



The WRSA-Graaff Reinet Chamber held an information day at the well-known Coldstream Restaurant in Graaff Reinet, on July 23rd overlooking the town's iconic 130-year-old Church Building. There were approximately 80 guests in attendance, including a group of wildlife management students from Nelson Mandela University, who are actively involved in the Eastern Cape Chambers.



**Gerhard Heyneke**  
(WRSA Director: Advisory Committees and Chambers)

Gerhard kicked off the day's program by highlighting initiatives of the WRSA at national and provincial level, giving a behind the scenes account of what's going on, and reiterated that WRSA works hard on behalf of their members and the wildlife industry at large. The most important aspect that we all need to keep in mind is that as a unit, we can make a huge difference in the industry, and the only way to ensure progress is to improve the genetics of our game. He also introduced Ankie Stroebel, WRSA-Recruitment and Marketing, to the audience and encouraged non-members to join.

The day's speakers including Gerhard Heyneke, WRSA director, Elizabet Pienaar of the Wildlife Ecology and Conservation Department at Florida University in the United States, Doug Stern, President of Agri Eastern Cape, Stephen Palos, CEO of CHASA, and Angus Sholto-Douglas, WRSA director. Summit Wildlife's Neil Dodds and Hennie Barnard also gave the 'inside track' of what is in store for their upcoming auction.



Newly elected WRSA Graaff-Reinet Chamber committee members: Joseph Ott (vice-chairperson) and Katjana Ott (chairperson) Congratulations!

Thereafter, a new WRSA Graaff-Reinet committee was elected, and Katjana Ott of the farm Glen Harry Game Reserve was elected as Chairperson. Joseph Ott was elected as Vice-Chair, and this couple team will soon appoint a committee to assist them. Our thanks and appreciation for their willingness to be so involved in WRSA.

Elizabet Pienaar, a former South African currently residing in America, has explained the research being done

on venison in South Africa. She emphasized the importance of educating the community to exploit this rare and sought-after product for the local and international markets. She believes that the South African venison industry can certainly compete with similar products in the meat market overseas.

After a tea break and the opportunity to have conversations with fellow game ranchers and other role players, we were all excited about the next half of the morning.

Doug Stern brought a very positive and lively message full of hope and confidence about the game industry. Agriculture is the backbone of the economy of South Africa. Oom Dougie asked us all to "invest in your farm, exploit your business and remember that the future is bright".

Angus Sholto-Douglas had the audience at his feet with his inspirational and insightful presentation. He brought it to everyone's attention that all four pillars of the wildlife industry that include Hunting, Meat Products, Game Breeding and Eco-tourism must be jointly developed to achieve success. His big question: "WHAT IS YOUR BRAND?" was real food for thought.

We, as game ranchers, must guard what we have in SA closely and determinedly and we must realize what privilege it is to protect our land and lifestyle.

Summit Wildlife's Neil Dodds and Hennie Barnard briefly gave the audience a look at what we can expect from the Summit Wildlife auction this year - from blue duikers to rhinos! They also elaborated on how close their hearts are to the charity lots and how the proceeds of these lots will be utilized.

The Coldstream restaurant is renowned for its Karoo Cuisine and everyone enjoyed the amazing finger food that consisted of venison finger snacks.

When the sun started to sink behind the Kamdeboo mountains, we all headed for home after an inspiring day of fun, information and networking.

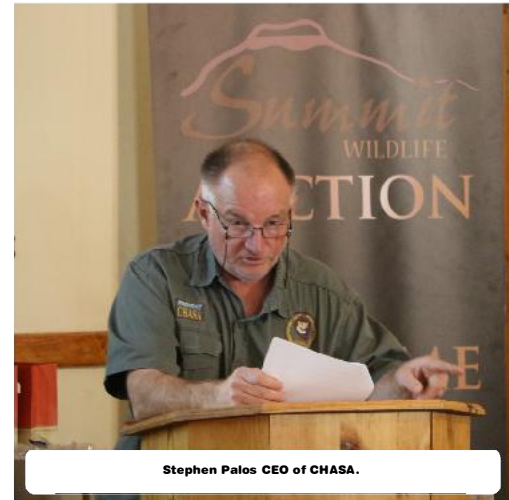
This event was made possible by the following generous sponsors - Summit Wildlife, Karoo Taxidermy, Grootbaas, and Hellspoot Meat Products. Many thanks to them.



Having lots of fun with the attendance draws!



Angus Sholto-Douglas from Kwandwe Game Reserve.



Stephen Palos CEO of CHASA.



Doug Stern from Agri Eastern Cape.



Ms Elizabeth Pienaar, assistant Professor of the Department of Wildlife Ecology and conservation - University of Florida.



Hennie Barnard and Neil Dodds from Summit Wildlife



Gerhard Heyneke (WRSA Director: Advisory Committees and Chambers) and Ankie Stroebel, WRSA Membership and marketing.