

WINTER SCHOOL 2006!!!

By Cindi Wilkins

Hey, young hunters, the following story is my experiences of the winter school I would like to share with you. The duration of the camp was from 2 to 8 July 2006. It was held on Secretarius Farms. I was really excited. I love nature so this camp would be an ideal opportunity for me to learn more about nature.

We had to report to Uncle Richard's house, the homestead, at two o'clock. I knew there would be four girls there this year, so I would not be alone. There was a girl from Australia and her name was Emma. There were two other Afrikaans girls, Chriszanne and Elani and then myself.

We said goodbye to our parents, friends and relatives and off to camp we go on the back of uncle Hennie's bakkie. We soon got chatting to our new companions. Emma and I immediately started chatting. As soon as we arrived at our destination, we explored the camp very briefly. Our bungalows looked really comfortable. There were boys from Johannesburg, Mark, Matthew and Jacques; they really looked like good friends.

One of our first chores was to skin a springbuck, if we wanted supper. It was not as difficult as it looked. Supper was nice, very nice. The night was ended with a nice cup of coffee, but nothing beats the nice cup of coffee made with mommy's love.

Monday morning I was woken out of my dreams with a really loud banging on my bungalow door. I thought the person on the other side of the door broke the hinges of our poor door. Today was the caping of a springbuck's head. I thought it would be the most disgusting experience ever. I was proved wrong. I was astonished to see how much fun it could be. You just have to concentrate, otherwise you might cut too much or too little meat off or you might by accident cut the jaw, then your head is totally destroyed.

Have you ever wondered how a black powder gun works? If so, come and visit winter school and you may be surprised. Ever gotten lost without a compass and heard the saying, you could use stars for navigation?

We had a nice chicken stew, cooked by Oom Hennie and rounded off the night with a cup of “flou” coffee, only if you have no idea how to make coffee. If you want to learn to make coffee, winter school is the place to be.

We were again banged awake Tuesday morning for the second time this week, but I learnt to make peace with it, because this is how I chose to spend a week of my holiday, roughing it out on a hunting farm. For breakfast, “potjiepap” and coffee.

Mechanical bow and arrows require a lot of upper arm strength, ask me. Uncle Dougie visited us on Tuesday morning to demonstrate the different bows and arrows. Other than practicing bow and arrow, we took the day calm. For supper, springbuck; don't ask what part of the buck it was. A nice cup of coffee was the order of the day. Then it was time to head to bed and try and get a good night's sleep.

Shooting with a double-barrel shotgun, 243, and 30.06, was on the top of the list today. Yip, guessed right, today was practical shooting day. The shotgun was my worst. It's really heavy! I shot well with the 243, my grouping was okay, but I could've done better. My target shooting was excellent!

Ever heard someone bang so hard on your door, you imagine the person on the other side a giant? That's how I felt Thursday morning at 05:30. I mean, everybody is snuggly warm in his or her beds and here I am freezing. I thought to myself what on earth am I doing on this camp? All we did today was ride around on Kingston, to familiarize ourselves with the farm, seeing that our night march was to be held on Kingston Farm. After the “lekka” braai we had, Charles and Dougie dropped us off at our spot. That's when the fun started. The first team got there at 09:15, the 2nd team about 11:30 and the last at 12:00. We then traveled back on the back of the bakkie, one word for it, cold! Then we snuggled into our beds.

We only woke up at 09:30 Friday. Time really was flying. Saturday is the big day. And I can't wait. On Friday, we just lazed around basically the whole day. But the day was brought to an end by a steaming hot cup of coffee.

The big day has arrived, hunting day. Each child had the privilege of having his or her own PH accompanying him/her on this exciting day. We were dropped at our spot, and I had to control my excitement. I shot a female springbuck, all thanks to Oom Corné Anderson. He kept me calm and showed me not to stress.

Tonight was prize-giving night. I only received my certificate, but I am more than happy with my achievement. Thank you to Uncle Sandy, Uncle Richard, Uncle Corné Anderson, Uncle Hennie, and Uncle Charles and to everyone involved in making this camp a success.

Jy sien, aan al die jong jagters wat die kamp wil bywoon, winterskool is great. Jy sien!! I will gladly go again. To all of you “uncles” and “aunts” who made this camp so enjoyable, especially Uncle Charles, thanks a hunting million.