

# MINNESOTA ADVENTURING

Fall 2022



# ▽ Editor's Letter

How was your summer? Mine was great, one of the best. Let me paint a little picture of one Sunday evening in August in our neighborhood:

“Zane.....Zane.....ZANE! Come to dinner buddy!”

“Dad! I already ate!”

“What did you eat?”

“Hank and I were chasing frogs with our slingshots, and we cooked up some legs over the fire, I'm full now.”

This is a real insight into my son, Zane. His future is bright, I am happy he is back to school now so he can balance his life skills with some math and reading to add to his culinary and outdoor skills. My kids both have their first deer hunting licenses. Evie in Minnesota for the youth season but since my son is a little younger, he has a tag in Wisconsin where the mentor age is a little different. Both kids are excited, but Evie is not happy with the fact that Zane gets to hunt at an earlier age than she did. Just another day of problems in the Roettger house.

The hunting world is a great place. Kate and I were blessed to spend a couple of weeks in the Northern Cape of South Africa this past summer. We met a family – the Christensen's – Josh and Laura and their two sons, Elija and Ivan. What fun as they are SCI members and as luck would have it, Josh is the editor of their chapter magazine in Michigan. It was fun to swap stories and share ideas, pictures, etc. so we decided to join each other's chapters. Welcome to MN SCI.

This issue may feel a bit African-themed. But that is the content received so that's what gets printed. We love supporting our friends in Africa. I cannot lie, it is one of my favorite places in the world, and Kate and I will be going again next year. We are also doing something very interesting with a trip to an island that I am going to guess few have ever heard of. More to come on that as I finalize travel, etc. Next year I am going to be 50 (The plan is to make it anyway) so we are going big!

By the time you all read this, bear, deer, elk, pronghorn, and who knows what else will have been harvested already. My guiding of my two kids should be over and I pray they both get a deer as that first deer is one that is not forgotten. The rest of you will also have harvests, so send me some pictures. I would love to share what is going on with the membership. Remember, this is your organization and one of our best ways to communicate is through *Minnesota Adventuring* magazine. Good luck and I hope it is the best year you all ever have!

**Tony Roettger, Editor**



# MINNESOTA ADVENTURING

**MINNESOTA**  
**SCI**  
FIRST FOR HUNTERS

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Cover photo credit: Tony Roettger, Welgevonden Reserve, South Africa

### Capture a Moment on Film.

*Minnesota Adventuring* is looking for cover photos. You are invited to submit your hunting or wild animal photos. Cover photos need to be portrait or vertical orientation. Email your photos with descriptions to [razr1500@gmail.com](mailto:razr1500@gmail.com).

*Are you an avid outdoorsman?  
Do you love to hang out with other outdoorsmen?*

**COME JOIN SCI**

We have an incredible calendar of events in store for 2022 and would love to welcome you to our chapter.

If you have interest in helping out... we also have room on our board for you to get involved as a board member.

**Private message Travis Senenfelder for details.**

# MINNESOTA ADVENTURING

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MINNESOTA ADVENTURING welcomes advertisements, articles, hunt reports, and photos from Members of the Minnesota SCI. Submissions should include Member's name, address, and daytime phone number and be sent to editor@minnesotasci.com. Submissions may be edited for length and clarity.

*No attempt is made to verify the accuracy of hunt reports. Advertisements in the Minnesota Adventuring are not to be considered endorsements by the Minnesota SCI.*

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**Bonus!!** Any new or renewal 3-year membership to National SCI plus Minnesota chapter SCI also receives a **FREE \$150 KUIU gift card** from National SCI. KUIU gift card offer ends Feb. 15, 2023. Antelope hunt entries accepted through Feb. 11, 2023.

*Minnesota SCI is offering a fantastic opportunity to win a*

# 5 Day Antelope Hunt for Two Hunters!

This 5-day, 4-night fully guided Antelope hunt for 2 hunters includes one Antelope per hunter along with lodging (tents), three meals per day plus snack table, non-alcoholic beverages, transport to/from airport and guided hunting for 2 hunters. Alcohol not provided, so you may bring your own. Airfare to Los Lunas, New Mexico not included. This hunt value is \$4,000 per hunter. *\$8,000 total value.*

## HOW TO GET AN OPPORTUNITY TO WIN:

### Gets 1 entry:

- New person that joins MN SCI with a 1-year membership.
- An existing member who renews for a 1-year membership
- An existing member who refers a person that then becomes a new 1-year member of MN SCI

### Gets 3 entries:

- New person that joins MN SCI with 3-year membership.
- An existing member who refers a person that then becomes a new 3-year member of MN SCI.
- An existing member who upgrades to a 3-year membership from a 1-year membership in MN SCI.

### Gets 20 entries:

- A non-member that joins MN SCI as a Lifetime member of National SCI plus MN SCI.
- An existing member who refers a person that then becomes a new Lifetime member of National SCI plus MN SCI.
- An existing member that upgrades to Lifetime member of National SCI plus MN SCI.

*Minnesota SCI thanks Hi Lo Country Outfitters for this fantastic hunting opportunity!*



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**NOTE:**

Available to new members, upgrading members, and existing members that bring in a new person who joins MN SCI. Joining Minnesota SCI requires either an existing or new membership of equal length in National SCI. All entries will be verified with National SCI to be eligible.

# A Happy Anniversary in South Africa

## Hunt of a Lifetime Takes Michigan Couple to the 'Dark Continent' For Unforgettable Safari

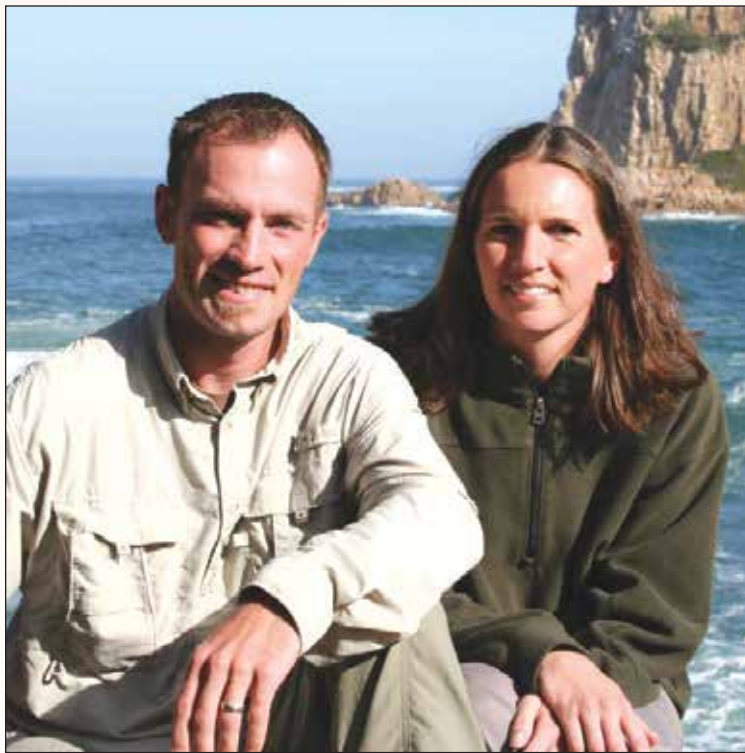
By Josh Christensen

Our first trip to the African continent started at the 2007 Mid-Michigan Chapter of SCI annual fundraiser. After talking with many of the outfitters in attendance, my wife, Sara, and I decided we would bid on a hunt donated by George Lavin of Walken Seymour Safaris. He was donating a 10-day hunting safari to the Eastern Cape of South Africa for six different animals ranging from kudu to warthog. After an interesting bidding war, we won the trip to the “dark continent.” Sara and I found it hard to believe we were heading to Africa!

