

BRAAI NEWS

Community News for SA Expats

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Howzit!

IN THIS ISSUE

Tampa Bay Braais are <i>Back!</i>	2	An Open Letter to Theo Bronkhorst.....	7
Sarasota Potjiekos Competition	3	What's Cooking, Good Looking?	9
A Love of Writing	4-5	The Good Expat.....	10-13
Canned Hunting in Southern Africa	6	Smile Awhile	14-15



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Greg Ross-Munro married Chaz Brueggemann on 7 August. Greg was born in SA and emigrated to the USA at 19. He is CEO of SourceToad, a contract software engineering firm in Tampa. Chaz, who has a USF Masters in Entrepreneurship like Greg, grew up in St Louis, MO. She works for Hamilton Engineering as their Marketing Manager.

In a "destination wedding" that entertained guests from South Africa, the UK and around the USA, the wedding ceremony took place at Mr Dunderbaks in New Tampa. The reception was at the "foodie" StoneChef theatre in Ybor with a Recovery Brunch at Greg's parents' home on Sunday. As promised on the wedding invitation, "a Bloody Good Time".



Tampa Bay Braais Are Back!

on the last Sunday of every April and October

Next date April 23rd, 2016

Sunday 10am - 4ish

Philippe Park, Safety Harbor, Shelter # TBD

For updates, please check our Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/BraaiNews/>

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Welcome Back to Florida



After a long 6 year adventure that took the DeWet family all the way to Colorado and California, Anton and Henza (above) are back in the Tampa Bay area.

In the meantime, their two sons, Christiaan and Walter recently bought a home in Tampa as if to “cement” their return to the area....

*Mom and Dad soon followed.
We are very happy to have them back again.*

Welcome to Florida

Chris & Steph van Rensburg (front) were absolutely delighted to have their daughter Rhoda (back left) visit for the first time in 10 years. This was granddaughter Cindy’s (back right) first time traveling out of South Africa. The family made the most of what Florida has to offer and crammed every single day with the maximum amount of fun. We all hope that they will come back again for another visit in the not too distant future.



Sarasota POTJIEKOS COMPETITION 2016

It’s time to dust off those potjies again. Mark your calendars for February 27, 2016, for the next famous Potjiekos Competition in beautiful Sarasota, Florida

Address; 7289 Palmer Blvd, Sarasota, 34240
Cost is \$20 per person. Please enter your teams as soon as possible, and send in your team names.

For more info, contact Jacqui 941-4003518 or email me at jdebeer3@aol.com

Camping spots are available at Myakka State park and Oscar Scherer State park. they fill up fast, so if you do plan on camping, place your bookings as soon as possible.

If you can/want to sponsor to help get George van Dyk to perform again, please let Jacqui know.



A Love of Writing

by Eleanor L. Bailey

With the publication in March 2015 of the historical novel “Forever Friends”, Drienie Hattingh reached a new milestone in an ever-evolving career as writer, columnist and publishing entrepreneur.

An historical novel, seven years in the making, *Forever Friends* is receiving promising feedback from a growing fan base. A rich examination of ways the lives of ancestors and family connections can influence an individual’s growth, the book offers insights through the eyes of a protagonist whose experience embraces perspective gained through life in South Africa and in the U.S.

Originally an Afrikaans-speaking South African, writer Drienie Hattingh immigrated to the United States in 1987. She and husband Johan, and children Eugene, Brenda and Yolandi first moved to Woodbury, Minnesota. After their children left for college Drienie and Johan settled in Eden, Utah, a small town located on the Pineview Reservoir, a community nestled between the Wasatch Mountains in the Ogden Valley.

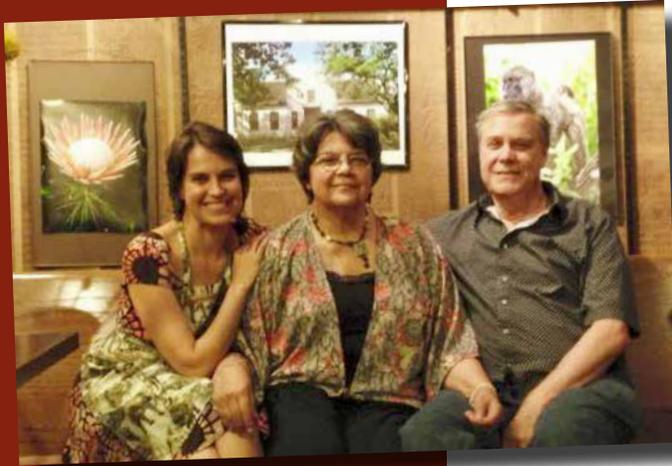
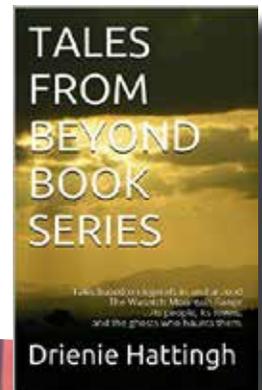
Hattingh’s journey as a writer began once she’d come to the U.S. Except for creating admittedly “long” 20-page letters, to family and friends, back home, she hadn’t thought of herself as writer. After time and much encouragement from readers of her letters, she was inspired to write for a wider audience. Hattingh went to the community newspaper in Woodbury, Minnesota, pitching the idea of publishing essays based on her letters home. “I took two essays with me,” Hattingh remembers, “One story called “One Fine Day”, was about the amazing day we found out that our Visas to come to America was granted. The other was called “One Can Smile without an Accent.” The editor was quite impressed and it happened that the paper was looking for a weekly columnist. Hattingh was hired on the spot. Since that day, nearly two decades ago, she has written more than 1,000 columns.

Once settled in Utah, Hattingh went to the Ogden Valley Newspaper to talk to the editor, taking samples of her writing and copies of *The Woodbury Bulletin* with her. The editor immediately hired her as the new columnist for the paper. Hattingh has also authored feature stories and regular columns for American and South African magazines including *Juluka* and *Huisgenoot*.

