



# Capstone Ministries



*Restoring Children! Strengthening Families!*

***“The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone” Psalm 118:22***

A prayer letter from Dan and Patty Schmelzer, Kisumu, Kenya      June, 2012      Volume 7 Issue 6

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The number of street boys reconciled with family by Capstone Ministries to date:

# 225

+ 8 in May



Check out Capstone on Facebook.

Capstone participates in Savemart/Lucky Supermarket’s SHARES program in N. California. You only scan your card before purchasing your groceries and SaveMart donates 3% of your purchase. To date Savemart has given Capstone **\$2,741.72**...because of you.



## “The Power in Knowing”

***“...my people are destroyed from lack of knowledge.” Hosea 4:6***

The advancement in technology today is unparalleled in the history of man. To be even five years behind in the IT world is to risk being called obsolete. I’m sure it will not surprise many to learn that social media sites Facebook and Twitter are very popular even in Kenya.

While there are certain advantages in being up to date on technology, it is not the most important knowledge one can have. The prophet Hosea in the Old Testament and the circumstances under which he attempts to teach God’s people certainly illustrate this critical arena of knowledge. Hosea is God’s prophet to Northern Israel during those final years before Assyria wipes the 10 northern tribes from the face of the earth and scatters them to the wind. What precipitated this judgment is illustrated in the strange image of Hosea and his adulterous wife: Gomer. Unfaithful Israel is pictured in this wife with a wandering sexual appetite. As chapter four begins, the Lord cites a laundry list of Israel sins. So intense is the unfaithful lifestyle of Israel that it even affects the land and animals. Ch. 4:3 says ***“Because of this the land mourns and all who live in it waste away; the beasts of the field and the birds of the air and the fish of the sea are dying.”***



Vicar Zadok (left) leads a family in a prayer of reconciliation and thanksgiving as he prepares to share the Word of God with them.

It is in this context that the Lord laments in the words above, ***“my people are destroyed from lack of knowledge.”*** Later in the chapter the Lord laments the state of the priesthood in Israel. Instead of being shepherds of souls and teachers, they became participants in the evil lifestyle of the people. ***“like people, like priests...”*** vs. 9

## Patty's Post-It:

\*The following is an excerpt from Jacob Gillard, LCMS missionary formerly from Uganda and now serving in the World Missionary Prayer League. This article was taken from one of his newsletters that came across our desk a few weeks ago. I believe you will find it enlightening.

"I've fielded many inquiries from Christians in America, Australia, etc who desire to get involved in East Africa. I commend them for doing due diligence (those who don't, often end up with heartbreak). There is a steep learning curve when it comes to initiating and maintaining cross-cultural partnerships and I'm happy to share what I've learned. I encourage you to get involved—just take some precautions.

\*Turn and run away from unsolicited partnership requests.

\*Anyone who comes to Africa with money needs to understand dependency issues very well. It may surprise you to learn that it is almost always harmful when well-meaning Christians from "the West" take it upon themselves to "sponsor" or send money directly to an African pastor or congregation. Such practice often hinders the development of the Church by fostering jealousy and distrust...your sponsorship makes the man accountable to you instead of his congregation and local leadership. As a general rule, don't send any money directly to Africa.

\*There is a lot of good scholarship these days on the issue of dependency and missions. One researcher with lots of experience in Africa basically says: come visit but leave your money at home. It's counter intuitive to the American mind but he's got the research to back it up. African leaders back him up too.

These warnings may sound like a real downer but we don't deal with these problems every day. Overall, the work here is a tremendous joy. It's just that Americans tend to assume the best and take people at their word. Unfortunately, a few bad apples take advantage of that. That said, I'm not down on Africa. Are you going to tell me that we don't have scammers and crooks in America? No, we're sinners the world over.

Get involved, have fun, but let's be careful out there. Matthew 10:16"

*-Printed with permission from the website blog of Jacob Gillard.*

(cont. from p.1)

God had established a precious covenant relationship of grace and mercy with his people. But the priests had abandoned their role as Israel's teacher and the people suffered from ignorance.

The principle here is that knowing the Lord and his love for us changes us as people. And when we grow in faith and knowledge, we grow in how we deal with each other. Relationships change with family, with community and even with what we own: land, animals, investments, etc.

When you grow in faith and in the love of God, things change. This is illustrated to us every Friday during our weekly staff meetings.

