

Out & About

A guide to arts & leisure

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Richard Daniels poses with a group of Masai women in Kenya, Africa.

Into Africa

As seen through the camera lens of Richard Daniels

BY PAM ASHLEY

Today's News-Herald

He knew Africa's cape buffalo could be dangerous and unpredictable. He also knew they were strong — the males weigh around 1,500 pounds. But the one thing Richard Dennis never expected was how cunning the huge beasts could be.

"I actually thought cape buffalo were kind of stupid. But then I saw a herd of them take on some lions. It was like a chess game, watching the lions and the buffalo go back and forth, gaining and then losing ground. The buffalo are actually pretty smart," he said.

Dennis was in Kenya last November on safari. During the 18-day trip, he got to do a lot of shooting, but not with a gun. Instead, he was taking pictures with his camera. The photos from his trip are on exhibit at Mohave Community College's Lake Havasu City campus now through Sept. 22.

But back to that lion-buffalo

sighting. Dennis said there were several lions dogging the buffalos.

"It was a large herd — about 1,000 — and they had to cross a big ravine. There were about 12 lions waiting for them.

"The lead males were in front, leading the herd to safety.

They seemed to be pacing the group. When the head buffalos made a maneuver, a couple of lions darted in. Right then, a buffalo turned around and butted one of the lions. The lions ran off, like a bunch of cowards," Dennis said.

He returned to the area a few hours later. There were no buffalo carcasses in the area.

"I guess that's one time they all got away," he said.

A retired landscape contractor from California who recently moved to Lake Havasu City, the

67 year-old Dennis said he's dabbled in photography for a few years. His African photos were taken with a Canon D10 digital SLR with basic wide angle and zoom lenses. The MCC exhibit features about 15 color photos; most are 13x19 prints.

If you go

Kenya Photo Safari

by Richard Dennis
Free exhibit daily
through Sept. 22

MCC Gallery
(Room 204)
Havasu campus
1977 Acoma Blvd.
505-3321 for details

"My favorite picture is a close-up of a lion. But overall, I was really surprised by the quantity and quality of the animals we saw. With the lions, if their stomachs were full, you could drive right up to them. They were so relaxed, it was hard to get them to raise up their heads," Dennis said.

Most of the wildlife photography was shot while Dennis was standing in a van that had a large, open roof.

When he was out of the van, he traipsed around African vil-

lages. He said the Masai tribal members were interesting photo subjects, but it was somewhat irritating that he had to pay for the privilege.

"If you want to see the Masai, you have to pay to go to a village. And if you want to take pictures of anyone, you have to pay them. They do a good job of getting you to buy trinkets, too," Daniels said.

The practice of shelling out a few dollars every time he turned around became so obnoxious, he threatened his guide.

"I told him, 'Every dollar I have to spend is going to be deducted from your tip.' I didn't do that, of course, but the whole thing was kind of irritating. He was actually a pretty good guide. It was a great trip."

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A reception for Richard Dennis is from 5-7 p.m. tomorrow at the MCC Gallery (Room 204). The free event is at the Lake Havasu City campus, 1977 Acoma Blvd.