



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

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The number of
street boys
reconciled with
family by
Capstone
Ministries this
year!

69

***went home
in 2019***



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

"2018 In Review"

"Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past." Isaiah 43:18

For the first time in many years, Patty and I spent Christmas in the US. She cared for her mother from September until Dec. 26 when she passed into glory. I spent Christmas with my mother in Wisconsin and realized it was probably the first time since I was in college that I spent Christmas Day with her. One of the experiences we enjoyed together was attending the Charles Dickens play, "A Christmas Carol" performed by the Milwaukee Rep in the Pabst Theater. It was truly a remarkable production, faithful to the book.

I'm sure we all are familiar with the story. It is broadcast on TV in the US every December countless times and has been interpreted and adapted and modernized. But the theme and message remains.

One of my favorite scenes is the visitation of Jacob Marley to Ebenezer Scrooge. Marley, the former and late partner of Scrooge arrives as a spirit in chains. When Scrooge asks him why he is in chains, he replies, *"These are the chains I forged in life."* Marley goes on to warn Ebenezer that his chains are much longer and that if he does not change, he will face a fate even worse. Dickens wrote the beloved tale after a visit to Field Lane Ragged School, an institution for the street children of London. The book was widely popular from the release on Dec. 19. In five days, the first edition sold out. Within a year 13 more editions sold out and the book has never been out of print. The book touches on truly human experiences: regret, change, generosity and redemption. It is popular in part because all of us deal with the failings of the past and realization that our own selfish spirit is not all that different from Ebenezer.

As we look back at our past as 2019 dawns, let us be encouraged by Isaiah's words: ***"Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past."*** There is a benefit to recalling and repenting of our past to be sure but to dwell on it is unhealthy. It is like trying to drive a car while fixated on the rear view mirror.

We recall in the following paragraphs the events of Capstone Ministries in 2018 with honest reflection, joy and praise in our hearts for the good work God is doing through the staff of Capstone. We also express our deep gratitude toward all who contributed to this work with your donations and gifts. We say with Tiny Tim, *"God bless us, everyone!"*

2018 has many highlights but none more thrilling than the 69 boys who were rescued from the street and reconciled with their families. Each month you have seen their pictures posted in this newsletter. Thus far Capstone has reconciled 492 boys from the street

(Cont. p. 2 left column)

since 2005. We look forward to surpassing 500 children reconciled early this next year. To God be the glory!

In February we expanded the Home Based Care program to support needy families with a school lunch program and a school uniform program. 35 families are supported by these two programs and it is limited to those families with a confirmed challenge in providing these items for their children. We offer this only after thorough investigation and counseling with the family.

In March, all Capstone staff enjoyed a staff retreat on the Kanu plain in Katito. Below the staff a treated to a tour of the facilities that focuses on agriculture. All food served was grown or reared on site.



Patty also returned to the states in late March to spend time with her ailing mother.

In April all secondary students spent a day and a half at the Capstone office for mentoring. Below students review a booklet provided that deals with study skills.



In June I was privileged to officiate at my nephew's wedding in Tuscany, Italy. Below is the view from the hilltop wedding in central Tuscany.



I returned to the Milwaukee area in July to spend time with my mother who was recovering from cancer surgery. Thankfully she recovered completely.

August was Capstone Camp, again spent at Kima International School of Theology campus in Kima, just north of Kisumu. 30 boys attended this camp. Highlight of Camp this year was the 11 boys who were baptized on Friday.

Below the boys enjoy a morning lesson on the 10 Commandments. Each day begins with a spiritual lesson.



In September Patty found it necessary to return to California to spend time with her ailing mother. She remained with her mom until her passing on Dec. 26.

I flew to the US in October to visit churches in New England, Wisconsin and California.

In December 40 needy families received a Christmas packages of food.

We praise God as we close this year, thankful for our Capstone staff who had to take on added responsibility in Patty's absence.

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 2 boys and reconciled them at home during December bringing the number of boys reconciled in 2019 to 69.



Duncan Ndungani #492R

In Loving Memory : Josey Oehrlein

Patty's mother passed away on Dec. 26, 2018. She was 92. Josey was born in Oklahoma and lived most of her life in Escalon, CA. Josey was preceded in death by her husband of 56 years, Willie Oehrlein. She leaves behind three children: Doug, Don and Patty, 3 sisters: Anita Ward, Roberta Chaney and Dorothy Cagle, 5 grandchildren and three great grandchildren. Chapel service is set for Thursday Jan. 3 at 10:00 AM at Deegan Chapel in Escalon. Donations in Josey's memory may be made to Community Hospice or Capstone Ministries.

Josey's family would like to acknowledge everyone's heartfelt prayers, sincere words of sympathy and all the many gestures of love.

Please join them immediately following the chapel service for a reception at the Escalon Presbyterian Church Hall; 1612 1st Street, Escalon.

Deegan Funeral Chapel
www.deeganfuneralchapels.com



In Sweet Loving Memory
Josey Oehrlein
February 9, 1926 - December 26, 2018

Mission Perspectives: Accountability

“Capstone Ministries is one of the most transparent and accountable organizations you will ever meet.” Those words by Pastor Emeritus Robert Schipul from Massachusetts are an oft repeated phrase as he introduces the ministry to new churches. Capstone has a board of 12 members in the US that oversees the ministry financially, and structurally. A board of 5 in Kenya oversees the cultural sensitivity and legal obligations in Kenya.

Patty has worked tirelessly in establishing guidelines, checks and balances, as well as monitoring and evaluation for a model in efficiency, honesty and accountability.

In principle, establishing a culture of accountability, honesty and integrity sounds like something that happens automatically, especially in Christian organizations. But in practice, it is a different matter. Often it is assumed. Many western missionaries find it quite disheartening when they discover corruption. Many retreat, become disillusioned and go home. Often, however it is the very assumption that accountability is not needed and that trust is a given that produces temptations and the resultant corruption. Producing receipts, audited accounts, monitoring and evaluation of work performed are the hallmarks of an organization that understands the Biblical principles of good stewardship. Capstone staff have been trained and expect their work to be evaluated regularly. All expenses are receipted. All cash is counted and signed for twice, by the one dispensing the cash and the one who receives it. Even families that receive the annual Christmas gift sign indicating the items they have received. Families who have been visited by a Capstone staff will be called on a routine basis to confirm that the staff was there and performed his/her duty. At Capstone Board meetings, all directors receive a copy of all expenses incurred during the past quarter with full explanations. These are just a few of the practices put in place by Dan and Patty that ensure that your support was used for the intended purpose.

Below Isaiah, Operations Supervisor and his deputy, Johan



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. Since then we have realized that boarding school may not be in the best interest of every boy who qualifies. Some may be better off staying at home and going to a local high school. For others, particularly those who are much older, it may be better for them to receive vocational training. So we have adjusted this program also to do things in the best interest of each boy. Parents and students will be given more flexibility to choose a direction in education that best suits them.

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. This year Steven has qualified for University also. 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. We are so proud of these kids who all were once on the streets but precious to our Lord. They will one day be future responsible family men, community leaders and most importantly, disciples of the Lord Jesus!