We discuss all active cases at our weekly staff meeting. In almost every case, the problems and obstacles encountered by families can be traced to a lack of spiritual development. Symptoms of the deeper problems may be rooted in adolescent rebellion, favoritism by a step mother toward her own children vs. her husband's, discipline that focuses on beating instead of communicating, poverty that stems from laziness or loss of real hope. Those are just a few of the examples that are discussed each week.

Hosea cites the same kind of symptomatic examples in his day: cursing, lying, murder, stealing, adultery, bloodshed. But the real disease behind these symptoms is the lack of knowledge of the Lord. What they didn't know was killing them, spiritually and physically.

Each and every time a Capstone staff visits the home of a reconciled boy, the focus is on the spiritual knowledge of the Lord. From there it is applied to the individual circumstance of the family.

An example: Recently, Bob Owino was returned to his mother and father by Capstone staff George Owiti. The boy had run away because he had stolen 200 shillings (\$2.50) from an uncle. The symptom was the theft. The disease was not knowing how or why to forgive. In such circumstance it is important to share with the father the great love God has for us in Jesus and how he has forgiven us a debt much larger than the 200 shillings his son stole. **Knowing** God's grace enables one to forgive. **Not knowing** has the potential to destroy the relationship between father and son.

This focus on personal ministry and individual family counseling is what makes Capstone Ministries a truly unique program in Western Kenya. Many attempt to deal with the symptoms of street children but Capstone goes deeper, providing ongoing Biblical family counseling long after the boy has been reconciled with his family....and it is working!

## Water Foot Pump Empowers Widows

The Kajulu Women's Group called "Tumaini" are 90% HIV+ women who have developed a support group for the purpose of encouraging self-reliance and psycho-social support. Capstone developed a relationship with this group one year ago through a local NGO (non government organization) called SWAP (Safe Water and Aids Project). Dan serves on the board of this organization. The board of SWAP encouraged Capstone to start a trial project for the women: growing moringa trees. That started in August 2011. Since December they have been regularly harvesting their moringa. But during the dry season of December-February, the production went down. An analysis of the availability of water was done and it was found that 80% of the women live within 100 feet of a river.



**Jane, on right, and Therese, on left, try out the foot pump.**



Dan proposed a cost sharing project to the group. He would provide a water foot pump so that they could irrigate their moringa and other crops during the dry season. The foot pump would be shared among the participating members of this project. Together they would raise 50% of the cost of the pump. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of May, the foot pump was presented to the group. Pictured above are two of the ladies in this Water Group. These are the kind of partnerships that really help people to achieve through cost sharing participation and hard work by the recipients. This creates ownership, encourages self-reliance and promotes the resolve of the recipients.

## Supporting Capstone

You too can be an ongoing supporter of Capstone Ministries and bring real and lasting change to the street boys of Western Kenya.

Capstone Ministries is a proven effective program supported by churches, individuals and Rotary clubs in the US and Canada. Fill in the form on the last page of this newsletter and send your donation today.

Be a spokesperson for Capstone in your church, Bible study or club. Make copies of this newsletter and share them with your friends.

Every year we have specific ways you can target your donation. In the past year opportunities were available to support many projects. Currently we are promoting three ways you can help specifically: The Water Foot Pump Project, The Fund Raiser for a new pick up, and The Loofa Soap Project. We also encourage you to consider being a monthly donor to our ongoing work.

## Feature: Calvince Okoth



Calvince Okoth is 16 years old and comes from Migori County. His home is in Kanyimach. His father is a mason. His mother has died and the father has remarried. He has three brothers, two older and one younger.

Calvince had been on the street for less than six months and was taken home on January 19, 2012.

He was enrolled in Bonde Primary School in class six. Last year he performed poorly because of truancy.

On a recent visit to his home the father was extremely happy because his son had become #3 out of 69 in his class and was now serious about school. Even his step mother talked about how much she loves the boy and how much he has changed. Both parents praised God for Calvince.

The step mother shared a wonderful story about how the boy needed an atlas for school. She told him to be patient because an atlas is expensive. She saved and finally a few months later had enough (700 shillings= \$8) to buy him an atlas. Berline who was visiting the family emphasized just how important it is for Calvince to look to his parents to assist him in school and to be patient.

As we shared his situation in our Friday meeting we discussed his circumstance as an illustration of the principle of self-reliance and how critical that component is in building family unity. If we had come in and provided that atlas, we would have not allowed for Calvince to exercise patience and faith. Even more we would have threatened the delicate yet growing relationship between Calvince and his step-mother.