Five short months and a lot of planning later, we were off on the longest plane ride ever. We were no strangers to flying, and had flown to New Zealand twice, but those trips were miniscule compared to the 22-plus hours we had to sit on this plane, and that doesn't count the two-hour flight we took from Detroit to Newark, N.J. We departed from Newark, flew the eight plus hours to Senegal, sat on the tarmac for about an hour to an hour-and-a-half to let people on and off and refuel, (we were unable to depart the plane) then flew the remaining 12 hours or so south into Johannesburg. Don't get me wrong, South African Air had a great set-up with everyone having their own nine-inch monitor and controller, but you can sit and watch television for only so long.

Upon arriving in Johannesburg, we were met by Desmond, an employee of Hunter's Support Air 2000. Hiring Hunter's Support was one of the best decisions we could have made. Hunter's Support Air 2000 is a customs firm that will handle hunters' gun import paperwork (all eight pages of it) and help them import their rifles into the country. We paid \$160 for their services and sent all of our paperwork to South Africa over a month in advance, but it was well worth the time and money. Desmond met us as soon as we departed the aircraft and was able to maneuver us to the front of every line – both customs and police station. With his connections, he had us out of the international airport and checked in at the domestic airport in less than an hour's time.

From Johannesburg, we had another flight to Port Elizabeth where we were met by George, owner and operator of Walken



Seymour Safaris. This flight was uneventful and we met up with George at the baggage claim. He helped us with our rifles and drove us to our hunting lodge. We would be staying at the Hounslow House, which turned out to be a very modern and well-kept historical landmark. We arrived around 11 p.m. local time and settled in for the night. We didn't have any trouble falling asleep due to our exhaustion.

The Hounslow House was built in the mid-1800s and was a stopping point for many settlers to this part of Africa. Many immigrants from Europe were given land, much like the program used in Oklahoma in the United States. People would pick up their deed in Grahamstown and then set out for their new land. The Hounslow House was about a day's travel by horse and wagon from Grahamstown.

The Hounslow House was a fully operational sheep farm/bed and breakfast used by many travelers and hunting operations. This would be our base for our 10-day safari in South Africa.

The next morning, we awoke to an excellent breakfast before we headed out to the shooting range. The sun was out and the weather was nice and cool. After confirming our zeroes, we set off after impala. It wasn't long before we spotted animals. The amount of wildlife in South Africa was amazing compared with what I was used to seeing in my home state of Michigan. We first saw a group of kudu, but they were all cows and calves. Next we spotted a bachelor group of impala with a few nice rams, but George was confident we could do better. We



continued to trek across George's large property until we found a nice ram with his herd of ewes. We approached the herd and Sara set up for a fairly long shot. (For this hunt we primarily used a .308 with 150-grain Barnes Triple Shock bullets. I also brought my 50-caliber muzzleloader in hopes of getting close enough to get a shot at a kudu and springbok with the "mini-cannon," as George referred to it.

Sara and George went ahead as Voou, George's tracker, and I stayed back with the tracking dog, Reggie. George and Sara were able to get within 200 yards of the animals and George set up the shooting sticks for Sara to take her shot. If you have never hunted in South Africa you will need to be prepared to shoot from shooting sticks, either from a standing or sitting/kneeing position, because the flora often will not allow you to get into the prone position.

Sara now admits she was a nervous wreck and hurried the shot, but the bullet connected nonetheless, and although it wasn't the best shot, we ended up claiming her animal a short time later with a little help from Reggie. Reggie was an excellent tracking dog. It was a treat to watch him work. He would walk with us everywhere we went and never needed to be on a leash. When we stopped, he stopped. When Sara or I would pull up our rifle to shoot he would look in the same

direction we were aiming, and as soon as a shot was fired, he would take off running in the direction of the shot. If the animal was hit, Reggie would smell the blood and start barking and all we would have to do was follow the barking to our animal.

Sara's impala was an excellent representative of the species, and after claiming her animal, photos were taken. The rest of the day was spent in pursuit of springbok. We saw many and even put a stalk on one or two groups, but it wasn't our day for springbok and we were unable to seal the deal.

That night, and every night at the Hounslow House, we came back to camp to discuss the day's hunt with the other hunter in camp, who was also from Michigan. We would visit with each other and the owner of the farm while snacking until dinner was served, which usually didn't happen until around nine in the evening. This was something I had to get used to. Each night for dinner we generally had some sort of venison, ranging from springbok to kudu.

The next morning, we decided to try to position me close enough for a muzzleloader shot on a kudu. These elk-size animals are often referred to as the grey ghost because they can blend into their surroundings so well. It is hard to believe an animal that size can seemingly just disappear in the bush, but they do. We saw many kudu on this morning but were unable to get within the 100 yards I requested to take a shot.

On the way back to camp for lunch, we spotted a herd of springbok feeding off to our right about 300 yards away. We stopped the vehicle, quickly got out, loaded the .308 and attempted to make a stalk on them. We worked our way to within 160 yards before the shooting sticks were set up for Sara. She made an awesome shot and the antelope went only about five yards before dropping. Sara now had her second animal of the safari. Once again photos were taken. It was amazing to me the attention to detail George took in taking photos of our animals. He was able to show the excellent quality of each animal as he positioned it with perfect backgrounds and foregrounds. The sun was always right and the animals almost looked as if they were still alive.

That night we decided to hunt over a hayfield for bushbuck. This hayfield had a 10-foot fence all around it to keep the animals out. It worked well for all animals except the bushbuck and a troop of baboons we saw in it one morning. George had been seeing a nice bushbuck feeding in this field for about two weeks before we arrived. We were able to see a few ewes and one ram, but he had one horn about two inches longer than the other, so I passed on him because we knew there was a better one around.

The next day, July 6, was Sara's and my fifth wedding anniversary and George wanted us to try our luck hunting blesbok. We drove to a new location about an hour from the Hounslow House where George knew of a large herd we could hunt. When we arrived at our hunting location, Sara and I were in awe at the number of blesbok in the middle of a very large grazing field. There must have been over three hundred of these animals – talk about a herd of animals! Obviously, there were tons of animals to hunt but they were all at least 400 yards from the nearest bush line, and trying to sneak up 300 pairs of eyes wasn't going to happen.

George told us we had two options, crawl out and try to get a shot or set up in the wood line and wait for Voou to circle the herd and stand up on the other side of the field where the animals would see him and move from him to us. We decided on the latter of the two because it was still early in the day and we thought we might get busted and spook them away if we attempted to crawl out into

the field. We waited about 45 minutes to an hour for Voou to make his way through the bush line around the field. The plan worked wonderfully and it wasn't long before the herd came within shooting distance.

It was my turn to shoot first on this day, so I took aim and shot the lead ram at George's "all clear." I hit the animal a little high but it looked like a good shot and it appeared the ram wasn't going to be able to get back to the herd, but he did and we now had to find him in the herd that had moved away. Lucky for us the blesbok moved to an area not too far off the bush line. We crept toward them and George was able to find the one I shot. After a few frantic shots my blesbok was down. We took photos and loaded him in the back of the truck and moved to a different location on the same property.