The critique group she was part of in Minnesota also stimulated Hattingh’s writing sensibilities. After moving to Utah, she started another such group by placing an ad in the local newspaper, inviting local writers to join. Eight authors showed up for the first meeting. “From the moment I arrived in the pristine Ogden Valley, I felt inspired as an author,” Hattingh remembers. “I knew it would be the perfect place to hold a writer’s conference. I shared this dream with my writer’s group, none of whom had been published. A couple of years later, my dream came true. Along with Wendy Toliver (one of the Eden writers, and a well-known author now) we funded and hosted a sell-out Eden Writer’s Fall Conference, attended by agents, editors, and over 100 authors.”

The theme of that conference was “ghost/mystery” because it was held in October. Part of the conference was a contest for attendees to submit spooky stories. “Most local authors thought I had gone mad,” Hattingh reflects. “They had never written short stories and definitely never written anything in the horror/spooky genre. Nevertheless, I persisted and invited the group to go with me to visit local restaurants, businesses and sites that reportedly had had ghostly encounters, and the owners of these establishments shared their haunting tales with us.”

TALES FROM BEYOND SERIES authors (L-R) Drienie, Vicki Droogsma, and Patricia Bossano had fun, dressing up as witches at the book signings during October.



Drienie with daughter Brenda (L) and husband Johan (R) at the Forever Friends book launch

FOREVER FRIENDS ...a synopsis

Johannesburg attorney Annette Lamphier inherits a financially-challenged three-century-old Vineyard (Boschkloof), in Franschhoek, South Africa. She knows it will take her all to make it successful again but she accepts the challenge. It was her late grandmother’s dying wish to keep Boschkloof in the family. Her grandmother had devoted her life to the vineyard, even at the cost of her one true love. However, as events unfold, Annette realizes it will be near impossible to grant her grandmother’s wish.

Meanwhile, Annette explores her new home and discovers letters penned in the 17th century by her ancestor, Antoinette Louise Lamphier’s three best friends. Their letters ignite in Annette a deep love of family and land, and give her hope to solve her problems when she learns how these women coped during extremely difficult conditions. Compelled to fulfil the wishes revealed in the letters, Annette decides to track down the present-day relations of the Forever Friends.

The past and present collide in the most unexpected of ways when Annette travels to America, desperately seeking guidance from Gene Fairfield, who owns a respected Napa Valley vineyard. She hopes what she learns there will help her save Boschkloof, but then she meets the arrogant yet devastatingly handsome Jacques Fairfield.

Will history repeat itself?



The conference produced a number of good short stories but most importantly, a group of authors who enjoyed writing them. Now, Hattingh wanted to publish the stories and have fellow writers experience the thrill of seeing their work in print. In June 2011 Hattingh joined two fellow authors in funding the spooky anthology, "Tales from Huntsville, Eden, Liberty and Beyond". Since then three books were added to this series. She has compiled, published and contributed to stories for the "Tales from Beyond" anthology series which includes Tales from Huntsville, Eden, Liberty and Beyond (2011), Tales from Two-Bit Street and Beyond, Part I (2012), Tales from Two-Bit Street and Beyond, Part II (2013), and Tales from the Wasatch and Beyond (2014). 15,000 copies have sold in book stores and on Amazon to date.

Based on legends in and around Utah's Wasatch Mountains, the complete "Tales from Beyond" series includes stories from Ogden authors who studied local legends and history, and wrote stories about them. Hattingh accepted 13 stories for every book. The first anthology, Tales from Huntsville, Eden, Liberty, and Beyond is known locally as "Tales from H.E.L.". Rather than mysteries per se, the stories tell of mysterious happenings in the Ogden valley; of sightings of people who have been dead for many years. They are sold in bookstores in Ogden, Utah, and on Amazon in the Kindle version. Although these books would typically be classified as 'self-published', Hattingh had found the additional talent necessary to put them together with outstanding pizzazz. As she explains, "Lynda Scott is a wonderful editor and has done a fantastic job of taking care of the details of these manuscripts. I did the formatting, for the paperbacks and the Kindle versions. I also discovered a great publishing company close to us that supplies authors with a complete package--everything from cover artist, graphic artist, to printing of the book."

But times change... and so did the book industry. After the last book was published in the TALES series, Hattingh finished her historical novel, Forever Friends, seven years in the making. Research took a lot of time, even traveling back to South Africa, to Franschoek, to get the real facts for her novel. In the meantime, the Hattinghs moved from Eden, in the Ogden valley, to Historic 25th Street in Ogden. Again Hattingh started a new critique/writer's group--The Divas, with Christy Monson, Patricia Bossano, Michele McKinnon, Natalie Pace, and Lynda Scott. One of the requirements, Hattingh insisted on, to join this group,

...continued on page 16

Other published writings from Drienie Hattingh:

- *Tales from Huntsville, Eden, Liberty and Beyond (2011)*
- *Tales from Two-Bit Street and Beyond, Part I (2012)*
- *Tales from Two-Bit Street and Beyond, Part II (2013)*
- *Tales from the Wasatch and Beyond (2014)*
- *Christmas Miracles*
- *The Last Gas Station*
- *The Spirit of Christmas.*
- *Taking Care of Family*, published in *Chicken Soup for the Soul* (non fiction)
- *Lessons I learned from my Parents.* (non fiction)
- *A Glass Slipper for Christmas.*

