



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

January, 2018 Volume 13 Issue 1

In this Issue

- Page 1: "2017 in Review"
- p. 2: "Review cont."
- p. 2 "TIK"
- p. 3 Donor slip, Prayers needed
- p. 3,4 Photos of Month, 18 rescued boys August 1-December 31.
- p. 4 Patty's Post-it



USA Address:

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

Kenya Address:

Dan and Patty Schmelzer
 P.O. Box 3962
 Kisumu, Kenya 40100

Email: CapstoneMinistries@gmail.com

Website: WWW.CapstoneMinistries.org

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

423

18 went home Aug.
Sept. Nov. Dec.



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

"2017 In Review"

"Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland." Isaiah 43:18,19

The past often haunts our present. Painful memories linger and are triggered by a song or familiar place. Sinful circumstances we authored cast hurt in cement. And we think it will always be! Famous poets and authors have described this power of the past over us. "My past is everything I failed to be," writes Fernando Pessoa, author of *The Book of Disquiet*. Percy Shelley wrote in the poem **Time Long Past**:

Like the ghost of a dear friend dead
 Is Time long past.
 A tone which is now forever fled,
 A hope which is now forever past,
 A love so sweet it could not last,
 Was Time long past.

Freedom from a past prison of thoughts and memories is a supreme fight. Some never escape. Dreams haunt. Emotions become chains. "When will it end!?" we scream into the night.

As we embark on a new year, it is good to reflect; but let us not obsess. Isaiah found it necessary even to warn unfaithful Judah about the prison of the past that still lay in her future. The occupier of Israel, Babylon, was not yet a world power. But it would capture Jerusalem and her people. Slavery in a foreign land was just around the corner. For 70 years a generation would wonder if freedom and deliverance would ever be known again. If ever a nation did not deserve an ounce of hope, it was fallen Judah. But God was merciful. He inspired Isaiah to write these words of hope and faith based in the Lord himself who is doing a new thing. Refreshing cool water of grace would flow like a river in the wilderness.

As we look back on 2017, let us do so remembering the God of grace who does not deal with us based on our attitudes and actions. Because of Jesus, the Lord blesses and leads. With that perspective we take a look back at how the Lord has led Capstone Ministries, reconciling and encouraging families of former street boys in Western Kenya.

47 boys were rescued from the street by Capstone staff in 2017. Despite a year filled with political upheaval and often in spite of it, Capstone staff worked tirelessly to reconcile these boys with their families.

9 boys were added to the High School sponsorship program. Rural

(Cont. p. 2 left column)

poor find it nearly impossible to send their children to secondary school. Because High School comes at a fee, the rural poor—living on \$1/day-- cannot afford the cost that averages \$600 per year. Another six qualified this December which brings the total of sponsored High School students to 26 through Capstone Ministries.

In February and March, Capstone Board member Delano and his wife Linda Meyer visited Kenya and did agricultural training in Northern and Western Kenya along with Tanzania and Uganda. We were blessed to host them for a few days while they did some follow-up at the home of Jane Iminza, one of the women who grows moringa for Capstone and has implemented many of the training ideas the Meyers have taught in the past.

Sadly, Capstone Ministries lost a board member this year to cancer: Rev. Peter Kelm of Cedarburg, WI. Peter entered glory on 9/11/17 and will be remembered for his devotion to missions and preaching the Gospel.

In March, Capstone staff enjoyed a short 3 day retreat at Kweissos Guest House in Koru. This was a welcome break for physical and spiritual renewal.

In April, all High School boys came to the Capstone office for mentoring. This annual gathering is for monitoring of performance, training in study skills and encouragement for the students.

At the end of May, 3 staff attended a children's CHE training in Nairobi lead by Jody Collinge who works with children in Mexico. It was a joy to have our staff grow and share from their experience working with children.

In July we were able to help the poorest of the poor with some food assistance. With Kenya in the midst of a crippling drought, we were able to secure food stuffs from the government which was used to help 20 families push through desperate times.

August through November found us visiting congregations in the US. In all 18 congregations were visited and Dan preached every Sunday while in the US.

Have a blessed 2018!