It was now Sara's turn. This time we were able to spot a smaller group of blesbok not too far from the bush line and methodically crept our way to the edge of the bush. The wind was in our favor and they didn't have any inkling we were there. Now we waited and hoped the herd would continue to feed our way. Luck was on our side as the group fed their way right past us. Sara pulled up and shot the blesbok George pointed out. Although it was a disabling shot George told her to hit him again, and with her second shot the animal dropped. Two blesbok down and it wasn't even lunch time yet. What a great morning for our anniversary! At the completion of this morning's hunt, Sara had the three animals she wanted, so it would be my turn to try to finish my wish list.

As a side note, on a photo safari we took later in the trip we learned something interesting about how the blesbok supposedly got its name. Blesbok don't have the capability to





close their nostrils like some other animals do, and being that it is so dry in South Africa, bugs are continually looking for moist places to go. Ergo, the bugs find refuge in the noses of blesbok. To get the little creepy crawling buggers out, a blesbok will lift its head and forcibly throw it down while blowing air out of its nose, appearing to sneeze. And of course when someone sneezes you say “bless you,” hence “bles”bok. Even if this is not how it got its name it is a great story for tourists.

There was still time left in the day for George to take us to a picturesque location overlooking the Indian Ocean where he knew there would be some good impala. I figured I'd try a shot at one with my muzzleloader, so I took this weapon out with us. George did an excellent job of finding a nice ram and getting me closer than the 100 yards I wanted to be with the muzzleloader, but I was unable to fulfill my end of the deal. I clean missed the ram. I couldn't believe it and was furious with myself, not only for missing the chip shot but also for messing up George's awesome stalk. George didn't seem to be nearly as upset as I was. He looked at me, smiled, and said, “That's why they call it hunting and not shooting; don't worry about it.” Although they were only words, they helped me feel better about the miss and a little more relaxed.

The next morning was Saturday and there was a big festival a short drive away in Grahamstown. Sara and I asked George to take us in to town to look around and possibly pick up some souvenirs. This is something we take pleasure in doing no matter where we hunt. We enjoy experiencing other cultures and meeting and talking with people we would otherwise never get the opportunity to.

We had a great time taking in the culture, including

watching traditional South African dancing, eating African foods, and buying presents for loved ones back home. We also purchased two pieces of artwork from a local man starting his career as an artist. It was nice to see the smile on his face when we showed interest in his work.

The craziest part of our day however was on the drive home. Dusk was beginning to settle in and we were only about five miles from the lodge when a huge kudu cow jumped in front of us. Now I've hit a whitetail or two in my day but a kudu is much larger. The picture is etched in my brain. George was telling me something interesting about the country of South Africa, as he often did, when up from the ditch came the cow. She had no intention of stopping and it was too late for us to. I slammed my hand up to the roof of the truck to brace myself while yelling to George “Kudu! Kudu! Kudu!” each time louder than the last.

Lucky for George, and us, he had a “brush guard” on the front of his truck and she bounced off and into the opposite ditch. The animal did very little damage to his truck but sure did get my adrenalin pumping. This day definitely turned out to be the true South African experience.

After another great breakfast the next morning, we set out looking for the grey ghost. Not only do they blend in extremely well to their surroundings, but they also have some of the best hearing and vision a game animal can have. An example of this was evident as we tried to put a stalk on a very nice bull. We saw the kudu about a half mile away and began our stalk. We were able to sneak in and out of the bush and advance toward him to within about 300 yards. Then when we popped out to get a good look at the bull, he was looking right at us! There

wasn't a wind that morning, so he wasn't able to smell us. He then vanished, never to be seen again. That evening we also saw some nice bulls, however, our shooting light ran out before we could close the deal.

I now had four days left to hunt and I still wanted to shoot seven more animals. I decided I had waited long enough for the 100-yard shot, so I ditched the muzzleloader and went to the .308. We decided to have a go after gemsbok on this day. The place George had lined up for us to hunt was a good two-hour drive. Within the first hour



of the hunt George had us within 30 yards of a nice young gemsbok. At first George told me to get my rifle ready, but after taking a better look he told me to pass as we could do much better. Although it looked good to me, I'm glad we passed.

We continued to walk the property but were unable to find any large gemsbok until George had us set up on a clearing near a very thick area of bush. He had Voou start at the far end of the bush, about a quarter mile or more away, and walk through the area hoping to push some animals out. It was to be a one-man game drive. Voou didn't make any extra noise as he walked through the bush but his movement and scent was enough, because within 20 minutes three nice gemsbok came out into the clearing looking back toward where Voou was. There were two cows and a bull. George had me shoot the cow with the longest horns and I was able to connect at about 120 yards. She went just over 20 yards and dropped.

I was elated! A gemsbok was the number one animal I wanted when traveling to Africa. Something about the size of the animal, the length of its horns, and the coloration of its face says "Africa" to me. In my opinion, it appears they are wearing a black and white mask. A very beautiful animal.

At the completion of the gemsbok hunt we drove the two hours back to the Hounslow House and spent the evening in search of the elusive kudu, but to no avail.

The next morning was a chilly one with frost on the ground. We were told they experience frost only a few mornings every year in that part of South Africa, but while we were there we had three frosts during our 10 days there (lucky us).

I was now down to three days in the hunt and six animals to go. I was getting a bit worried, but George continued to tell me not to fret and I would get everything I came to South Africa for. It was nice he was so optimistic, but to say I was skeptical would be an understatement.

That next morning, we went after kudu. We went to the same area where we saw the very nice kudu bull that gave us the slip a few days before and began to glass the surroundings. George spotted a cow and a bull in the distance, but told Sara and Voou they would need to stay behind as we made a stalk because he wanted as few people moving as possible.

The kudu were moving from our left to right and we had the sun at our back. The bush was very thick as we inched our way to intersect the animals. We hadn't stalked long before we saw the kudu cow walk through an opening roughly 10 yards wide 140 yards ahead of us. We

froze, and when the opportunity presented itself the shooting sticks were set up. As the cow passed through the opening, she gave me a perfect broadside shot, however, the bull who followed came in at a different angle and was facing us. I had the crosshairs on his chest, and when he turned his head to lick his side, I squeezed the trigger. The result was instant as the bull dropped where he stood.

We were only an hour into our morning hunt and I had a kudu down. George called the ranch and some of the workers were driven to our location to carry the kudu out of the bush. This was interesting to watch as five men used a tarp and sticks to make a stretcher type contraption, and with the sixth man with a machete blazing a trail they were able to get the kudu to George's truck.

Pictures were taken, and as it was early enough we decided to go looking for impala. On the drive to another property to look for impala, we passed the alfalfa field where George had been seeing the good bushbuck over the past few weeks. The really good bushbuck wasn't there but a very good one was. We were able to make a great stalk to within 70 yards of the bushbuck and I took my second animal of the morning.

By the time pictures were taken and the bushbuck was brought back to the skinning shed, it was lunch time. The rest of the afternoon slowed down as we were looking for impala and springbok to no avail, but right before dark as we were walking back to the truck, Voou spotted southern bush duiker. After a quick stalk, I was able to take the duiker with my muzzleloader. I decided to take the muzzleloader out for a springbok that evening since I had done so well in the morning. We spotted and stalked several herds but I wasn't able to get a



shot.

At our request, George booked a photo safari for Sara and me the next day. That morning George took us to the Pumba Game Reserve where we were able to see many animals up close and personal, some too close for my comfort. We saw and learned about many different African animals, like the giraffe, elephant and eland. Our guide on the game drive even took us to within 30 yards of two very large full-maned sleeping lions. Although the pictures we took of these two big cats were great, I was still uneasy being so close to that big of a predator. It was amazing to see how big these cats really are. Our guide estimated them at about 400 pounds each!

