



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, 2016 Volume 11 Issue 6

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

353

3 went home in May



Check out Capstone
on Facebook.



“SHARES” CARD HOLDERS

For those in California who use the
“Shares Card” with Savemart
supermarket, the program has
changed to an E-Scrip Program.
Easy instructions on p. 3

“Goodness in chaos?”

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose...If God is for us, who can be against us? ...Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?” Romans 8:28,31,35

The measure of God’s love is not in circumstance. It is in Jesus Christ on the cross! If you have been through life’s tough and tragic times, you know it to be true. It can be very challenging to believe when hard times turn you upside down. It is then that you realize that faith is not faith if it is exercised only when you are comfortable.

The promise of the opening sentence is not experienced every day. But when you see God’s goodness working through tragedy and trial, it leaves you astonished and renewed.

For the past month we have been experiencing organized demonstrations in the streets of Kisumu. The opposition party wants the electoral commission scrapped because of alleged corruption. In Kisumu marches with home-made signs have been a spectacle with occasional confrontations with police. For the most part the demonstrations have been peaceful. Last Monday things were a little more intense with running confrontations between demonstrators and police.

One of our welfare officers had been assigned to “street work” on that day. Jael found herself in the midst of a chaotic situation and took refuge in the Rotary Training Center near the bus park. She fled along with a number of other people including one street boy named Shem. (Cont. p. 2 left)



Shem on left in Capstone office on the day he was rescued, on the right reconciled with his family!

(cont from. p. 1)

. For several hours Jael had a “captive” audience in Shem so she took advantage and found a quiet place where the two could talk about how Shem came to be on the street. Shem’s father had died several years earlier which has left his mom in a difficult situation raising 5 children alone. According to Shem, his mom had not bought him a school uniform which made his attendance at school difficult.

Upon reaching home and after counseling with the family it was discovered that Shem had stolen money from his mom. God used Jael to bring the boy to repentance, his mom forgave him and promised to put the boy in school.

One of the things Capstone staff do effectively is to counsel with families and this family will receive an immediate follow-up visit to make sure there are no lingering feelings of resentment toward the boy and that he is in school. Reconciliation is an event between sinner and his Lord but between people it is a process that includes rebuilding trust.

God used the circumstance of chaos on the street during the demonstrations to connect us to Shem. He provided the privacy and time between Jael and Shem as they waited for peace to prevail. These are the unseen activities of God making good on his promises. Look for them in your life!

School Lunch Program

As a matter of principle, Capstone does not give financial support to families whose child has been reconciled. We believe it undermines the responsibility of families to provide. In some rare cases we may buy a school uniform for the boy to help expedite his enrollment in school but only when there is a fear that the boy may run away if he is not in school. We believe that misguided mercy often does more harm than good and often creates or sustains an attitude of dependency.

Occasionally we have wrestled with another situation among poor families. Food insecurity can threaten the educational development of a child. We have recently become aware of a couple cases where a boy may not even be sure of one meal a day and the family cannot afford the school lunch program. In these rare cases, we are working on the logistics of how to assist the family and the boy by paying for the school lunch program. This will motivate the boy to go to school, will remove the stigma of being one of the few children who is not eating in school and will enhance his ability to learn.

One such boy is Kepha who has been struggling with extreme challenges at home

Cont. p. 3

Photos of the month: We have morning glory and luffa growing on a trellis in our yard. They are in full bloom.



Do you use the “Shares” Savemart card when shopping?

Attention: Program Change

The Shares card is being changed to an e-scrip program. Savemart has made it easy for you to make this change from scanning your card. Here are the easy steps the next time you are shopping in Savemart in California or Nevada:

It’s as simple as providing your phone number at checkout:

1. Sign up for the NEW* Shares program by registering your phone number or Save Smart Rewards Card with eScrip.
2. *You will no longer use your S.H.A.R.E.S. card (effective April 1, 2016). Register your phone or your Save Smart Rewards card number (this will not be your S.H.A.R.E.S. card)
3. Shop at Save Mart Supermarkets and provide your registered phone number or card at checkout.

You can also go to the follow web address to make the switch:

<http://www.escrip.com/merchants/identity/savemart/index.jsp>

Donation: For Capstone and support for Dan & Patty

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Donation Amount _____

Designation? _____

Cont from p. 2

and is likely to run away if some intervention is not taken. Kepha’s father has separated from his wife and the children live with their grandmother while the father works in Nairobi. He is irresponsible and provides little support to his children. The extended family has been little support. In fact many of them struggle with mental issues.

Kepha was rescued by Capstone several years ago and Kepha has excelled in school, reaching the top of his Class 4. He has persevered despite the many family challenges and education is his future.

Capstone would like to start a support program for such cases. They are rare and will be decided upon after all other avenues of assistance are exhausted through the family. For just one dollar a day we can make sure boys like Kepha get at least one meal a day in school, which will also motivate him to stay in school.

To support this program, send a gift of any amount and designate on the form on this page or on your check: School Lunch Program.

Prayers, Praise and News

1. Extra reading: Ever wondered why we have abandoned the concept of orphanages in the west yet propagate them in third world countries at an astounding rate? Some inconsistency there? Does it violate the spiritual authority of family or at the very least create a generation that knows precious little what a family looks like? A better way: Read this article about Tara Winkler’s experience in Cambodia. It is a common one in most of East Africa too.

<https://www.timeout.com/sydney/blog/why-we-need-to-put-an-end-to-voluntourism-and-stop-supporting-orphanages-052516>

2. Capstone is moving! We are relocating our office in Kisumu to a nearby compound that will allow us to spread out a bit more. We thank our board for the assistance and support in this decision.

Vocational Training provides a future

Education is crucial in escaping the cycle of poverty. Without education, a child is destined to live out a life as a subsistence farmer in Kenya. That is, if he escapes the lure of robbery and violence. But there is an alternative for those who do not excel academically. Vocational training!

Briton is just such a boy. He is 18 and because of his time on the street, fell behind in his studies and never caught up. His parents grow rice for their subsistence. They love their children and once when Briton ran away, his mom went to search for him and brought him back home herself. Capstone rescued him again from the street in 2011 after he had spent a year and a half on the street. Those 18 months doomed his academic progress so his family decided to pursue vocational training for the boy but because of his poor academic ability he did not even qualify for a government sponsored trade school.

In these kind of situations, Capstone counsels and encourages the family to make their own decision about the boy. It is crucial not to overstep familial boundaries. As tempting as it might be to tell the family what to do next, it is their decision and they need to make it as a family. Too much intrusion undermines authority and responsibility that rightly belongs to the parents.

The family connected the boy to a man who runs a welding shop in their community and asked if he could take on the boy as an apprentice. The boy would help in the shop and gain the skills of welding without the classwork which he could not pass. Briton has been learning welding and loves what he does. The family is rightly proud of their son. It has been seven years since Briton ran to the streets. Capstone has stood by the family, visiting and counseling with the family through some tough times. There are many other boys just like Briton who can find a future through this type of non-formal training. Ask Dan and Patty how you can help!



Above: Briton with a finished metal security window he fabricated. Right: Briton welds a metal door.