Calvince is succeeding in school and we are encouraging him to pursue his goal of becoming an engineer.

This is a boy who can really succeed through education. His success comes from the loving support of his father and step-mother. Because the family is stable and supportive, he is achieving!



## Prayers, Praises

1. We currently have three boys at the Transition Center. Pray for Brian Victor, Brian, and Osteen
2. Pray for all the Ambassadors of Capstone who spread the word in their churches..
3. Patty has returned to Kenya from a visit to California to see her family.
4. Praise that we have the opportunity to share the vision of Capstone with Evergreen Lutheran, Evergreen, CO; Bethlehem Lutheran, Lakewood, CO; Bethany Lutheran, Naperville, Illinois; Trinity Lutheran, Toledo, Ohio and Trinity Lutheran, Winfield, KS; Bethany Lutheran, West Hartford, CT; Trinity Lutheran, Keene, NH; Messiah Lutheran, Fitchburg, NH; Christ Lutheran, Scituate, NH. Pray for new opportunities to present Capstone to new congregations during the fall of 2012. Dan and Patty are planning their time in the states for Sept-November. If your church would like to hear more about Capstone from Dan and Patty you are welcome to write and invite them to visit your church. [CapstoneMinistries@gmail.com](mailto:CapstoneMinistries@gmail.com)
5. In early June Capstone will be visited by Dr. Peter and Melissa Soderstrom along with their two boys. Dr. Pete will be making a presentation on the Saturday of the World Weekend of Prayer for Orphans and Vulnerable Children. Pray for their safe travel to, from and within Kenya.
6. Pray for upcoming World Wide Weekend of Prayer for orphans and vulnerable children. We will host it again at the Rarieda Parish just outside Kisumu on June 2,3. Watch for a report on this special event in the June newsletter.
7. Berline, our Operations Supervisor, is taking her exams for an course in management. The exams begin on June 4. Pray she performs well.
8. Good friends Tim and Megan Doods, LCMS missionaries in Kisumu will return to the states in July after serving here a year. Pray for their smooth transition and God's leading as they serve him in the US.
9. We have been awaiting our application for approval by the Kenya Bureau of Standards for five months. The application is for our moringa. Pray it comes soon.

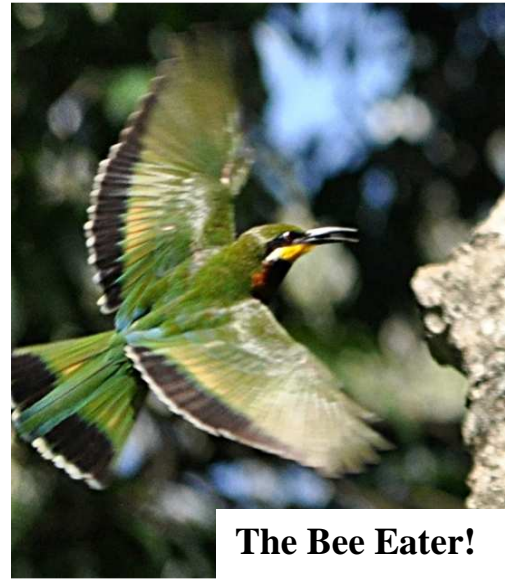
## Fund Raiser for a new pickup

We have raised \$21,065 toward the goal of \$30K for a quality imported Toyota double cap pick up. We are hoping to purchase this truck sometime later this summer and your designated gifts are still appreciated. On the donor slip on page 4 just indicate your designation for the truck fund. Thanks.

## Vocational Training

A grant from Semiahmoo Rotary Club in British Columbia will enable us to begin a program to help support older boys who have remained at home and are unable to complete primary school or perform poorly and cannot attend secondary. This program will be coordinated with family support to maintain parental ownership and supervision of the boy in training. Only those boys who demonstrate that they are serious about their future will be eligible for this program.

## Photo of the Month



**The Bee Eater!**

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Email: \_\_\_\_\_ (Include if you are not currently receiving the newsletter via email)

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Designation if other than operational budget: \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to Capstone Ministries. All donations are tax deductible.

[CapstoneMinistries@gmail.com](mailto:CapstoneMinistries@gmail.com)

Send to: **Capstone Ministries, P.O. Box 2080, Oakdale, CA 95361**

(Please cut and include with your donation)