George picked us up from the game reserve when our photo safari was over and took us to one of his friend's cattle ranches to hunt for warthog. This portion of our hunt reminded me of hunting whitetail in Michigan. As I said, it was a cattle ranch where they milked cows and we ended up setting up on the edge of an alfalfa field and a thick river bottom waiting for a big boar.

When we first approached the alfalfa field, we saw about a half dozen pigs eating new alfalfa shoots. We eased our way closer to the field and stood in the bush for about a half-hour watching the small warthogs eat and play. Then a sow came bursting from the bush about 50 yards to our left with a nice boar following her. George took one look at the boar and said he was a shooter and to shoot him when he turned broadside. One shot later the warthog was dead in his tracks. These animals are an awesome sight with their long faces and big ivory tusks, but as many people say, "They have a face only their mother could love."

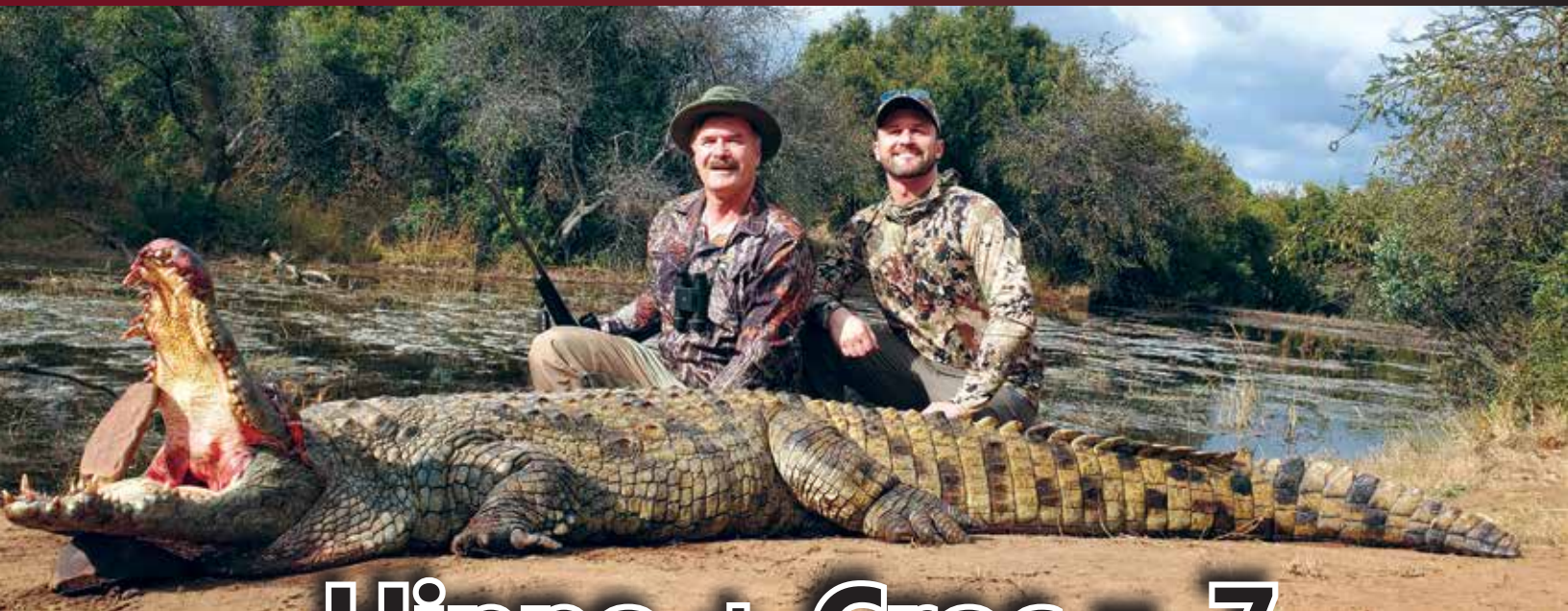


The next morning was my last day to hunt and I still wanted to shoot an impala and a springbok. The morning was rainy and cold and I thought it might be a tough hunt, but luck was on our side. During our drive to the property where we were going to look for animals, I spotted a nice impala ram walking by himself. I pointed him out to George and we stopped, got out of the truck, and made a stalk to within 100 yards. From the shooting sticks, I was able to make a very effective shoulder breaking shot.

We loaded the impala in the back of the truck and began to look for springbok, and right on cue found a decent sized herd with several good rams. We stopped the truck and watched them feed their way into the bush before we pursued them. We moved slowly, but within a half-hour we were in position for me to make a quartering away shot at about 100 yards. The springbok dropped and then jumped back up and ran off. We found him a short distance away lying dead. We pulled the impala from the truck and got pictures with the last two animals from the trip.

We stayed an additional three days in South Africa on a side trip we organized through George. He was our tour guide for most of it and took us to see many beautiful sights to partake in some food and fun adventures, including zip-lining across rivers in Tlissicama National Park, whale watching in Plettenberg Bay and swimming in the Indian Ocean. Sara and I had quite the adventure on this first trip to South Africa.





# Hippo + Croc = 7

By Brent Nelson

At the 2020 SCI Expo, a bunch of us were shooting the breeze about African hunting. I mentioned since I had already gotten the Big 5 and most of the plains game animals, I may be done hunting the African terrain. Brian Smith, past SCI president, then said, “I have just the thing for you, and it will be on the auction.” He ran the live auction hunts and had a donation from Sensational Safaris for a hippo plus croc hunt in South Africa. He was right, that would round out my “Dangerous 7” – elephant, lion, leopard, buffalo, rhinoceros, and crocodile and hippopotamus. How could I pass up that opportunity? I won the bid. In March 2020, I called Sensational to set up the adventure and then the global pandemic hit, and the hunt had to be delayed. This past winter I contacted Sensational again to set up the hunt. My son, Jace and I headed to South Africa for the hunt.

Our first task was the crocodile. The weather was perfect for croc sunning. We went from pond to pond searching for “the one” when we found a nice 10.5-foot croc sunning himself. Sneaking up through the brush we got within 75 yards. I lined up the scope on where the plum-sized brain should be ... I fired and the croc’s entire body rose a foot and then fell lifeless. Our task ended in success.

We then decided to hunt plains game and small cats for Jace. He got a nice black impala to mount alongside his common impala he got on an earlier hunt. Egbert Boon, the professional hunter and owner of Sensational Safaris, taunted Jace that he really needed a white impala to complete his impala collection. Of course,

we had to have that white impala, but it proved to be incredibly challenging. They were quite skittish, and it took two days to get the perfect one.

Filling time, we ventured out on night hunts. In addition to the serval cat we got, night hunts proved extremely worthwhile as you get to see animals that you would otherwise miss on your day hunts.

