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Lansing Area Chapter Safari Club International Newsletter



The Blue Bag

By Jim Houthoofd

One of the more interesting and emotional parts of our recent trip to Namibia was taking a blue bag and donating some medical supplies to a local clinic in Anker. While a single blue duffel bag of medical supplies doesn't seem like much, as I looked around, there was little on the shelves and the services that were being provided were far less than what we are accustomed to receiving in the USA.

In advance of the trip, our hosts, Roger and Amelia, of Vieranas Safaris, called a local physician to find out what they really needed at the clinic. Roger's response was that they needed some very basic tools, rather than medicine or bandages. A few days later, a wide variety of items were purchased and a visit to the local clinic was scheduled.

Our appointment with the local practitioner and her assistant went well, but we were left with the hollow feeling that our generosity was not nearly enough. On the ride home we all were in agreement that if every group of hunters took a blue bag, and took their responsibility

to the local community seriously, we could make a big difference in the quality of life in that little community.

If Roger and Amelia get a dozen groups a year, and go back to provide a dozen blue bags, the community clinic would be in far better shape and have much greater resources. If you have never taken a blue bag, consider talking with your PH about how you can make a difference. Whether it is school supplies or medical supplies, visiting hunters can and do make a difference in the lives of others.

As a side note, even more touching (and amusing) was when Tony Semple started peeling coins out of his pocket, giving them to the children who had come to see who the visitors were. In only moments, the word spread that a very big guy was giving away money in front of the clinic. It was chaos, as even the smallest children flocked to him and encircled him

as smiles were exchanged for coins. After all – you can never get enough smiles!