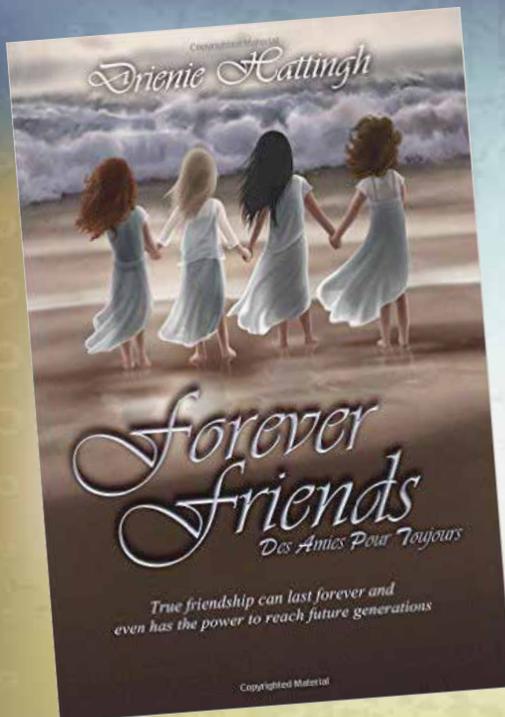
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True Friendship can last forever and even has the power to reach future generations.

Douglas R. Gibson: Standard Examiner, Entertainment Editor (Utah)
"This delightful book has enough twists to guarantee readers chills and gasps of surprise."

Elna Lotter. Amazon Reader. (Ex-South African now living in Atlanta, Georgia)
"If you were ever swept away from people you love - you know you want to read this! Look for a moment through the window of our past - 4 girls separated decades ago as French Huguenots, having to flee to places like America, Holland, South Africa... If names like Franschoek, Hermanus, Napa Valley make sense to you - you know that you don't want to miss this book!"

Wendy Toliver: Young Adult Author. (Eden, Utah)
"Forever Friends is a story of the struggles, cultivation, and triumphs of the human spirit, set against the picturesque backdrop of a South African vineyard and infused with history, romance, and the power of friendship."



Available at

amazon.com

goodreads.com

and at Barnes & Noble

Email: drieniem@aol.com • www.facebook.com/drienie.hattingh

Canned Hunting Reaches an All-Time High in Southern Africa

By Jeffrey Flocken

“Blood Lions,” a documentary that exposes the South African canned lion hunting industry, premiered recently on US television MSNBC.

In the wake of the tragic death of Cecil the Lion this past July, this timely film reveals yet another dark dimension to trophy hunting, an industry already morally bankrupt and long overdue to be relegated to the history books.

This documentary uncovers the realities of the despicable subset of the already appalling trophy hunting business – the canned hunting industry, which breeds and raises game such as elephants, bears, lions and others in confined areas so that hunters can select their kill ahead of time and complete a hunt in a matter of days.

This is an easier, cheaper, faster, and inhumane way of hunting big game animals as compared to wild hunts.

This film examines trophy hunting’s effect on conservation as well as sustainable alternatives to trophy hunting that render trophy hunting needless – such as eco-tourism, which brings in billions more dollars to the African continent than lethal safaris, and can be a tool for conserving lions.

READ: Wildlife “farming” is not conservation

Unfortunately, approximately 600 lions are killed by trophy hunters each year. And with as few as 20,000 African lions left in the wild, we need to take action immediately.

IFAW and the producers of “Blood Lions” are creating more awareness about canned hunting, and other forms of trophy hunting. We are also working to affect legislative change to end the commercial exploitation of lions and other imperiled species being killed for sport.



Wall of Shame on Facebook

Read Captain Paul Wilson’s article that explicitly exposes the Safari Club International -- the menace behind the killings and destruction of our wildlife

<https://www.facebook.com/1WallOfShame/posts/1010852918947743>



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An Open Letter to Theo Bronkhorst

from John Varty

Hello Theo,

I grew up in a hunting environment. Both my father and grandfather were hunters. I estimate that for every lion taken, we walked and tracked with brilliant Shangaan trackers over 100kms. Out of every 30 hunts, one was successful.

The problem I have with you and many of your colleagues is, you are living a lie, you are unethical.

When you sell in Vegas and other places, your brochures advertise that you can get the biggest lion for your client. It is well known that wealthy clients will pay extra for an extra large lion and elephant above 60 pounds ivory.

You knew where Cecil the lion's territory was. You knew if you pulled a bait in that area, you would stand a good chance of getting him.

I trust you will tell the court how much Palmer paid you over and above the normal head tax for an extra large lion. Palmer is wealthy, his mentality is money can buy him big trophies. So he offers more money for big elephant, big lion and big bear.

I am suggesting that this is where your ethics evaporate. The lure of the big dollars!

The other problem I have, is that you know very well that if you take off dominant males, it will cause havoc in the social system of the pride. Is this ever discussed with the client that after you have shot the dominant male, infanticide will occur and cubs may die! I suggest this is never ever mentioned!

The next problem is you know that Cecil must weigh between 450 and 500 pounds. To kill an animal this size with a bow and arrow at night, you have to be highly skilled. Palmer spends his days looking in peoples mouths. He boasts he is good, but how good?

You know that a .375 or .458 should be the weapon used. However, you allow him to shoot with a bow. Why? Because he pays you more money!

Palmer shoots with a bow and arrow to feed his giant ego. Consequently, he wounds the animal.

So Theo, every which way you turn, you are compromised. You are shooting a dominant male with an inferior weapon because he is paying you more money.

You will counter by saying the money Palmer paid goes into conservation. How much of the \$55 000 dollars goes into the park, the conservancy, the permit or the local community?

How does the death of Cecil and all the other lions you have taken, benefit the camp fire project?

How many trackers do you employ compared to the eco tourist operators who photographed Cecil day after day, week after week, year after year?

What was Cecil's value alive compared to your \$55 000 dead?

I have some more problems. When I grew up, baiting was considered unsporting. How many lions have you taken using the recorder, where you play distress calls of buffalo or calls of foreign male lions?

All your leopards are taken over a bait from a hide or with a pack of dogs treeing the leopard. Where is the fair chase in that?

