



# 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**

**July, 2013 Volume 8 Issue 7**

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

**260**

**1 went home in June**



**Check out Capstone  
on Facebook.**



Important changes are ahead for Thrivent's Choice Dollars program. Learn more about steps you need to take to ensure you can take full advantage of this program and continue your support of Capstone Ministries through this program. Go to

**[www.thrivent.com/thriventchoice](http://www.thrivent.com/thriventchoice)**

## **The Power of a Child's Prayer**

***"From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise because of your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger" Psalm 8:2***

On my Facebook page, I follow a link called "Churchfuel.com". Recently they posted a video called "Talking to Jesus". The short clip portrays a man rushing into a coffee shop for a few moments with a physical representation of Jesus. The clip is effective because it describes very honestly how we often pray: hurried and harried! (If you would like to see the clip, go to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dZAK0Hk13II> )

On the weekend of June 8, 9 Capstone observed the World Weekend of Prayer for Orphans and Vulnerable Children. What a joy it was to welcome more than 300 children to the Rarieda Parish for the weekend. Saturday was filled with spiritual lessons, dental hygiene activities, competitive games, and concluded with the showing of "The Chronicles of Narnia: The Dawn Treader." On Sunday, the worship services involved the children in almost every aspect. They read the Scriptures of the day, sang songs, performed dramas and poems and even assisted with the sermon. Of course they also recited the prayers revolving around the theme of the day. This year the theme was from Psalm 40:1,2 "The Lord lifts us



from mud and mire" Children prayed for vulnerable children all over the world, including those affected by child labor, child trafficking, slavery, poverty, limited opportunities in education, poor parenting as well as children on the street. The needs of children not only in Africa but around the world were brought before the Lord; children in Asia, Africa, Europe and America. The weekend was far from harried. It was uplifting, enriching and heart warming as children from the Lake Diocese displayed their faith **Cont. on p. 3**

## .....Patty's Post-It.....

Capstone Ministries mission and vision has always been family reconciliation. When we founded Capstone we anticipated having a few difficult cases. We knew a child might need to be isolated from his family for a time. Over time the Capstone staff became more and more skilled in family reconciliation. The need for the transition decreased.

Over the years we realized that family issues always needed to be dealt with at home. In other words the transition center was only delaying the real work that needed to be done. In the most difficult cases we work closely with the community and government structures through the village chief and elders.

The staff expressed concern about emergency cases where we felt the need to get a child off the street immediately. They had a valid concern. Through some networking we developed a partnership with another organization in Kisumu to be a "holding" facility for any Capstone child who has been rescued but can't be taken home immediately.

We also weighed out the financial expenditure of the transition center which needed four full time staff regardless of the number of children there. When we weighed need, effectiveness, and stewardship we made the decision to close the transition center. We praise God for the development of Capstone and friends with like minded vision!



## Steps to Reconciliation

Understanding the intricate and challenging work of restoring a street child with his family is not easy. In our presentations to groups, churches, Bible studies, etc, we have noticed that there are often misconceptions about the work we do and how it is accomplished. For this reason we thought it good to write a series of articles on the process. This article deals with the objectives and obstacles of the first step: Ministering to boys on the street.

Every Saturday, and frequently for a few hours every week, all of our six staff members meet the boys on the street. They travel to where the boys often congregate: the bus stage, along the lake, in town or in what is called the "jua kali" area. The latter literally translated means "hot sun." It is the area where mechanics will work on vehicles in the open air or "hot sun."

The boys join groups for protection, information, and companionship. It is in these groups that the boys will be influenced by older boys and seldom is the experience positive. Younger boys will be engaged as roaming thieves and beggars for older boys. Sadly, sodomy is also part of this relationship. Much like the message of the Gospel, our staff want to meet the boys "where they are". The objective is to build trust and show unconditional, consistent concern. Many of the boys have been betrayed in their experiences with adults and it takes time to break through this perception. A second objective is to invite the boys to our weekly outreach at the Lutheran church in Kisumu. Here the staff can have more pointed and private time to counsel and listen to the boys' story.

