

# International

## Term in Kenya Illustrates Cultural Differences

Dave Snyder

Jambo! That means hello in Swahili, Kenya's national language. They relished the opportunity to put a European through their language tests. One park warden we met was obviously upset when he discovered we hadn't learned "how are you?" after two weeks of travel there. It goes like this, "Jambo!" "Jambo! Habari? (how are you?)" "Mzuri sana, (very well)".

I was in Kenya during January enjoying the journey with Neal Bushoven and a former St. Android, Dave Saunier. Our first adventure was to rent a car from Polay's Car Hire. Driving on the smooth roads of Nairobi, we were unprepared for the hazards to confront us outside of the city.

In the back of our car, I bounced around like popcorn in a popcorn popper. Avoiding the potholes was not the issue; they had expanded so much that our task was to avoid the bits of road that were left. It only makes sense: all the bureaucrats who decide what gets paved live in Nairobi. One of our first destinations was the Masai Mara National Game Reserve, adja-

cent to Tanzania's Serengeti Plains. Once a famous hunting park, it is now a Mecca for shutterbugs.

It's obvious why. We stopped and watched a herd of elephants saunter by our jeep. Old males ahead and behind, the rest determinedly, gracefully, ripped through the small trees that dotted the savannah. Mothers nursed their babies without slowing down. Occasionally one would turn toward us and check us out. We just stared ahead, awed.

Later we discovered a lion. We spotted it by looking among a posse of white tourist vans corralled around a bush, where lions get shade from the midday equatorial sun. We noticed one of the lions was stalking.

In her sights about 250 feet away were two unsuspecting zebra. She stalked closer, using the vans as a shield. Power coiled in her legs. Haunched low, closer still. Eyes dead ahead. Body unmoving.

Van pulled between her and the zebra.

What?! We couldn't believe it either, but the tourists wanted a better picture. Nature got pre-empted.

A major controversy surrounds, literally, these reserves. Masai Mara is in the territory of the Maasai, the famous nomadic people of East Africa about whom many a documentary has been fantasized. They earn their livelihood through drinking the milk and blood of the cattle they maintain. They were appalled to learn the Europeans kill their cattle, which is just one thing they learned not to like about the Europeans, who are called in their language as "the people who hold their farts in their clothes."

But the Maasai are being crunched by an economic system expanding into their territory. To the north

Kenyan farmers are encroaching with their barbed-wire fields. To the south they are prohibited on the game reserve in order to preserve the habitat for the wild animals.

Imagine a federal official coming down to St. Andrews from Washington and deciding that Lake Ansley C. Moore is a unique geological phenomenon which must be preserved in its natural state. Therefore, we must destroy the causewalk and the entire residential side of the lake

and let it become swamp again. Then, two or three of us can become tourguides for visiting geologists. This is the condition of the Maasai; their means of earning their livelihood are being taken away from them for the sake of tourist income. Like most of the native Americans centuries ago, their way of life is coming to an end.

As we camped just outside the park's boundaries, we heard a bunch of people celebrating life inside the park guard's residence. Singing these rhythmic, circular, eternal tunes, their jubilation was intense.

Our plane left Nairobi at 1:30 a.m. Super Bowl Sunday. Twenty hours later, we landed in New York at 3:30 p.m. But I had a breakfast riding on the Redskins and Dave had an invitation to a Super Bowl party with some friends of his. What culture shock! To re-enter the U.S. on our National Holiday of Over-Indulgence. After four relatively austere weeks in East Africa, I found myself immersed in an orgy of consumption: a table of food, bathtub full of beer, apartment crammed with technology and people all watching this electronic spectacle with rapt attention.

## Ode to a Grecian Experience

Christopher Wood

This is a good time for us to explore some of the rest of the world. After we leave college, it may be awhile before we again have sufficient time to spend away from responsibilities. And you almost certainly won't be able to do it as cheaply as you can now. These two factors create a third; you may not have the chance to be part of a good group of people to travel with.

This, I believe, was the case when nearly thirty students, accompanied by Professor Dick Prust, flew from New York to Athens, Greece, in early January, at which point we met up with the course's other professor, Anne Woodson.

Athens was the city in which we spent roughly half of our four-week excursion, gracing its busy streets. There were times when the atmosphere in Athens, whose prominence included crowds and occasionally some natives whose scruples were on that day slightly anemic, made us

want to find a different place to spend our time. However, it seemed that whenever the general feeling of the group came to this, along came the time to scurry out of the Hermes, the hotel which served as our home base. We found refreshing experiences to be had in Delphi, Olympia, and Crete (an island), to name a few. We tended to find these more laid-back parts of Greece greater cause for relaxation, due in part to some wonderful scenery and some good people we came in contact with—not that we didn't come in contact with plenty in Athens as well.

To experience a ride through another culture, seeing some of how it evolved, some of how it remains today, and how it compares to cultures one is more familiar with, was in this case both beneficial and enjoyable. Having this, with helpful, undomineering guidance, was as good an experience as I will have during a Saint Andrew's Winter Term. I wouldn't hesitate to recommend it to most others who have a similar option.

**Voter Registration  
for the  
November General  
Election  
will be held  
Friday, March 4  
from 4:30 - 5:30 p.m.  
In the Main Lounge  
of Mecklenburg Hall  
Register  
and  
Vote**

*V.I.T.A.  
Volunteers*

HELP YOUR NEIGHBOR...

Join individuals and organizations who are helping nearly one million people with their tax returns. The people being helped are low-income, elderly, handicapped or have difficulty with English. The IRS will train you. The program is called VITA—Volunteer Income Tax Assistance. For details, call the nearest IRS office listed in your local telephone directory.

**TAX TIP**  
A Public Service of the IRS