Next, we moved on to terrain with a river full of crocodiles and several hippos. The hippos must have sensed we were there. As we stalked along the river, they would only lift their eyes and nose out of the water to get a quick breath and a look around. Unfortunately, you can’t tell the size or sex of a hippo by its eyes and nose, so we hunkered down in a blind. After an hour, two hippos popped their heads out of the water, and we could tell one was a large bull. Now we had to wait as he came up for air about every 10 minutes. This offered five seconds to shoot a softball-sized brain at 80 yards. On the hippo’s next, and last, breath, the .375 roared twice and the hippo immediately sank. Jace and I looked at each other when Egbert informed us that hippos can hold their breath for 25 minutes and if they’re dead, they usually float in 35 minutes. That’s a long time when you’re waiting to see if



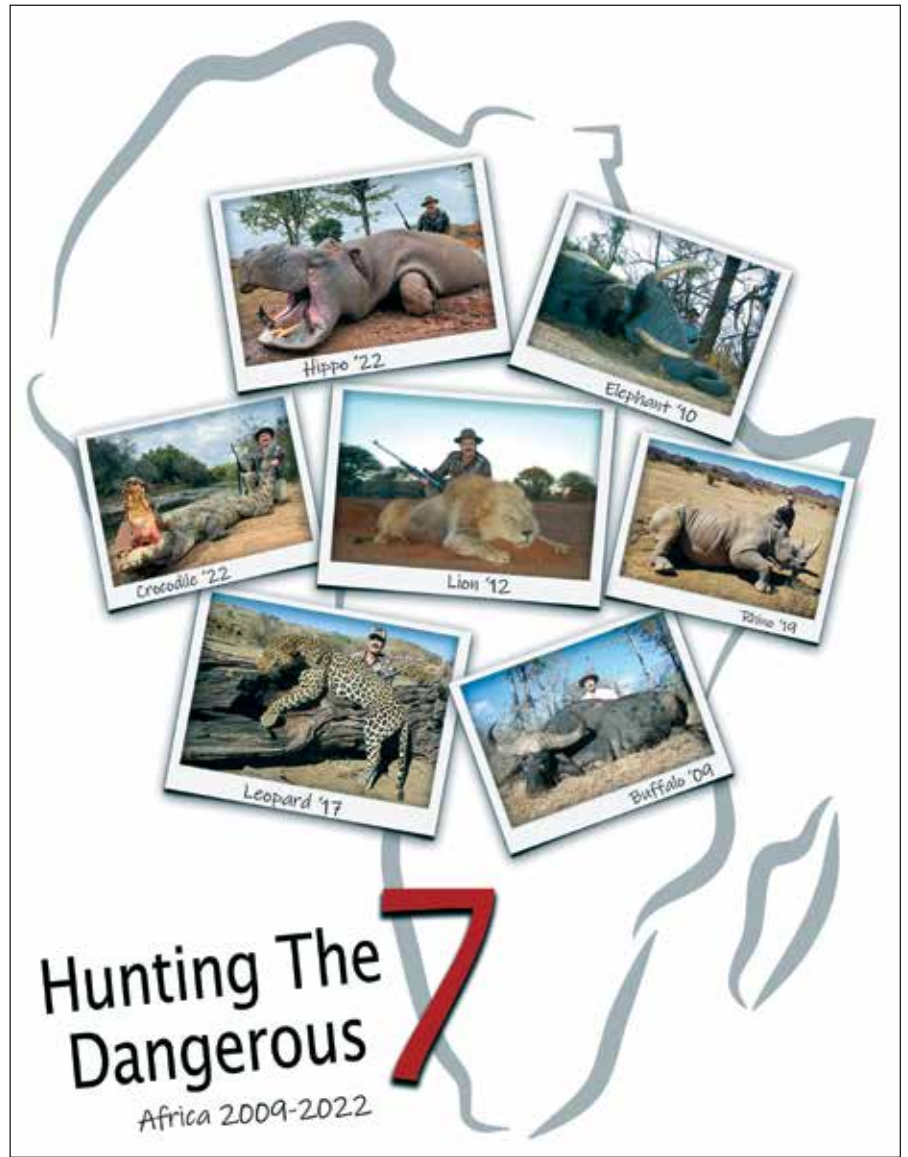
you hit your mark ... 25 minutes came and went, but Egbert was right, at 35 minutes the bull floated to the surface. That's when the fun began. One of the other guides got a boat and went into the river and tied a rope to the hippo. The land cruiser backed the trailer into the river too deep and got stuck, so another guide went back to the lodge and got a backhoe. It looked like a comedy in the river – hippo tied to the boat, the boat tied to the trailer, the trailer tied to the land cruiser, and the land cruiser tied to the backhoe. But this train was successful, and they finally pulled the hippo out and hauled it on a trailer back to the lodge.

The last three days we hunted plains game during the day and hyenas at night. Hyena hunting was interesting as we set up a blind and played an electronic game call very loudly. The hyenas would howl back but never come in close enough for a shot. Unfortunately, hyenas don't like the cold, wet weather we were experiencing and stayed denned up. On the bright side, Jace and I have a reason to return to Africa to get the hyena that eluded us.

Brian was right, he did have just the thing for me. Completing my "Dangerous 7" proved to be a highlight of my hunting expeditions.

- Cape Buffalo, 2009, Zimbabwe
- Elephant, 2010, Zimbabwe
- Lion, 2012, South Africa
- Leopard, 2017, Namibia
- Rhinoceros, 2019, South Africa
- Crocodile, 2022, South Africa
- Hippopotamus, 2022, South Africa

Africa is worthy of every hunter's destination. From plains game to the Dangerous 7, there is something for everyone.



# HUNTING *Adventures*





# THE John Rambo OF Deer

By Gordon Jensen

November 2021, finally, the firearm deer season came to Northern Minnesota. Every hunter here in the North Star State most likely has his or her own stories of deer camp, either on their property or on a relative's or someone else's. My family usually hosts a considerable group throughout the last few months of the year up on or property near the Detroit Lakes, MN area. It is like the many other deer camps that make up the rich north woods culture of this great state: early mornings walking through the shadowy silver moonlight to the stand, the crackling fire in the fireplace and out in the yard, the great comradery during happy hour and dinner after shooting time is over. At least that's how we do it. Add in a little afternoon college football games and maybe a bloody mary if you're not going out later. All in all, it is one of the major highlights of my year, one I have been participating in for most of my life. However, this year, I would experience something truly extraordinary.

On my first morning out, my friend Nick came with me. We were headed out to one of the stands my family has on our property, in between two cornfields, right up against the cat-tailed swamp of a lake. I brought with me, as usual, my Savage Arms model 111 rifle, chambered in .300 Winchester Magnum. My only big game rifle. I use it for various North American game, whitetail deer included. The 185-grain Nozzler rounds I use are well suited to most things, even elk, moose, and bear. The longest shot I have made with my Vortex 5 x 20 scope was an elk at 573 yards. All in all, this is my "workhorse" rifle, intended to be passed down to my descendants. I was ecstatic to harvest with it once more. I usually carry a sidearm with me, this time, I brought my .500 Smith and Wesson Magnum with me. This is to ensure that any close or cripple shot is going to be quick for the animal. Nick brought with him my dad's old Ruger M77, chambered in .7mm Magnum, with a 3 x 9 Zeiss. My intention that morning was to get Nick a deer.

We set up in the stand at the perfect time, just about half an hour before shooting time. In the darkness, we chatted a little and I dozed off until it was time to shoot. In the early morning twilight, just before sunrise, almost everything looks like a deer, even small rocks, and tufts of grass. We call those "deer-shaped objects." We saw no real deer until after the sun came up. One buck sauntered down from the forest opposite the stand. He came out into an open alfalfa field and made his way towards the corn. It was a pretty decent 8-pointer. I ranged him at 152 yards. Exactly dead on for what my dad's 3 x 9 Zeiss was set at. I whispered to Nick that this was his shot.

"Naw, Gord, I want to wait, look, he's looking back over his shoulder." Nick quietly replied. "He's smelling something bigger."