However, many of the boys have already had experiences on the street that make it difficult to "break through". Many of the boys will quickly develop an addiction to glue. Others have started enjoying a little bit of money by working for a shop keeper or by sweeping one of the local transport vehicles. Still other boys will scavenge for scrap metal, even stealing cooking utensils to sell to scrap metal dealers. All of these experiences work against the idea of returning home where all children spend long hours in school, dig in their "shamba" (garden) with the rest of the family. Street life means complete independence. No one to answer to. No challenging family dysfunction. No school teachers or homework. On the surface, it can seem very tempting.

There are a number of organizations working with the street kids in Kisumu. Some do not have long term objectives. They merely give the boys food, clothes and other items that actually make it more comfortable for the boys on the street. This misdirected concern is called "enabling". Often these are new organizations working with street children. They may not have yet learned the best practices and what is in the best interest of a street child. They may have been guided only by the visual sight of a child on the street and felt compelled to provide what they have seen as lacking. However, the food is



## **SaveMart S.H.A.R.E.S. benefits Capstone**

SaveMart Supermarket in Northern California has a program that benefits various non-profits organizations. When you shop at SaveMart, you only need to present your card before purchase and 3% of the value of your purchase is kept in the account you have designated, in this case Capstone Ministries. Capstone receives a check quarterly from all those who have participated by taking the extra 5 seconds to hand the cashier your S.H.A.R.E.S. card. To date



Capstone has received \$3,969.89 from this program. Do you live in Northern California? Do you shop at SaveMart? Why not help Capstone while you shop! Ask for your card on the form on p. 4 of this newsletter!

### **Cont. from p. 2 "Steps to Reconciliation"**

gone in a day, the child sells the clothes and shoes and the boy remains in the same predicament as before. In fact the boy may be in a worse situation than before as he now has a preformed opinion about what he really needs and may be disappointed when one of our staff may want to talk to him about going home. Other organizations invite children into a children's center and once inside they are talked to about going home. Again, the intent may be to help but often the boys will run away, having felt lied to about the intent of the "helper". Such organizations may show that they are working with huge numbers of boys but their "success rate" is very low with many boys impacted negatively. Those same boys now are very reluctant to talk to a Capstone staff because they were deceived once already by a supposed well-wisher.

These are just a few of the initial challenges faced by the six Capstone staff as they strive to raise the sights of children on the street off of their feet, their immediate situation and instill a vision of home, stability and a future. It is not easy work and we ask you to pray for our staff: Berline, George, Isaiah, Benedict, Joseph and Jael. Pray that the Lord gives them strength, fortitude, faith and dedication. (Next month: Capstone Youth Center and taking the step to family reconciliation)



### **Cont. from p. 1 "The Power of a Child's Prayer"** in so many ways.

In the Psalm above, David reminds us that the Lord responds to the praises, spiritual songs, and petitions of children and through the prayers of children the enemy, the foe, the avenger is silenced and defeated. The foe is obvious in every corner of Africa but through the God-ordained prayers of children he is silenced. Glory be to God.

Capstone Ministries partners with the ELCK-Lake Diocese in this event as part of a joint ministry to vulnerable children. Many poor and vulnerable children are part of the 13 Lutheran congregation Sunday School choirs who attended the weekend events. Many community children in and around Rarieda also participate. The evening movie always attracts those who live in the community. We always choose a movie that will communicate regardless of language or culture. "The Dawn Treader"—which is part of the Chronicles of Narnia series addresses the power of the Lord in overcoming personal challenges, bad decisions and temptations.

The last two years, parents of participating children have helped to cost-share the expense of this weekend. It is our intent to encourage ownership of this program by the local Lutheran congregations. However, no child is ever turned away from participating because of the small fee that is charged.