As you get towards the end of the hunt, your client will take any leopard, male or female. How do you know that female leopard you've taken out doesn't have small cubs in her den? Even from close, it is difficult to tell if she's suckling or not. How many leopard cubs have you orphaned?

Theo, I understand it's difficult to make a living and raise a family in a country which has been run into the ground by atrocious management.

However, you and your colleagues in Zimbabwe and those PH's doing canned lion hunting in South Africa, are nothing more than mercenary soldiers killing icon animals for money.

I suggest you sit down and do some serious soul searching on the cruelty you create and how you earn a living.

Tread lightly on the Earth!

JV

www.jvbigcats.co.za



John Varty

John Varty is a South African wildlife filmmaker who has made more than 30 documentaries and one feature film. Varty is also leading a controversial project which aims to create a free-ranging, self-sustaining tiger population outside of Asia

Below is a link to an interview with Varty to protest against trophy hunting and the illegal killing of Cecil the lion:

<http://youtu.be/3m4tJCeah7o>



Help stop canned hunting and the breeding that supplies this industry.

Visit IFAW's page

<http://www.ifaw.org/united-states/news/watch-blood-lions-documentary-makes-its-us-premiere-oct?ms=UONDC160001072&cid=701F00000000SyAa>

A Tribute to ALF

The Animal Liberation Front

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rg8Fx3ZMmEw>

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Oxtail with Gnocchi

Ingredients

- olive oil
- 2 oxtails (about 2 kg)
- 4 large onions, roughly chopped
- 1 whole bulb garlic, cut through the cloves

- 3 bay leaves
- 30 ml dried Italian mixed herbs
- dry red wine
- prepared beef stock
- oxtail or brown onion soup powder
- salt and freshly-milled black pepper, to taste
- brown sugar, to taste
- extra garlic, chopped, to taste
- fresh thyme and rosemary, chopped, to taste
- 500 g ready-to-cook potato gnocchi
- two large handfuls of basil and rocket leaves, torn

Method

Heat some oil in a large pan and brown the oxtail pieces in batches and transfer to a large casserole. Next, brown the onions and add to the casserole. Then break the cloves of garlic off the bulb and throw into the casserole – no need to peel - together with the bay leaves and dried herbs.

Using equal quantities of dry red wine and beef stock, cover the oxtail completely plus a little more so that there is about 2 cm more liquid than food in the casserole. Oil a large piece of baking paper well and place the oiled side inside the casserole on top of the liquids. Now take out insurance (to keep the flavours and juices intact) and cover the top of the casserole with a sheet of tin foil before covering the whole lot with a lid (or another sheet of tinfoil if there is no lid!)

Cook in the oven at 190° C for 2½ hours before checking. If it needs more liquids to remain covered (it shouldn't), add boiling water. Then using your discretion, continue to cook the oxtail (covered like before) in the oven for as long as it needs for the meat to come off the bone easily when pierced with a fork.

Remove the casserole from the oven and strain the oxtail and juices. Place the oxtail in a bowl, cover and set aside to cool. Then re-strain the cooking liquids, this time discarding the bits and pieces.

Pour the cooking liquid into a saucepan, bring to a boil and then, using your discretion once more, allow to cook rapidly until reduced and thickened to your liking. Just make sure that you have enough of a sauce left to cover the meat and the gnocchi. Alternatively, you can thicken the sauce to your liking with some of the soup powder - and ignore the critics ;).

Now pick the meat off the bones, discard the bones and place the meat in the sauce. Taste and adjust the seasoning to your own heart's content: add - if you like - more salt, freshly-milled black pepper, brown sugar and chopped fresh garlic, thyme and rosemary. Cover with a lid and keep warm.

Finally, cook the gnocchi as per the instructions on the pack. When done, drain well and stir into the oxtail together with the rocket and basil. Serve with a simple green salad and perhaps some crispy ciabatta for those juices.wv

Recipe Corner

Don't let old cooks fool you ... any novice can cook oxtail, but do it on a cold day. This winter warmer oxtail on a hot day just does not quite hit the spot. And try to make it the day before as it will improve while waiting for you. But only add the gnocchi on the day. Enjoy! Serves 6.

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The Good Expat: 5 Steps to a Successful Expat Experience

By Eva Melusine Thieme

Montaigne once said: “The pleasantest things in the world are pleasant thoughts: and the great art of life is to have as many of them as possible.”

I’m no expert on the great art of life, but having lived on four different continents, I know that Montaigne is on to something when it comes to expat life. As an expat, you have a choice: You can be miserable because nothing in your new life works as it did before, or you can enjoy the wonder of exploring a new culture, even if it’s a culture where “just now” means “later, tomorrow, definitely not anytime soon.”

I won’t ever forget the low point of our expat assignment in South Africa. It was March 2010, we had been living in Johannesburg for a week, and I was sitting on a chair in our empty new kitchen with my head on the table, letting a wave of self-pity wash over me. The kids hated their new school. Plus, I had no car and no cell phone (and neither one seemed possible to be acquired without the other). An army of ants had marched up my arm that morning, angrily swarming out of the electric kettle as I was pouring my tea. And I had hardly closed an eye since we had arrived, because every night I was woken by a blood-curdling scream. The sound, it turned out, emanated from a flock of hadedas, a South African species of bird with vocal chords 10 times stronger than any rooster. I’d come to like them, people assured me, but I wanted to strangle them one by one. Forget the crime I’d been warned of. Getting hijacked at gunpoint sounded more promising than dealing with the non-human predators invading my house.

Thinking murderous thoughts, not pleasant ones, I was in desperate need of a good dose of Montaigne. But how to get there? What steps can you take to achieve a successful expat experience?

Step 1: Drop any pretenses about how things ought to be

“We had our best experiences when things were completely not how they should be,” says Dave Abel, whose family of five recently repatriated to the U.S. after several years in South Africa. When there was load-shedding (scheduled power blackouts by the local utility to conserve energy), he dropped his habit of working from home at night, something that would have made him uneasy back home, but became one of the most cherished parts of his day, he says.

