



# 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

October, 2013 Volume 10 Issue 9

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

# 270

5 went home in Sept.

Email: [CapstoneMinistries@gmail.com](mailto:CapstoneMinistries@gmail.com)  
 Website: [WWW.CapstoneMinistries.org](http://WWW.CapstoneMinistries.org)

## Cross Cultural Ministry: A Few Keys

*"I have become all things to all men, so that by all possible means I might save some." I Corinthians 9:22*

Imagine working on Ellis Island when immigrants were flooding into the USA by the thousands daily. As an orientation officer, your job is to help new arrivals with important information about citizenship, how to live, work and travel in this new land. However you don't speak the language of those arriving from so many different countries. How would you approach your job? How would you communicate effectively? What might be some potential problem areas?

Being effective in cross cultural ministry involves some of the same situations. Over the past 11 years Patty and I have discovered some keys to being effective in bridging the gap in culture between our western culture and African culture.

**PLAN.** From the beginning it is vital to understand that as a Christian missionary, you have moved away from your culture and are now living in another culture. That means that the burden for bridging the gap every day is on you, not on those you work with. That affects everything from how you talk, understanding norms of conversation to how you approach theology and learning. In Kenya for example, conversations will circle a topic before addressing the topic at hand. Americans tend to be more abrupt and dive right into an issue. Preaching also is different. Africans are more "eastern" in their approach, using stories and illustrations to teach. Americans tend to be more "western" or conceptual. An African may be more comfortable hearing about God as the Bright Morning Star whereas a westerner might describe God as a source of enlightenment.

But a basic structure to ministry is also a key in planning. Long ago missionaries did everything that needed to be done. Over time we have learned that it is more effective for missionaries to utilize people from the culture to minister to their own people. A missionary becomes more of a trainer of trainers, planner, administrator, motivator, fund raiser and accountant. It is critical to find the right trustworthy, honest, industrious and innovative people to work with the missionary. Capstone is blessed with seven very dedicated staff members and this greatly enhances the effectiveness of the ministry.

**PITFALLS** The downside of the missionary insisting on doing the work him/herself is many. In Kenya there is a perception that white people have money. This coupled with the history of hand-out programs that just give things away creates a perception by those

# The Cundiff Clippings

*(Jennifer and Joel Cundiff have been in Kenya serving as volunteers at Capstone for one month. They are on their own now after a month of orientation. They are filling in for Dan and Patty while they travel in the US. During their stay I wanted to share some of their experiences with you. Below is one of their blog posts. For those of you who don't know the Cundiffs, Joel serves as associate pastor at Immanuel Lutheran, Danbury, CT)*

Joel and I have experienced a lot of what Capstone does, but we won't get to experience everything. For example, the Capstone Camp occurs once per year and is described as a pivotal event that rewards rescued children as well as the staff.

Twenty boys are selected out of those that Capstone has reintegrated back home from the street. In order to be a candidate, a boy must currently be at home, and be someone who the staff feels would most benefit from the camp. They also take into account which boys are the most vulnerable of being influenced to run back to the street. It is a week-long event that involves spiritual enrichment, scouting activities, and crafts and games.



George works in the Capstone office in Kisumu.

The camp acts as a support group for the boys. They are asked questions that prompt them to think about life on the street versus life at home. On the street the boys have a freedom without restrictions and responsibility. Upon returning home they have to learn once again to follow the rules of their parents or guardians. At the camp, the boys come to find that they are not the only ones struggling with this change.

Cont. on p. 3

Cont. from p. 1

politely all the while intending to ask for and expecting a hand out at the end. Indigenous staff may face some of this but it is certainly less normative.

One temptation that every missionary faces who tries to help people directly is something known as the God-complex. When the recipient of your help calls you "Jesus in the flesh" or says, "You are so wise and we are so blessed by your presence," humility can be a challenge and an ego can run wild justifying even bad ideas.

A doctor can be extremely gifted but if he makes a mistake in diagnosis, harm can result. The same is true of a missionary diagnosing a social or spiritual setting without local wisdom. This happens often with those who come for a short visit and draw conclusions about how to help street kids based on a few conversations with a street boy.

Other less serious pitfalls can also be experienced by a missionary. Communication issues are one example. Kenyan English for example sounds much different than American English. Most Kenyans speak with an English accent. Kenya was a former colony of the United Kingdom and Kenyans learned their English from the British. Americans speak much faster, slur their words, use slang and idioms foreign to the Kenyan ear. It is not uncommon for an entire sermon to go unheard simply because the American made no effort to communicate as a Kenyan.

**PRIDE.** All of us love our own country and people with a good heart want to make it better. One reward of our Capstone staff is that they know they are improving the society. When an alcoholic father repents and vows to support his family, when a boy is reconciled with a harsh father and becomes a prayer warrior in school, when Bible study group members minister to each other with love and sacrifice, our staff go home in the evening with a full heart and love to recount the stories in our staff meeting. That is pride in the work of God and the privilege of being an instrument in the hand of God. I believe it is even more powerful and meaningful when that PRIDE is part of the indigenous experience. May we all take pride in our joint efforts to bring reconciliation to the vulnerable children of Kenya through our Kenyan staff.

*(This article was a little bit different from other newsletter articles. I wanted to take some time to explain the uniqueness and challenge of cross cultural ministry. Patty and I have learned a lot in our 11 years in Kenya. We are still learning. It is, by far, the most challenging work we have ever done. It is also the most rewarding. I hope you have enjoyed this glimpse into cross cultural ministry. If you would live further explanation, you are welcome to write and ask. For those of you in California, we will talk more when we see you in just a few days)*

## **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.



Capstone has received a total of \$3969.89 to date from the "S.H.A.R.E.S." Program. Keep swiping!