For the last two years St. Paul's Lutheran Sunday School of West Hartford, CT has supported this event through their Sunday School offerings. We acknowledge and thank them for their partnership with us and the Lake Diocese and encourage other Sunday Schools to be part of this World Weekend of Prayer. We will gladly send you a list of activities, prayers, poems and songs you can include in your observance of this Weekend of Prayer. Then when we visit, we will show the video of the weekend to your Sunday School and show them the children who joined them at the throne of grace as they, together, silenced the foe and the avenger.

Enjoy the pictures on these pages of the weekend's activities.



**Sermon theme: "The Lord lifts us from the mud and mire"**

## Prayers, Praises

1. Pray for Jael, staff of Capstone on maternity leave. Jael gave birth to a boy in early May. She will return in July.
2. Pray for all the Ambassadors of Capstone who spread the word in their churches.
3. Praise for the successful World Weekend of Prayer for Orphans and Vulnerable Children held June 8, 9.
4. In early August, 2012 Capstone applied for RSO status with the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. We have completed all necessary documentation. Pray it is well received and approved. We should hear any time now.
5. Dan's right knee was examined at Kijabe Mission Hospital, outside Nairobi, in late April. X-rays were taken and sent to Dr. Jim Weir in Michigan for observation. Dan will see Dr. Weir on August 19<sup>th</sup> and have surgery on August 22. Dr. Weir is a respected orthopedic surgeon in Saginaw, Michigan and a schoolmate of Dan's. Meanwhile Dan will deal with the discomfort with pain killers.
6. Praise for our mothers, Josey and Chrysta, who are both strong and active in their 80's.
7. The next meeting of the Capstone Board will be Aug. 1
8. Pray for the new program that gives supporters the opportunity to sponsor a boy who has been reconciled with his family. This new program, called School Sponsorship & Spiritual Support (SSSS) provides a school uniform, a Bible and Luther's Catechism and to pray regularly for the specific needs of boy in Capstone's Program.
9. Patty safely returned to Kenya on June 4. Praise God.
10. We will be redesigning the newsletter in the coming months. Watch for changes.
11. We reported last month that Norman was taken to Nairobi by well wishers from the local Provincial Hospital. Sadly, Norman passed away shortly after arriving in Nairobi before surgery could be performed.
12. We offer the following names for intercession, trusting the Lord knows their circumstance: Jennifer, Pat, Barry, Eunice, Gabriel, Christian, Troy, Phil, Liz, Mary Anne, Mike, Jim, Joel, Jen, Jan, Susan, Landon, Ernie, Lori.

Donation: For Capstone & Dan and Patty Support

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All donations are tax deductible.

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

Send to:

Capstone Ministries, P.O. Box 2080,  
Oakdale, CA 95361

## Coming to California

We want to make our friends in California aware that we will be spending most of our time this fall on the West Coast. We are available for presenting in your church, to your school, LWML and others as you see appropriate. All Sundays are already book but we would be happy to meet you during the week. Here is the schedule to date:

Sept. 22, Concordia Lutheran, Toledo Ohio

Sept. 29 Lutheran Layman's League, Wheaton Zone, Western Minnesota

Oct. 6 Trinity Lutheran, Redding, CA

Oct. 13 St. Andrew's Lutheran, Stockton, CA

Oct. 18 LWML, Messiah Lutheran, Citrus Heights, CA

Oct. 20 Our Saviour's Lutheran, Patterson, CA

Oct. 24 Semiahmoo Rotary Club, White Rock, BC, Canada

Oct. 27 St. Paul's Lutheran, Tracy, CA

Nov. 3 Good Shepherd Lutheran, Turlock, CA

Nov. 10 United Lutheran, Manteca, CA

Nov. 17 St. John's Lutheran, Valley Home, CA

We are also looking for anyone who might have an empty house or apartment we can use for our stay during the above schedule.

## Photo of the Month



A blue monkey in the Kakamega Rain Forest. Good photo Patty! New camera?

Donation: "4S Primary School Sponsorship"

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Check here if you do not need a hard copy of the newsletter and prefer to read it online \_\_\_\_\_

Donation Amount \_\_\_\_\_

Student name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to Capstone Ministries.

All donations are tax deductible.

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