It’s funny how taking away a convenience can lead to previously unimagined bliss. I, too, remember most fondly the days when our internet connection was down, and instead of calling the provider

to complain – something I learned quickly is of little use in Africa – I would settle on a sunny lounge chair and read my book all afternoon. Pure bliss, so easy to be had, but something we almost never experience anymore due to our hectic and technology-driven lives.

Letting go of Western-style ideas of how things ought to be also helps us shed prejudices. When

you’re in a new country with very different customs, you quickly realize that you know nothing. Who better to help you acquire the needed skills to navigate this new and slightly scary world than the locals who’ve been born into it? Even if some might not have a Western definition of an education, even if their English is rudimentary, chances are they still know a whole lot more than you. Let locals be your teacher. Respect them. Respect is the enemy of prejudice.

Besides, “how things ought to be” might not actually be the gold standard. Most Americans think of their country as a hotbed of convenience, but we are still clinging to the archaic custom of exchanging scribbled pieces of paper (aka checks) as a form of payment. Try that in the remotest corner of Africa when you pay the propane delivery guy, and they’ll laugh in your face and give you their bank details so it can be done electronically, 21st-century style.

Step 2: Get busy and reach out

Kobie Pretorius, a native South African who arrived in Nashville together with her husband in 1996, found herself home alone in a strange new country without a work visa, looking out the window “not recognizing one plant or bird,” she says. So she decided to do something about it and signed up for what she describes as “absolutely everything,” including nature hikes, ballet, English classes, tennis leagues, and a cooking with okra class. Her advice: soak it in, reach out, and enjoy the ups and downs. When you meet Kobie for the



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first time, it's impossible not to be infected by her energy, her curiosity, and her zest for life. As the founder of Friends of South Africa in Nashville, a thriving and growing community of South African expats from all walks of life, she seems to have a hand in almost every local happening, whether it's a breakfast meeting with the mayor, a sold-out performance by Rodriguez (the iconic but long-forgotten musician of "Searching for Sugarman" fame), or the annual dragon boat race where her "Team Vuvuzela" has consistently been a top contender.

Getting busy and reaching out is also what pulled me out of my funk soon after that doleful morning in Johannesburg. I started talking to some parents at school, pestering them with a million questions, and before we'd even unpacked our container we'd taken scuba lessons and hit the road with a local family heading to Sodwana Bay, one of the top 10 diving locations in the world. Both scuba diving and those first friends we made became integral parts of our life in South Africa, and beyond.

But reaching out isn't a one-way street. "A good expat knows that to get support, you have to give it, unconditionally, whether it's going to the baby shower of the woman you just met, or offering to watch someone's kids for a weekend," says Jennifer Dziekan, an American mother of three who has made her home in Switzerland for the last three years. If you "know when to listen – to the shop clerk, the teacher, the bus driver, other expats," advises Ms. Dziekan, you'll build a good support group around yourself. And if you have to "pay it forward" because often you won't be in the same place anymore when it comes to return the favor, that's okay too.

Step 3. Go local

"We loved finding fellow Americans, but our experience was greatly enriched by our local friends," says Mr. Abel. He found that his family had the best experiences when opening up to the world around them rather than "locking down" in their "expat enclave." Like us, Dave and his wife Julie sent their three children (now 13, 11 and 9) to a South African school and "watched them become local kids with funny little accents," as he puts it.

There's nothing wrong with an international school, of course, but my husband and I found that the connection to the local school was the key to our happiness in South Africa. We avoided the constant comings and goings within the expat community, our kids learned Zulu and Afrikaans, and we were exposed to customs we would never have discovered on our own. You might debate whether participating in an "impala poop spitting contest" is a desirable activity, but it was certainly a memorable one.

Going local often starts with the most obvious thing: food. "If you opened an expat's pantry and stood me in it, I could tell you within five percentage points their degree of happiness, based on their food selection," says Ms. Dziekan. She has seen fellow Americans receive monthly shipments from Target, and more often than not, these are the same people complaining and comparing everything. Her advice: "Just try the Swiss ravioli. You'll live without Chef Boyardee."

Sometimes having a skill you bring from your home country can be a great way to connect locally. When trying to find a baseball team for my boys in South Africa, I stumbled upon a baseball program for disadvantaged children in Alexandra, a Johannesburg township we were warned, before our move, to never set foot in if we wanted to live. Needless to say, we lived, and my experiences driving through Alexandra – swerving around the occasional goat, chatting to the tailor who'd set up his sewing machine right on the sidewalk, and helping our team manager with "just one more errand, ma'am" to hustle up food or transport money or whatever else was needed that week – turned into my most cherished memories of our expat experience.

For some, going local isn't much of a choice. Stephanie Bolstad, who is originally from Oregon and has lived in many places and called them home, currently lives in Umhlanga Rocks on South Africa's eastern coast – as beautiful a place as you'll find – with her husband and three small children. "I think I'm a little different because my spouse is South African; this isn't a three-year commitment so I

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have to adapt and make the most of it," she says. Making the most of it, to her, means being a doer, getting involved, and lobbying the local councilor to get playground equipment installed. "The grass is greener where you water it" has been a philosophy that's served her well, she says. Is there a better sentiment about expat life?

Step 4: Write a blog

Granted, not everybody is a writer. But you don't really have to be if you just want to share a few pictures and experiences with your friends back home. You'll be amazed how quickly this can turn into an all-consuming hobby, if not a vocation. And if you've lived through any harrowing experiences, then writing can be the best (and cheapest) therapy.

