

PREPARING FOR YOUR LIFE AND THE HUNT OF A LIFETIME



By Lewis Metzger

As people's wealth has grown, so has the interest and ability to hunt abroad. More and more people are looking at the opportunity to experience the adventures of Rurak, Capstick and Hemingway.

Whether it is a Cape Buffalo hunt in Africa, a cast and blast in Argentina, a Chamois hunt in New Zealand or a game bird hunt in England, it is important to be prepared for your travel and your hunt.

One important component of preparing for your next safari is updating (or at least confirming they are current) your estate plans. You have worked hard to earn, grow and secure the wealth you have acquired, don't let it be destroyed or diminished because you have failed to prepare for your trip.

The human tendency is to believe that disaster will not happen to me. Unfortunately, sometimes-bad things do happen. In his book, *Death in the Long Grass*, Peter Hathaway Capstick reminds us that we should expect the unexpected. Capstick's entire book is a reminder of the dangers of hunting, particularly big game.

A real life example of these dangers

occurred last year when Tom Siebel, the founder of Siebel Systems Software, was on an elephant safari. He and his guide were watching an elephant when it decided to charge them. The elephant seriously wounded both Siebel and his guide.

We recommend you start by addressing some basic estate planning issues. To protect your family and your wishes, you want to be sure you have your legal documents in place. The first is a will. If you already have a will, be sure it is updated. If something happens to you and you do not have your estate in order, the State of Texas, administered by a Probate Court, will make the decisions on your behalf regarding the distribution of your property and assets. Furthermore, the care of your minor children will be made by the state in the event you do not leave proper instructions. Having your will in place and updated will allow for the distribution of your property and assets according to the way you want, not a government employee or a court.

The second legal document you want to have in place is a Living Will or Medical Power of Attorney. This document states your wishes regarding medical care should

you become incapacitated or be in a "vegetative state."

The third legal document you should have in place is a Durable Power of Attorney. This legal document gives authority to an individual to carry out legal affairs on your behalf. Again, wouldn't you rather have a person you love and trust make decisions on your behalf rather than a government employee or a court?

Some other helpful legal documents to consider are a Directive to Physicians and Family, Specific Powers of Attorney for HIPAA, and a Declaration of Guardianship.

While completing your trip planning and estate planning, it is important to review your insurance policies. Are these policies adequate to meet you and your family's needs? As you review your policies, be sure you have the proper amount of life insurance in place in case you find yourself in Tom Seibel's shoes. If you survive an unforeseen encounter, you might be in a situation in which you are permanently disabled. In order to continue providing for your family, be sure you have the proper amount of disability insurance in place.

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To protect yourself, consider a travel insurance policy that covers you on your trip. Consider trip cancellation insurance and trip interruption insurance. Additionally, consider insurance to cover your equipment, guns and personal effects. Finally, under the insurance category, give careful consideration to medical evacuation/air ambulance service insurance, prescription and medical expense insurance. The medical evacuation/air ambulance service insurance will provide you with the appropriate transportation if you are injured and need to get the proper medical attention. These items are important because they protect your family and your wishes.

In addition to having your estate planning done and checking your insurance, there are several other things to consider when preparing for your hunt.

Since you are leaving the country, you will need a passport. If you do not already have one, be sure and give yourself plenty of time to get your passport. Currently, the wait time to get a passport processed can be as little as 48 hours. But, it can take up to 6 weeks.

Determine the proper gun for your hunt. If you are hunting big game, be sure you

bring a rifle that has adequate knock down power. If you are hunting game birds, be sure you know what gauge of shotgun your host lodge or ranch recommends. In addition, know how many guns and how much ammunition the airlines and the country you will be hunting allow. Be sure you know the laws governing guns and ammunition in the country you will be visiting. Chances are that if you break the gun laws, you might find yourself returning home without that prized gun you brought. Before leaving the United States, the U. S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) advises travelers to register their firearms prior to taking them overseas to expedite clearance upon their return to the United States. The traveler must physically take the firearm to a CBP office and complete a Form 4457 Certificate of Registration.

Determine the best time to go on your hunt. Not only will this influence your success, it will determine the proper clothing you will need. When is the best time of year to visit Africa, England or New Zealand to pursue your game of choice? Be aware of the weather so you can bring the proper clothing with you. Many times, temperatures will be cold in morning and at night, then hot during the day. Bring clothing that you can layer and be ready for hot and cold temperatures as

well as rain. An often-overlooked piece of clothing is the proper shoes. Will you be walking long distances or over rough terrain? This is not the time to break in a new pair of boots or shoes.

Your health is one of the most important gifts you have. Do your homework and know what, if any, immunizations and medications you will need. Visit your doctor. Do this with plenty of lead-time. You may need to take medication prior to your hunt. Additionally, visit the website for the Centers for Disease Control to gain a better understanding of the health conditions of the country you will be visiting. Finally, be sure you have an adequate supply of the prescription drugs you need.

Since you are travelling out of the country, you might want to visit the U. S. Department of State travel warnings website. Travel warnings are issued when conditions make a country dangerous or unstable for Americans.

Having the proper estate plan in place as well as thorough planning for your trip will help ensure your wishes are carried out, that your loved ones and you are protected and that you will have a memorable and successful hunt.

Lewis Metzger is an avid hunter and conservationist. He has hunted in Africa, South America, Mexico and throughout the United States. A Family Wealth Director and Senior Vice President for Morgan Stanley Smith Barney he has been recognized by Barron's as one of the Top 1,000 Financial Advisors in the country*.

**Source: Barron's "Top 1,000 Advisors," February 20, 2010, as identified by Barron's magazine. Advisors in the Top 1,000 Financial Advisors have a minimum of seven years of financial services experience. Qualitative factors include, but are not limited to, compliance record, interviews with senior management, and philanthropic work. Investment performance is not a criterion. The rating may not be representative of any one client's experience and is not indicative of the financial advisor's future performance. Neither Morgan Stanley Smith Barney LLC nor its Financial Advisors pay a fee to Barron's in exchange for the rating. Barron's is a registered trademark of Dow Jones & Company, L.P. All rights reserved.*

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