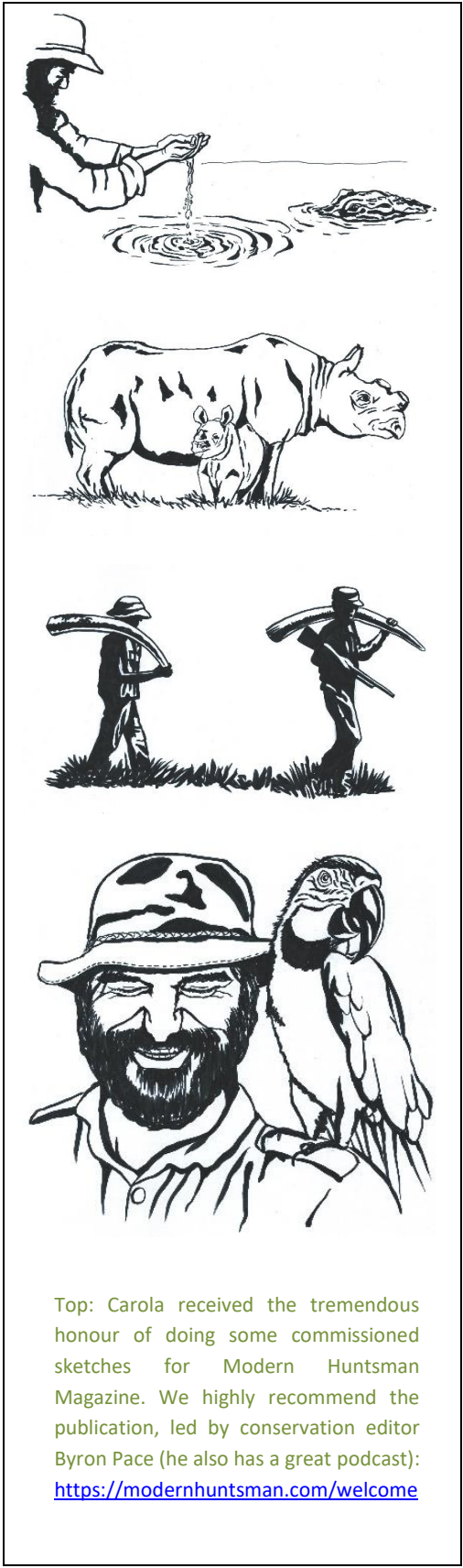
You would not believe it even if you saw it on her birth certificate, but amazing Annette has turned 60 on the 20<sup>th</sup> March 2022. Still looking better than many 20-year-old these days, we celebrated the big day with a picnic in the bush, her entire family joining her as a surprise! We had an amazing day, of which Annette's equally stunning mother, (now almost 90 years of age



Left: Although the rain was not as plentiful as in the past year, it was still sufficient, and we are tremendously grateful!!!!

and in excellent shape and state of mind), was our guest of honor. We wish you only the best Annette, thank you for your endless determination, dedication, and hard work for conservation, you bring buckets full of goodness into this world. You are the matriarch of our reserve, and we will follow wherever you lead!

Below: One of our lionesses has given birth to at least two cubs recently! Rudie has been taking the most beautiful photos. Be sure to follow Rudie on Instagram @rdk.photo



Bottom: Little Jan and Keira, helping and being a part of all that is happening on the farm! If it includes attaching wires, lying under cars at the garage, spending time in the butchery, riding a motorcycle or a shovel of the front-end-loader, they are always exploring and experiencing interesting new things!

Top: Annette's surprise birthday celebration with friends and family. One good friend, Nadine, even flew in from Switzerland to surprize Annette!



Top: Carola received the tremendous honour of doing some commissioned sketches for Modern Huntsman Magazine. We highly recommend the publication, led by conservation editor Byron Pace (he also has a great podcast): <https://modernhuntsman.com/welcome>



Left: Successful hunts over the past months! Two big sables, nyalas, an ostrich, the first golden wildebeest, and a big kudu of 60 inches were some of the most noteworthy animals taken this year so far.

### Mount Etjo School Kids

We are happy to announce that this little girl now has also found a sponsor to finance her schooling for the time when she leaves Mount Etjo Private School. Sadly, the schools surrounding our area often do not have enough space to accommodate our learners once they have finished Grade 7. For this reason, and because the quality of online learning having improved substantially through COVID times, we are now considering offering remote studies to our high school kids.



**Seizing the opportunity...** before meeting Alex, it was my (Carola) dream to pursue a PhD in Genetics. Moving to the farm instead was an easy choice to make. But, having coincidentally stumbled across a fully funded PhD Pharmacogenetics/Bio-informatics project that can be done remotely and in collaboration with the Namibian and Stellenbosch University this year, I realized a second chance to do what I am truly good at, 10 years later! Juggling between farm life, family and this great new challenge will require constant compromising, but I do know this: if I had not at least given it a try I would have regretted it more than a few sleepless nights!

**LEOPARD TAG  
AVAILABLE for  
2022!!!**

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