

How do you pet a cheetah? Ask Evan, he is a natural with animals. He actually had a chance to find out while we were visiting Tim and Dianne Bannister. The owner of the ranch where they live has a pet cheetah. We were able to go inside its enclosure to pet it and hear it purr. This isn't exactly an everyday occurrence for most kids!



**Rains:** It has been wet! The "short" rains have lasted over two months, which is very unusual. In central Kenya where we are, the rains have been good and crops are growing well. North-East Kenya, Western Kenya, and the coast have not been so fortunate and have had significant flooding affecting over half a million people. Homes and property have been destroyed, roads have been washed away. Many water supplies have been

contaminated leading to water-borne diseases. The humanitarian agencies in Kenya have been stretched to provide help to the many who are affected, particularly the large refugee camps in Dadaab. This area has been cut off from all road traffic except for small four-wheel drives for weeks. The US Air Force was called in to air-drop supplies to the camps, which continue to grow as more Somalis flee ongoing fighting in their country.



**Visitors:** We've been here one and a half years. Many things are starting to seem normal to us. Visitors sometimes make us realize just how much we have adjusted. My parents returned "home" to stay with us for a couple months. They arrived in mid November, bringing two couples from Main Street Baptist Church in Sackville to see Kenya for two weeks. I was reminded just how odd it is to be passing truck spewing black diesel smoke while going 15km/h on the highway with oncoming traffic. I realize that the view of the Rift Valley and the occasional monkeys in our yard are something to enjoy and not to take for granted.

I took our guests to the special service at Matathia where Pastor Barry Todd had been invited to speak. It was an incredible experience of authentic, joyous, African worship. To finish off the day in true African style, we got stuck in the mud on our way back from the church. I called Ephantus who showed up with about 15 men from the church, all in their Sunday best. They found a rope and managed to pull the van out of the ditch and up the slippery hill.

Our guests finished out their visit with my parents taking them on a safari to Masai Mara Game Reserve, which the UN has recently dubbed "The Seventh Wonder of the Natural World."

**Christmas:** Our Christmas was green -- very green! We woke up to a wet, foggy day. It was the perfect day to spend inside with family around the fireplace.



**Bible Project update:** Thanks to all those who have given to the Bible project. We know that we have enough to purchase 500 Bibles and there is still more to come. Pretty exciting!

*"The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever." Isaiah 40:22*

**Recent Photos:** I've put some of our recent photos on our website at [http://kijabe.org/term\\_1\\_2006/](http://kijabe.org/term_1_2006/) so you can see a little more of what we are experiencing.

Have a great New Year!

**Michael, Bernadine, Julianne and Evan**

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