TIK – This is Kenya

This is a new column and I hope you enjoy it. It will focus on our unique experiences in Kenya that just become part of living here. Every day experiences become our ongoing cultural lifestyle. Every day differences become the norm. I pray it gives you some insight into what we take for granted every day.

Standing in Line (“Queue”)

British influence on language in Kenya is very common. This is one. A “queue” is what we would call a “line” in the US. The Oxford dictionary defines it as “a line or sequence of people or vehicles awaiting their turn to be attended to or to proceed.” Kenyans are not exactly disciplined regarding this procedure. We discovered this early on by mistakenly allowing for some personal space in line (queue) when checking out of the local supermarket. Before we knew it one person after another cut in ahead of us assuming we were not actually in line. Quickly we learned to stand within inches of the person in front of us lest we lose our place. Sometimes those in the queue will discipline those who fail to “mind the queue.”



Kenyans queue to vote

Bicycles (Boda-Boda) and Motorbikes (Piki-piki) are common transportation in many areas of Kenya. Usually and normally they are used to transport people but we have seen quite a few strange sights on the back, the front and all around. More next month.



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 following 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? _____

New Rescues

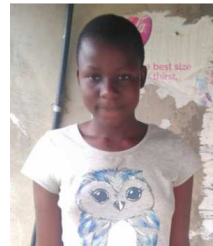
Capstone has rescued and reconciled at home eighteen boys in August-December. Since we were traveling in the US, we did not include them in those newsletters. Eight are pictured below. More next month.



Erick Odhiambo #407P



Collins Odhiambo #408R



Vida Achieng #410



Nactoline Etale #411R



Maurice Wanga #412



Eugene Joshua #413R



Nelly Griffins #414



Eliya Libondo #415

Photos of the Month

We spent Christmas Eve and Day at the Rondo Retreat Centre in the Kakamega Rain Forest again this year and were treated to some wonderful sights. #1 Photo is the Great Blue Turaco just taking off into flight. #2 is an infant Colobus monkey being cared for by two females. They handed the baby back and forth several times like this. #3 is a Rosis Turaco with brilliant red wings that are visible only when in flight. Enjoy.



Patty's Post It

Early in Capstone's history we had a great idea. We thought about empowering families so they would be able to better care for their children. We set up a "Hands Up" empowerment program in which we counseled with the neediest families to help them decide what they could do to improve their economic situation. Every family we approached with the idea was excited to start a new business with Capstone giving the seed money. It was not a loan but a "hand up." Most mama's or families started selling something in their local market. Early on it looked like a very successful program... until it was time to restock. Then we realized that alcoholic fathers and dysfunctional families were not changing. Every single family given a "hand up" business opportunity eventually failed. We had to swallow hard and reexamine the program. We realized if the relationship issues were not the main focus, monetary assistance was certainly not going to change anything. We also realized we are not experts in the field of micro finance. We decided to leave such programs to the experts.

In late 2011 we had our first successful grade 8 student. Maxwell qualified for High School but his family was not able to pay the fees. If Maxwell could not go on to school he would become an idle teenager or an educated thief. We felt a tug on our hearts that if this child was going to be the one to change the course of his family history, he needed a high school certificate. Having a high school certificate increases the odds of getting employment. We had to get the kids in school. Dan and I became the first silent sponsors. Thus the birth of the Capstone Sponsorship Program.

Maxwell was our first high school graduate. He did not qualify for University but he has been able to secure a job with a Community Based Organization. Two years later, another boy—Elly--qualified for University. Andrew became a supermarket attendant and Gabriel works for Mpesa (a money mobile transfer wing of a cellular company) and has plans to enroll himself in a certification program. This year another student has qualified for a call to the government assisted University program. In all we now have 26 students enrolled in High School! Who would have guessed? We are so proud of these kids who all were once on the streets, the dregs of society but precious to our Lord. They will one day be future responsible family men and community leaders!

Thank you to all our High School Sponsors! You are making a difference in the future of a child and even in the future of his family! Send me a note if you're interested in knowing more about our sponsorship program! We can send you the program description get you on a list to start sponsoring in 2019!