

CHRIS JOHNS



Chris Johns was a 1969 Crater graduate who was an honor as well as an involved student and especially in the Crater FFA chapter where he served as President. This experience led to him being elected the State FFA President.

After high school, Chris moved on to Oregon State College where he earned a Bachelor's degree in Technical Journalism with a minor in Agriculture. Later, he attended graduate school at the University of Minnesota where he focused on photojournalism, which led to his chosen career. His first job in 1975 was as a staff photographer with the **Topeka Capitol-Journal** where he quickly became known as an up-and-coming photojournalist. In 1979 Chris was recognized as the Newspaper Photographer of the Year. After a stint at the **Seattle Times** newspaper, he embarked on a freelance career doing photography work for **Life**, **Time** and **National Geographic** magazines. His extensive work with **National Geographic** led to him taking a full-time position with the magazine in 1995.

As a photographer, Chris produced more than 20 articles for the **National Geographic**, eight of which were cover stories. His defining images are of Africa and its wildlife. He has taken readers down the Zambezi River, examined the Bushmen's ongoing struggle for cultural survival and provided important documentation of Africa's endangered wildlife. He was named one of the world's 25 most important photographers by **American Photo** magazine in 2003. During his **National Geographic** tenure, he has assumed various roles, including being the Senior Editor for Illustrations, Associate Editor and then Editor-in-Chief, a position he held from 2005 to 2014. He is the first photographer to be named as Editor-in-Chief, a high honor. During this time the **National Geographic** was awarded 23 National Magazine Awards. Today, Chris is the Executive Director of the centers of Excellence for the **National Geographic** and heads the National Geographic Society's mission to have a distinctive impact as a leader in photography, mapping and journalism.

An author as well as a photographer, Chris's titles include **Valley of Life: Africa's Great Rift** (1991), **Hawaii's Hidden Treasures** (1993) and **Wild at Heart: Man and Beast in Southern Africa** (2002).