Sure enough, after a few seconds, that buck scurried off towards the highway as fast as he could. Nick grunted approvingly. Almost instantly after that, Nick motioned toward the lake. When I looked over, I could see a much larger buck plowing through the tall grass toward the corn. Once he got to it, he started eating. He was so close that I could hear him munching on the corn. When he was done, he walked out on my side. I motioned Nick to quietly come over to my spot so he could shoot him. Nick shook his head. "You get 'em," he mouthed. I shrugged. If he wanted me to do it, I'd do it. I wasn't going to let that one go scot-free. I ranged him one last time, 43 yards. Close. He was walking perfectly broadside from my position in the stand. I lined up my scope on him and realized he was too close. All I could see in my reticles was fur. I didn't have time to dial my scope back, so I found the trace of his front shoulder through the sea of fur I was looking at, aimed just behind it, and pulled the trigger.

The .300 Win. Mag. has a pretty decent kick, so once I steadied myself, I frantically tried to find him again. I saw him hobble away from the stand toward a thicket of aspens in the direction of the lake, no doubt trying to get lost in the acres and acres of cat tails that lay beyond. However, he stopped about 100 yards out and turned around to look back. His head was facing to the left this time and he looked around like he was feeling alright. Did I miss? It is possible. My scope was sighted in to be dead on at 200 yards, but I can compensate for that, I am experienced enough to be able to hit him at 40 yards. When he started to walk forward unabatedly, Nick suggested I hit him again. I had to have missed. Flustered, I knelt down and shouldered my rifle again. This time he was in the aspen trees. I had to wait until the sweet spot was in between the trunks. I pulled the trigger again.

This time he flinched and ran off to the cat tails, but he fell in the long grass right when he got out of the aspens. I did not see him get up. I looked back at Nick, who gave me a thumbs up, and I finally relaxed.

"That one was a nice one dude," Nick said. "See, told ya there was a bigger one."

"Yeah, all we have to do is wait for him to marinate," I replied. We hung out in the stand for another ten minutes or so. Then I got up and unloaded my rifle. I instructed Nick to follow me with his rifle just for good measure. I would be taking my sidearm to finish the deer off if I needed to. We both quietly made our way to where we thought he was. We came up to the spot where I had fired the first time and found no blood. When we got to the spot where I had made my second shot, we found a big crater in the dirt. That got my heart rate up. That meant I probably missed him the second time. It would make sense, I desperately tried to shoot him through the trees. We fanned out and came up to the spot where I thought I saw him drop. "This is it, here," I said.

With that, suddenly, the buck popped up about ten yards in front of me. We looked at each other for a split second, then with a huff and a snort he bounded off again directly away from us. I cursed under my breath.

Then he stopped one more time and looked back at us. I ranged him. 115 yards. I raised my handgun but quickly reconsidered. My longest shot with my .500 magnum with iron sights was 84 yards. This was not a good idea. I turned to Nick and traded guns with him. Looking down at my dad's Zeiss, the buck was in a perfect broadside position like a painting. His head facing to my left again. This time I pulled the trigger, he dropped like a brick to the ground, his feet tucking up underneath him.

"I think you got him that time." Nick laughed.

"I guess we'll see," I replied.

Once we got up to him, we could tell he was thoroughly dead. I poked him with a stick for good measure. It was a really nice 8-pointer. Big body, one of the biggest I've seen in a Minnesota whitetail. The two of us could barely get him into the back of my truck. One of the brow tines was broken down to the base. It was bleeding still. He had been in a fight for sure. As we were dragging him back out into the open Nick made an observation.

"Hey look," he said. "Wasn't his head facing to your right when you shot the first time?"

"Yeah," I said.

"And then your second shot, he was facing with his head to your left?"

"Right."

"But that's the one where you hit the ground, where the crater in the dirt was. Look." Sure enough, I hadn't noticed it, but the buck's stomach was caked in dirt. No doubt I had blown that dirt into his belly when I shot that second time.

"But then the third time you shot him, he was also facing to your left?"

"Right," I said.

"Holy crap, man, look."

Nick pointed to a spot on the right side of the deer. Right in the middle, there was the tail end of a bullet sticking out of him. A .300 Win Mag bullet. The only time I took a shot when he was facing to my right was my first shot. At 43 yards. The bullet only penetrated about half an inch into his hide. One of his ribs was broken, but that was it. This deer took a 185-grain .300 Win Mag round to the chest at point blank and the bullet didn't even go into him. Nick deemed him "The John Rambo of Deer" at that moment and we both took a few minutes to laugh and shake our heads in disbelief. In reality, it must have been a defective round, which I should have called the manufacturer out for, but I haven't gotten around to it.

Throughout the rest of my hunting career, I will always cherish this story. It was a good hunt and a heck of a buck. It's not every day that two regular deer hunters get to witness the birth of a legend.

# ▽ SCI News Around the World

## SCI Continues to Push for Bontebok Imports

On July 29, SCI submitted a comment letter urging the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to grant 17 permit applications for the import of sport-hunted bontebok from South Africa. Since early 2018, SCI has submitted dozens of comment letters in support of bontebok importation. Unfortunately, the Service has delayed processing these applications since 2017. For the 100-plus hunters who are waiting to import their bontebok trophies, there is a light at the end of the tunnel.

In March, the Service finally began processing pending applications. SCI is aware that some permits have been granted, while others have been denied. As detailed in SCI's letter, the Service's denials contradict the fact that bontebok hunting on private game ranches in South Africa has essentially saved the species from extinction. Simply, hunting enhances the survival of the species, and the Service should grant the import permits.

SCI's letter focuses on two sticking points for the Service. First, the Service faults South Africa for not having a signed (i.e., adopted) national management plan prior to December 2019. And second, the Service is now requiring documentation of genetic analysis of the bontebok herd from which the hunt occurred. A registration certificate is no longer sufficient; the Service wants to see DNA test results. If you are

waiting on a permit or planning to hunt bontebok, note that your application will be stronger, and perhaps processed more quickly, to the extent you can submit information showing implementation of a management plan and provide DNA test results for the bontebok herd.

In the last month, the Service has published notice of more than 30 other pending import applications, opening public comment opportunities for those applications. Many more will likely be published in the coming months. SCI will submit comment letters for each applicant and continue to urge the Service to grant the import applications before bontebok conservation programs are irreparably harmed.

## Other Hunting News

**Canada is now open** again for waterfowlers after being closed since 2020. Good luck waterfowlers!

**Has anyone in the past received that piece of paper to log your deer and other critter sightings?** Well you do not need to wait anymore for that. The DNR web page has a "Log Your Deer and Wildlife Sightings" page now. Check it out and log them! <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/mammals/deer/management/hunter-field-log.html>



## ***SCI is going to Nashville!***

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# Heart Ceviche

Emily Linhoff Vance is a local Minnesota huntress and lover of game meat. If you are friends with her on Facebook you might see these giant spreads of game feeds she does which look amazing. We are excited to have her as a contributor to the recipe section of Minnesota Adventuring! Look forward to many more of her recipes in the future.



- 1 cleaned heart diced
- ½ raw white onion diced
- 1- avocado diced
- ½ cup radish diced
- 1 tsp chili pequin or red pepper flakes
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice

Mix all ingredients together in order.  
Let sit for about 5-10 min and enjoy.  
Best served with a tortilla chip.



*\*Picture show with Nilgai Heart.*

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## Minnesota SCI needs your wild game donations for our annual Christmas Party and Wild Game Dinner!