When people ask me what prompted me to write a certain story, my answer is almost always: "I had a really crappy day." Think about it: A vacation at a five-star hotel where everything goes smoothly is rarely memorable. But the time you were lost in the Namibian wilderness and had to change not one, not two, but three flat tires in one day? That story will practically ooze out of you before you've even stowed the jack in the trunk. The more truly awful the day, the better the story – this became my mantra as an expat blogger. We all know that trying to get a visa sorted out, applying for a driver's license, or opening a bank account can be trying endeavors in a foreign country. But the knowledge and anticipation that they're providing you with a great story make them so much easier to deal with. My blog gained quite a following when I reported on a succession of traffic stops, each one with some variation of a cop asking for bribes while threatening me with jail, and I began to feel perverse stirrings of pleasure each time I came across another road block, hoping, despite sweaty palms, for an even more outrageous story than the last.

Writing a blog also provides an incentive to repeat Step 3 and reach out even more, creating a self-amplifying loop of adventure begetting story. Once your readership grows, you might find yourself looking for new things to do so you can report about them, even if they take you out of your comfort zone. I don't think I'd ever have summoned the courage for a walking tour of Braamfontein, formerly one of Johannesburg's most crime-ridden neighborhoods, if the idea of providing my followers a colorful blog post about Johannesburg's fabled street graffiti hadn't been so alluring.

5. Laugh often

Living in Africa, our family has learned, will infuse you with a healthy dose of humor, if you'll only allow it. My favorite story is that of my friend Phil, who upon his return from a grueling one-week hike up Mount Kilimanjaro — Africa's highest mountain capped by the iconic equatorial snow — was standing under the long-awaited shower back at his hotel. Alas, only a cold trickle of water was coming out and just as he wondered what else could possibly go wrong, the power went off and he was left shivering and filthy in the pitch dark. As frustrating as it was, he started laughing uncontrollably because it struck him as funny; life, really, was good! If you can cry when things are wonderful and laugh when they go wrong, you're on the right track.

Which brings us back full-circle to Montaigne. Perhaps figuring out "the great art of life" is exactly the same as figuring out the best way to become a successful expat. Nudging our thoughts from murderous to pleasant takes repeated practice, and somehow expat life seems to provide the perfect training ground.

Those hadedas I wanted dead our first week in Africa? I did indeed come to love them. I miss their lovely wake-up call.

Eva Melusine Thieme is the author of Kilimanjaro Diaries as well as the blog Joburg Expat, where she chronicled her family's adventures while living in South Africa. She continues to blog from her home in Brentwood, Tenn., where she lives with her husband and four children. She's currently working on her next book, about a road trip through Namibia with six people in a five-person car. Her author website is Rhymes With Melusine. Email her at expat@wsj.com.



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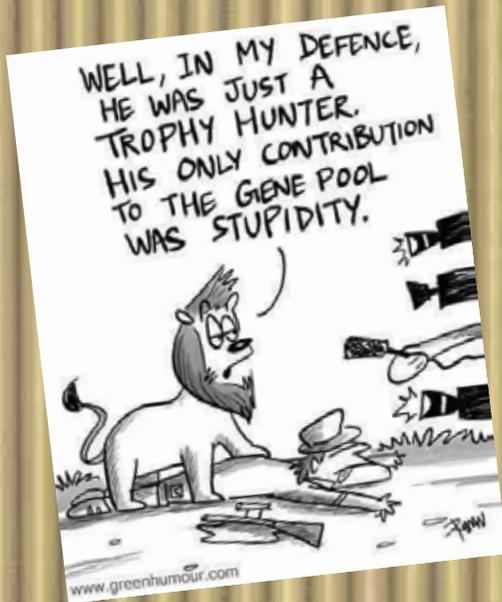
Smile A While



You know you're flying S.A.A. when you ask the air hostess for the black pepper and she brings you ...

....THE SOWETAN

FEMALES ARE SIMPLE. WITH THEM, YES MEANS YES, NO MEANS YES, NO MEANS NO, NO MEANS MAYBE, BUT MAYBE MEANS YES, AND MAYBE MEANS NO.



I OWE MY MOTHER

BY A SMART-ASS TEEN

(Who got grounded for months after writing this)

My mother taught me to APPRECIATE A JOB WELL DONE. "if you are going to kill each other, do it outside. I just finished cleaning!"

My mother taught me RELIGION. "You better pray that will come out of the carpet!"

My mother taught me about TIME TRAVEL. "if you don't straighten up, I'm going to knock you into the middle of next year!"

My mother taught me LOGIC. "Because I said so, that's why!"

My mother taught me MORE LOGIC. "if you fall out of that swing and break your neck, you're not going to the shops with me."

My mother taught me FORESIGHT. "Make sure you wear clean underwear, in case you're in an accident."

My mother taught me IRONY. "Keep crying and I'll give you something to cry about."

My mother taught me about CONTORTION-ISM. "Will you look at that dirt on the back of your neck?"

My mother taught me about STAMINA. You'll sit there until all that spinach is gone."

My mother taught me about WEATHER. "This room of yours looks like a tornado went through it."

My mother taught me about HYPOCRISY. "If I told you once, I've told a million times. Don't exaggerate."

My mother taught me the CIRCLE OF LIFE. "I brought you into this world, and I can take you out again."

My mother taught me BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION. "Stop acting like your father."

My mother taught me ENVY. "There are millions of less fortunate children in this world who don't have wonderful parents like us."

My mother taught me ANTICIPATION. "Just wait until we get home."

My mother taught me RECEIVING. "You are going to get it when you get home."

My mother taught me MEDICAL SCIENCE. "If you don't stop crossing your eyes, they are going to get stuck that way."

My mother taught me ESP. "Put your jacket on; don't you think I know I know when you're cold."

My mother taught me HUMOUR. "When that lawn mower cuts off your toes, don't come running to me."

My mother taught me HOW TO BECOME AN ADULT. "If you don't eat your vegetables, you'll never grow up."

My mother taught me GENETICS. "You're just like your father." My mother taught me ROOTS. "Shut that door behind you. Do you think you were born in a barn?"

