



What does it cost to save your buns when the going gets dangerously bad?

By John Ross | November 10, 2010

Not a lot, really, even if you're hunting in sub-Saharan Africa, the mountains of the Middle East or the jungle along Colombia's border with Venezuela. A payment of less than \$200, or \$300 if you're headed in to a zone with possible civil unrest, terrorism or open warfare, will cover a two-week trip. Think how much you just shelled out for dinner for four at that good restaurant you and your wife love to frequent.

While you and your three friends were enjoying that chef's new inspiration, a leopard in South Africa thought it would dine on John Abraham. It sank its teeth into his knee, and bit his wrist before it expired.

A local doctor cleaned and dressed the wound and Abraham returned to camp. Almost immediately infection set in. The pain was intense as was the swelling. More than 1,000 miles separated him from top-quality medical facilities in Johannesburg. His safari company is a member of Global Rescue, which specializes in medical and security evacuations. His wife placed the call, and Abraham is now recovering very well.

Global Rescue is unlike most other medevac operations. American-trained and certified critical care paramedics man the company's phones 24/7. They have real-time access to emergency medical staff at Johns Hopkins, one of the finest hospitals in the world. Satellite phones, digital imaging and electronic records make available diagnoses that are far superior to anything in the wild lands where trophy game is plentiful, but stellar doctors are not.

Any hunter who's not been living in a cave for the last five years knows that the world isn't quite as peaceful as it used

to be. Sure, big wars are rare, but kidnappings and related terrorism are always a threat in the steppes and mountains favored by ibex, sheep, tur and stag. Transportation to and from the closest "international" airport will cost a grand plus. Avoiding capture by terrorists might not be possible at any price. But for less than \$200, you can improve your odds exponentially.

Global Rescue employs a staff of former Navy SEALs and ex-Army special ops vets who are trained to intervene. The biggest incident so far was the evacuation of several staff members of a Fortune 500 company from Western Lebanon during the Israeli-Hezbollah war in 2006.

Thinking about casting for bonefish on the flats off the Seychelles? Fishing's quite good, they tell me. But those in the know also talk about Somali pirates and their attempts to seize those luxurious motor vessels to which anglers return each night. Were I headed in that direction, I'd plunk down a couple hundred bucks just to know that my four newest best friends – highly trained in military extraction – would be headed my way soon as any word arrived of my potential capture.

Admittedly, escaping from terrorists is not highly likely for most of us. Illness and accidents happen every day. And accompanying fees for medical evacuation can be staggering...

When it comes to travel these days, there aren't many bargains out there. International evacuation and health insurance is one of the best. Since first writing about it nearly a decade ago, I've never left the country without it...