If you're going to be hunting antelope, elk, pronghorn, caribou, moose, mountain goat, black bear, sheep, wild boar, or any exotics this fall, the Chapter will pay your excess baggage or shipping charges to get donated meat to Minnesota. Waterfowl, small game, and fish are also very much appreciated.

# WILD GAME NEEDED

Minnesota SCI board member Kevin Bollig has generously agreed to store our wild game donations.

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# HUNT REPORT

Hunters: Brad Anderson and John Folland

Outfitter: Jaques Senekal

Guide/PH: Francois Cloete and Gene Hill

Dates: August 31 - September 10, 2022

Method of Take (Rifle, Handgun or Bow):  
375 improved MG Arms and 300 PRC

Animals Taken: Two Blesbok, two springbok, two black wildebeest, two red hartebeest, impala, black impala, bush pig, black Buck, burchells zebra, hartmans zebra, waterbuck, gemsbok, nyala, two sable, and a duiker



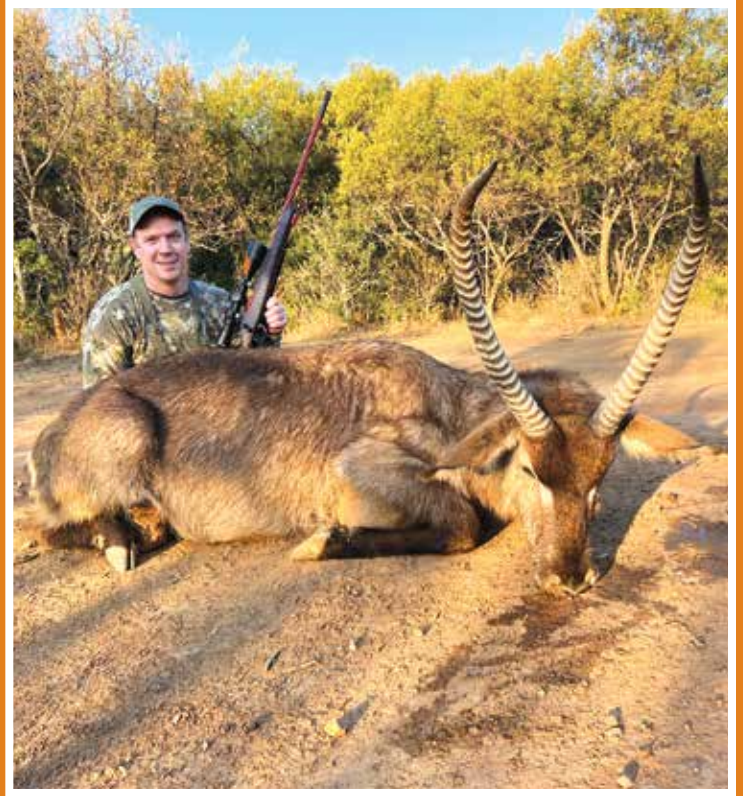
## By Brad Anderson

The weather was 55 degrees at night and 75 to 80 degrees during the day. No rain at all entire trip. Accommodations were 5 star. Everyone got their own cabin with air conditioning, a heater, a full bath and shower, and even refrigerators in the room. Meals and trucks were top-notch. There were other hunters in camp, and all were from the United States so evenings around the campfires were entertaining.

We hunted four different properties. Jaques personal ranch, Bona Bona, Nahla Safaris, and another place I can't remember the name of. Half of the trip was in the Kalahari, and the rest in the northwest.

Getting firearms into South Africa is very simple. Riflepermits.com explains everything, has the forms online and meets you at the airport, and walks you through with your permit in hand. Most Airlines will take your firearm to Johannesburg, but you should know that only some African airlines will transfer your firearm and you must contact them prior to arrival if you have to fly somewhere else in or out of South Africa. Pretty simple though. It was my fifth time hunting with African Maximum Safaris, and I know I will be going again with Jaques Senekal probably to Mozambique for giant Crocodiles as we are already planning it. All trophies are sent to Splitting Image Taxidermy for salting and tanning and prepared by Philesia Vorster. We have been home for three weeks and he has already contacted me. He can do your taxidermy and ship or he can ship directly to your personal taxidermist.

I normally use Coppersmith as a customs broker in the U.S. as they have been generous sponsors of Minnesota SCI for years. Many of us know Mike Lewis as he comes to our banquet. We spent a couple of days at Pilanesberg game park and a night at Sun City Resort which was a bonus added on this trip. South African Safaris are not that physical and they can accommodate people with disability and pretty much any trophy you want they can provide opportunity. Jaques has been extremely generous to our chapter and I would recommend him without reservations to anyone.



# Alexandria Youth Activity Day Report

By Gordon Jensen

On the last Sunday of August, the city of Alexandria, Minnesota put together an entire fair of outdoor activities oriented towards kids and family fun. Over 150 exhibitors provided a myriad of booths with fun games, activities, and prizes. The most amazing part about this event was that everything was entirely free. From admission to participation to prizes and even the food. All the booths must be oriented toward the Great Outdoors.

SCI Minnesota was there this year, providing a crossbow target shoot for the kids, along with an exhibit we call the "Sensory Safari," a collection of different animal hides and their corresponding skulls for everyone to touch and hold. As per usual we also handed out shirts, bumper stickers, brochures, and personal drink coolers. It was a lot of work, but also a blast talking with all of the inquisitive kids about nature, hunting, and all the different animals. We also raffled off a Yeti cooler.

Overall, I would say the whole day was a hit. We had many wonderful volunteers from Minnesota SCI as well as the Cambridge Christian School trap team. There were thousands of people who showed up to the fair in total, and I think that almost all of them came through every exhibit. We got to meet and talk with so many people. What surprised me the most is all the kids and how good of shots most of them were. Some kids were as young as five who were nailing the targets with bullseyes.

I can't wait to go back next year.





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# Dixie: Chronicles of a Field-Bred English Springer Spaniel

By Benjamin (Chip) Schleider III

The heat shimmered off the runway as the aircraft touched down on the tarmac of the Minneapolis-St. Paul airport in the mid-morning August heat. My youngest son, Zander (short for Alexander) and I, were there that Friday on a mission - to meet our newest family member for the first time and bring her back to Virginia. Dixie, a diminutive and beautiful field bred English springer spaniel, just under a year old, was very much still the puppy. This journey had started almost one year prior when I had struck the bargain with Tony Roettger, now a very dear friend, for the little springer. Tony had raised her in his home and started her down the gun dog path. In retrospect, we both gambled.

Although increasingly a common phenomenon in the development of started dogs, at that time, a breeder committing to raise a dog in the home (not in a kennel) for a year while training the dog for the field was a relatively novel idea. But now, one can see a distinct upswing in this trend. In fact, I credit this with the relative ease of Dixie's subsequent integration into the Schleider suburban household. It's also a major factor in her development as a mature, well-socialized gun dog equally comfortable in the home and the field. There was no way either of us could know a year in advance as to the outcome of this experiment; however, we would soon find out.

It was a perfect day in North Branch, Minnesota, when we hit the small town's exit off of interstate 35, and, although the weather was warm, it was not oppressively hot. In short, the conditions were excellent for what we had planned. We pulled into the Roettger Ridge Kennel driveway with the late summer dust of the road settling on us and the car. After introductions we made our way up the porch and to Dixie, who was enjoying herself thoroughly in the kitchen. She was very small, a little gangly as youngsters tend to be, and very, very pretty. Her silky liver colored ears still retained the shortness we associate with field bred English springer puppies. Dixie's coat was beautiful, and deeply livered in the saddlebag-like markings that straddled her back. The white of her coat was snowy and un-yellowed.