## **Capstone Camp Sponsor(s) needed**

Every year Capstone Ministries holds a one week camp for boys who have been reconciled with their family during the past year. This camp provides encouragement for those boys who have remained at home and in school. The activities include teaching in preparation for Baptism, activities, games, community service and training by two of the district's Boy Scout trainers. It is a wonderful time for the boys and our staff. The budget for the camp is \$2000. If you would like to be a partial or total sponsor of this camp, please indicate so under specific designation on page 4 or write to us for more information at [Capstoneministries@gmail.com](mailto:Capstoneministries@gmail.com).

## **High School Educational Scholarship**

Capstone has a unique opportunity for those who would like to sponsor a well deserving and needy student in high school. While primary education is free in Kenya, public high school fees can be beyond the capability of most rural poor families. For those boys who are both needy and achieve an above average score level on their finishing exams in primary school, Capstone offers a scholarship subject to sponsorship funding. If you are interested in making a 4 year commitment to sponsor a needy and deserving high school student, the cost is \$600 per year. We project that we will have five students who will qualify for a possible scholarship. Primary exams are coming up this fall. We will send you a photo and description of your sponsored boy along with ongoing academic reports. If we are visiting your congregation this fall, ask us more about this program or write to [CapstoneMinistries@gmail.com](mailto:CapstoneMinistries@gmail.com).

They see other boys that also have to fetch firewood after school, and tend to livestock. Interaction at the camp helps the boys focus on their future by being with other boys that are going through very similar struggles.

The Capstone Camp supports spiritual well-being with Bible teachings and lessons on baptism. Capstone Director, Patty Schmelzer describes baptism as a highlight of the camp: "...children learn what it means to be baptized and they have the opportunity to make that choice. If they've already been baptized we discuss what it was like and why they don't need to be baptized again. On Friday, baptisms are done and about half of the camp gets baptized. Eight to ten boys. It's amazing to see how serious the boys take the ceremony."

On the last day of camp, the parents are invited. Patty shares that "during the parents day the children give presentations, poems and songs. But, we also ask one or two parents to give testimonies and it seems like often others will feel led to also share. It is just really encouraging to the kids to hear their parents say how grateful they are to have their child at home....We've even had mothers stand up and cry."

The Capstone Camp acts as a reward for the children on many levels. Patty shares: "I think that the greatest growth comes from the spiritual lessons in the morning, the greatest fun comes from the scouting and activities and games in the afternoon. And, I think one particular meaningful event is the community service – where the children go into a public market area and clean it in the early morning. This is the typical area where a street child would hang out and beg and be called names and chased and be considered not much more than the trash on the streets. Now when they come in and clean, the same people that treated them like trash are thanking them and admiring them. And, they learn what it is to give something to the community, and contribute to the community without expecting something in return."

Joel & Jen

## Prayers, Praises

1. Dan and Patty are winging their way to California as these words are typed. Pray for safe travel.
2. Pray for all the Ambassadors of Capstone who spread the word in their churches.
3. Pray for the families of those killed in the Westgate Shopping Mall shooting in Nairobi. The enemy would have us live in fear and doubt. God is our refuge.
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. Pray for those battling flu and colds across the US. Pray for Dan's mom who continues to battle a nasty cough.
6. Praise for our mothers, Josey and Chrysta, who are both strong and active in their 80's.
7. Thanksgiving for those who hosted us in Ohio and Minnesota. You know who you are. God bless you.
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. Pray for sponsors for our primary school graduates who will enter high school next year. Final exams are coming up soon and we may have as many as 5 boys who will qualify for a scholarship. Only boys who qualify by finishing with a score of 250 and above are eligible for this program.
11. Pray for sponsors for Capstone Camp 2014. This camp will be held at the Kima International School of Theology while students are on break in August.
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, Timothy, Curt, Alexa, Nicole, Elisabeth, Rod, Donna, Delanna, Bob, Daniel.

Donation: For Capstone & Dan and Patty Support

Name \_\_\_\_\_ 

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State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Specific Designation? \_\_\_\_\_

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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

## 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 Bethlehem Lutheran, Herman, MN

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

Oct. 6 Trinity Lutheran, Redding, CA

Oct. 8,9 CNH District Pastor's Conference, Fresno, CA

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

Oct. 16 St. Peter's Lutheran School, Elk Grove, CA

Oct. 17, 10:00 AM Trinity Lutheran Church, Stockton, CA

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

Oct. 18 Evening presentation, St. Peter's Lutheran, Elk Grove, CA

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

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

Noon – North Delta Rotary, North Delta, BC

Evening – Langley Rotary Club, Langley, BC

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

Oct. 30 St. Paul's Lutheran School Chapel, Tracy, CA

Nov. 3 Good Shepherd Lutheran, Turlock, CA

Nov. 6 St. Peter's Lutheran School Chapel, Lodi, CA

Nov. 10 United Lutheran, Manteca, CA

Nov. 13 Grace Lutheran School Chapel, Modesto, CA

Grace Lutheran Church, Evening Presentation

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

There are still a few days here and there available on our schedule. If you would like us to visit your church or group, feel free to write to us at the email address provided.

To date Dan has preached at Concordia Lutheran, Toledo, OH and Bethlehem Lutheran, Herman, MN as well as spoken at the LLL Wheaton Zone Rally. We thank those who have warmly welcomed us in Ohio and Minnesota and look forward to our time in California and Canada.

Donation: "4S Primary School Sponsorship"

Name \_\_\_\_\_ 

Address \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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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