My mother taught me WISDOM. "When you get to be my age, you'll understand."

REVISED SOUTH AFRICAN DICTIONARY

AG This is one of the most useful South African words. Pronounced like the “ach” in the German “achtung” it can be used to start a reply when you are asked a tricky question, as in “Ag, I don’t know.” Or a sense of resignation “Ag, I’ll have some more mieliepap then.” It can stand alone too as a signal of irritation or of pleasure.

DONNER A rude word, it comes from the Afrikaans “donder” (thunder). Pronounced “dorner”, it means “beat up.” Your rugby team can get donned in a game, or your boss can donner you if you do a lousy job.

EINA Widely used by all language groups, this word, derived from the Afrikaans means “ouch.” Pronounced “aynah”, you can shout it out in sympathy when someone burns his finger on a hot mealie at a braai.

HEY Often used at the end of a sentence to emphasise the importance of what has just been said, as in “Jislaaik boet, you’re only going to get a lekker klap if you can’t find your takkies now, hey?” It can also stand alone as a question. Instead of saying, “excuse me?” or “pardon?” when you have not heard something directed at you, you can say “Hey?”

ISIT? This is a great word in conversations. Derived from the two words “is” and “it”, it can be used when you have nothing to contribute if someone tells you at the braai “The Russians will succeed in their bid for capitalism once they adopt a work ethic and respect for private ownership.” It is quite appropriate to respond by saying, “Isit?” *

JAWELNOFINE This is another conversation fallback word. Derived from the four words “yes”, “well”, “no” and “fine”, it means roughly “how about that?” If your bank manager tells you your account is overdrawn, you can say with confidence “Jawelnofine.”

JISLAAIK Pronounced “Yis-like”, it is an expression of astonishment. For instance, if someone tells you there are a billion people in China, a suitable comment is “Jislaaik, that’s a hang of a lot of people, hey?” *

KLAP Pronounced “klup” — an Afrikaans word meaning smack, whack or spank. If you spend too much time at the movies at exam time, you could end up catching a sharp klap from your pa. In America, that is called child abuse. In South Africa, it is called promoting education.

LEKKER An Afrikaans word meaning nice, this word is used by all language groups to express approval. If you see someone of the opposite sex who is good-looking, You can exclaim “Lekkerrr!” while drawing out the last syllable.

TACKIES These are sneakers or running shoes. The word is also used to describe automobile or truck tyres. “Fat tackies” are big tyres, as in “Where did you get those lekker fat tackies on your Volksie, hey?”

DOP This word has two basic meanings, one good and one bad. First, the good. A dop is a drink, a cocktail, a sundowner, a noggin. If you are invited over for a dop be careful. It could be one or two sedate drinks or a blast, depending on the company you have fallen in with. Now the bad. To dop is to fail. If you dopped Standard Two (Grade 4) more than once, you probably won’t be reading this.

SARMIE This is a sandwich. For generations, school children have traded sarmies during lunch breaks. If you are sending kids off to school in the morning, don’t give them liver-polony sarmies. They are the toughest to trade.

HOWZIT This is a universal South African greeting, and you will hear this word throughout the land. It is often used with the word “no” as in this exchange “No, howzit?”. “No, fine.”, “No, isit?”

WHAT’S POTTING Local vernacular for “Whats happening” or “What’s up”. This term has no gardening connotation whatsoever.

BIOSCOPE A local word now losing a little fashion meaning movie theatre, cinema, flicks or pictures, depending on which part of the world you come from.

JUST NOW Contrary to its apparent meaning, “just now” can mean anytime from now right through to the next [millennium](#). Asked to do a job you don’t particularly like, you would reply “Ja, I’ll do it just now”



NOW NOW In much of the outside world, this is a comforting phrase “Now, now, don’t cry - I’ll take you to the bioscope tomorrow.” But in South Africa, this phrase means a little sooner than soon. “I’ll clean my room now now Ma.”, knowing that you will receive a well deserved ‘klap if you don’t do it at once. It is a little more urgent than “just now”.

BOET This is an Afrikaans word meaning “brother” which is shared by all language groups. Pronounced “boot” as in “foot”, it can be applied to non-brother. For instance a father can call his son “boet” and friends can apply the term to each other too. Sometimes the diminutive “boetie” is used. Don’t use the term with someone you hardly know - it would be thought patronising.

PASOP From the Afrikaans phrase meaning “Watch out!” This warning is used and heeded by all language groups. As in “Your ma hasn’t had her morning coffee yet Boet so pasop and stay out of her way.” Sometimes just the word, “pasop!” is enough without further explanation. Everyone knows it sets out a line in the sand not to be crossed.

VROT Pronounced “frot”. A wonderful word which means “rotten” or “putrid” in Afrikaans, it is used by all language groups to describe anything they really don’t like. Most commonly it describes fruit and vegetables whose shelf-lives have long expired, but a pair of tackies (sneakers) worn a few times too often can be termed “vrot” by unfortunate folk in the same room as the wearer. Also a rugby player who misses important tackles can be said to have played a vrot game-but not to his face because he won’t appreciate it. We once saw a movie review with this headline “Slick Flick, Vrot Plot.”

JA-NEE Afrikaans for “Yes/No” in English. This expression’s origin is believed to have originated when a family member starts talking politics what else do we talk about in South Africa?) and you don’t want to cause a political argument and get klapped or donned, then every now and then you mutter, “Ja-Nee.” (pronounced yah - near).

GRAZE In a country with a strong agricultural tradition, it is not surprising that farming words crop up (pun intended) in general conversation. Thus to graze means to eat. If you are invited to a bioscope show, you may be asked “Do you want to catch a graze now now.