Instead of rushing Dixie, we sat on the floor close to her and let her sniff us and get to know us on her own terms. She was, and still is, a little shy of strangers so it took a little time for her to warm up to us. Soon, however, she was licking our fingers and crawling into our laps.

"Eyes wild with bird scent, the young springer was hot on the heels of the bird as it gained altitude."

In the early afternoon, Tony, Zander, and I took Dixie out for spin in the fields behind his home. A natural instructor with an



infectious grin and twinkling, merry blue eyes, Tony explained to me where Dixie was in her training, the essential whistle commands and the do's and don'ts of dog handling. After the tutorial, Tony planted a couple of chukars in the field and quickly brought Dixie out of a holding crate on a slip lead. He broke open his 20 gauge Citori and loaded two shells. With me on the left, Zander on the right and himself in the middle (gunning and handling), he took the lead off of Dixie and immediately gave her the "get out" command. She exploded off the line, quartering beautifully toward Zander on the right.

Tony gave her two quick "pips" on the 211 ½ pitch whistle to turn her back toward the center just as she ran to the outside of Zander. She responded immediately turning back toward

*"Eyes wild with bird scent, the young springer was hot on the heels of the bird as it gained altitude."*

Tony running about ten yards in front of us as we made our way down the field. Although the scenting conditions were less than optimal, she quickly made the first bird nestled in a thick clump of switch grass and nosed the chukar into the air as she snapped at the bird's tail feathers. Eyes wild with bird scent, the young



springer was hot on the heels of the bird as it gained altitude. Allowing the bird to gain altitude to give plenty of clearance between the bird and dog, Tony made an excellent head shot at about 50 yards. Dixie, in full pursuit, marked the bird beautifully, made the retrieve and headed back toward Tony. About five yards from Tony, she veered to the right and began to circle behind him in an attempt to evade the part of the process she dreaded - handing over the bird to handler. Tony deftly made a grab for the young spaniel and explained her response to me. "Chip, this is not unusual for a started dog. Dixie is young and still inexperienced in delivering the bird to hand. With training and practice, she will ultimately bring the bird directly to you."

In all, I was quite pleased. Dixie had demonstrated excellent handling characteristics, sound bird finding skills and no problems with gun fire. She had beautifully marked the fall of the bird and was pretty good on the retrieve.

That night over Tony's famous creamed pheasant, cold beer and Minnesota-style barbecued corn on the cob we celebrated new friends and a new member of the Schleider family. I knew that the day was a success when Zander surreptitiously bent over and gave the young spaniel a kiss on the head as we parted company that evening. Over the next several days, Tony would work diligently with me to impart the fundamentals of dog handling. We repeatedly worked the young dog on land and water, and at every turn Tony was there with a handling tip. On that Sunday evening at the Dulles International Airport baggage

claim I knew Dixie was home to stay when Door, my wife of 46 years, saw the little springer for the first time. As Dixie licked her hands through the crate, Door exclaimed, "My Lord she is beautiful."

Author's note: this is the first in a series of articles that chronicle both the development of a talented young spaniel and the rights of passage of an inexperienced trainer and handler.



**Chip Schleider** is an avid amateur spaniel trainer and upland game hunter. He owns three dogs - two English springer spaniels and one English cocker spaniel. These articles was originally written in 2005 for the Spaniel Journal. Chip is a retired aerospace marketing executive, and retired Army Lieutenant Colonel. He now lives with his wife Door, and three spaniels on small farm near Middlebrook, Virginia.

Chip is the co-author with Tony Roettger of *Urban Gun Dogs: Training Flushing Dogs for Home and Field*. He also writes frequently for outdoor journals.



# Share Your Knowledge!



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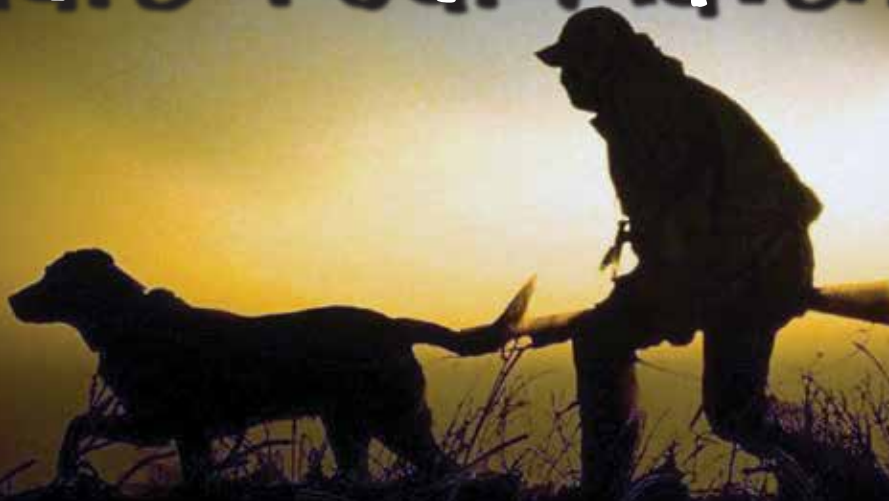
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# Share Your Adventures!



Learning about new hunting opportunities is one of the great benefits of being a Minnesota SCI member. All of the content in this magazine comes from members just like you. If you've been on a trip recently and would like to share your experience with us, we'd be happy to help you put together a hunt report. You don't have to be a great writer and it doesn't take a lot of time.

Contact Tony Roettger at [razr1500@gmail.com](mailto:razr1500@gmail.com) for more details.

# MINNESOTA ADVENTURING

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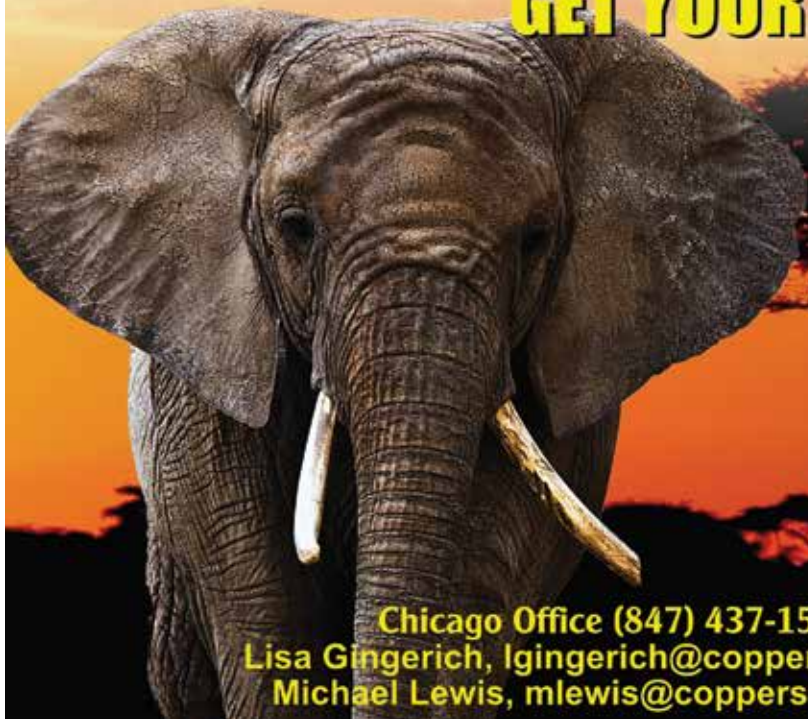
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