CATCH A TAN This is what you do when you lie on the beach pretending to study for your matric exams. The Brits, who have their own odd phrases, say they are getting “bronzed”. Nature has always been unkind to South African school children, providing beach and swimming pool weather just when they should be swotting for the mid-summer finals. If you spend too much time “catching a tan” at exam time, you could end up catching sharp “klap” from your pa.

ROCK UP To rock up at some place is to just sort of arrive. You don’t make an appointment or tell anyone you are coming - you just rock up. Friends can do that, but you have to be selective about it. You can’t just rock up for an interview or at a five star restaurant. You give them a bell first, then you can rock up.

BELL South African vernacular for telephone call as in “Ja Boet, I’ll give you a bell just now” which means phoning anytime from now to eternity.

SCALE To scale something is to steal it, A person who is “scaly” is not nice, he’s a scumbag and should be left off the Christmas party invitation list

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Husband buys his son an IPAD, daughter an IPOD, himself an IPHONE, and his wife an IRON. She wasn’t impressed even

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was a finished manuscript. Hattingh's goal for these authors, and herself, was to edit and critique each other's work and get it done and published. Hattingh states, "Forever Friends would not have been if not for The Divas, who worked on the book with me, for the last four years. They were ruthless in their editing and would not hesitate to 'kill a character' or cut unnecessary chapters." This time around Hattingh decided to go through Amazon, not only for the Kindle version of her book, but also for the paperback version. Again she wanted only the best for her book and acquired the services of a well-known editor in the writing circles, Marley Gibson. Gibson is known for thorough editing and will not hesitate to suggest changes in a manuscript where she thinks necessary. Again Hattingh got the whole package deal. Ms. Gibson not only edited *Forever Friends*, but formatted it for Amazon Kindle and the paperback through Amazon's CreateSpace, as well as Barnes and Noble's Nook. And as luck would have it, Hattingh knew a friend, Dimitria VanLeeuwen, who studied Graphic design in college. She also asked a well-known artist, Kory Fluckiger, to paint a poignant scene from her novel, which she knew would be the front cover of *Forever Friends*. Soon Hattingh had everything she needed, and her dream, of having her historical novel, *Forever Friends*, published, came true.

Forever Friends and the Tales from Beyond Series are available

on Amazon and also in 20 stores, including 3 book stores, in the Ogden Valley, Ogden City and also on Historic 25th Street, in Ogden, where the Hattinghs now live.

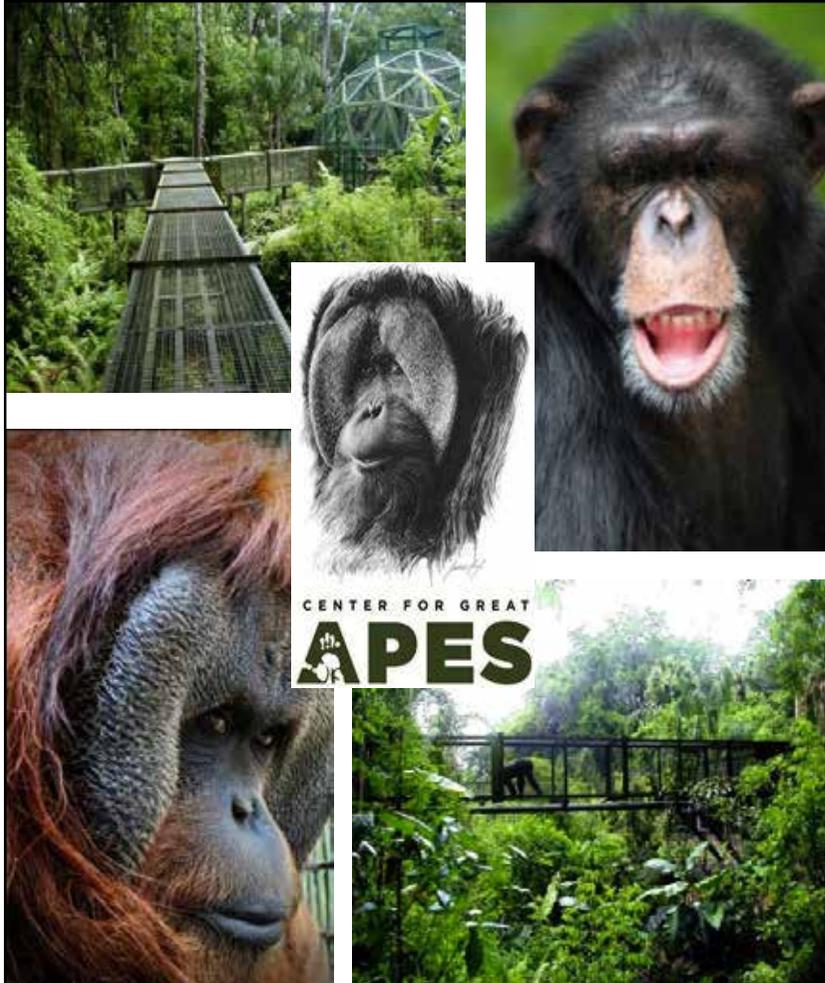
Hattingh says, "I'm fortunate to have a wonderful supportive husband, and children, who made all of my writing endeavors possible. And I know quite a number of people, including owners of local coffee shops, book stores and other businesses. Through the years they agreed to sell the *Tales* book series and now also *Forever Friends*. I am grateful."

Hattingh is now working on her second novel which will play off in the Kruger National Park. Her heroin is a game warden and fights poaching. Hattingh stated, "Of course there will be a big game hunter from America who will make her life difficult."

With Drienie Hattingh's career as writer, columnist and publishing entrepreneur soaring, who knows where her inspiration with take her next.



Drienie Hattingh's non-fiction stories are published in St. Martin's Press Christmas anthologies—Christmas Miracles and The Spirit of Christmas, as well as in Chicken Soup for the Soul and Lessons I learned from my Parents. In 2014 Ms. Hattingh also published a short novella, A Glass Slipper for Christmas.



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