



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

November, 2021 Volume 16 Issue 11

In this Issue

- Page 1: "Barack Obama Reconciled"
2: "Obama" cont.
2. Review of Capstone tour
3. Rescue in October



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 since
2005

608

***Rescued to date
1 rescue in Oct.***



Check out Capstone
on Facebook.



**Capstone Ministries is an RSO of the LC-
MS (Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod)**

"Barack Obama Reconciled in Kenya"

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

That headline most certainly got your attention. I apologize for the sensationalizing of a most serious topic. Of course, it was not the former President of the US who was rescued by Capstone staff this past month but a young boy named after him. Here he is at the Capstone Compound ready to go home.



Barack's rescue brought to mind the unique nature of Kenyan culture and the many ways it differs from a western society. Having lived in Kenya now for 19 years, those differences have faded for us. So, I thought I would highlight a few for our readers who may not have been exposed to them. Some are humorous, others captivating and complex, and still others, vital to understand as one tries to be effective in ministry. The mission principle, relative to all, is that it is critical for a missionary to accept that he/she is in another culture and must learn to adjust and accept his "visitor" status.

1. A polite and accommodating culture.

Western countries tend to be forthright and direct. This tendency can tend to clash with a culture that approaches topics slowly and deliberately. This is true particularly in a meeting setting. It is not unusual for the chairman of a meeting to open the session by having each attendee introduce him/herself. Even though it may take 30 minutes to complete and greatly

frustrate the western missionary, Kenyans value such procedure. A word to the newbie missionary: Take your time, relax, and have a cup of coffee.

2. Children are often named for esteemed people.

Ten years ago, it was not unusual for boys to be named Barack and girls Condoleezza after the former president and Secretary of State. Missionaries also often have namesake children in Kenya. In fact, in one rural village just north of Kisumu there were two twins born at the same time and were named Dan and Patty.

3. Time is relative and fluid.

One Kenyan remarked to me on one occasion: *"You people from America all wear watches and none of you have any time!"* Ouch! All too often western objectives and goals are time sensitive. We love to have daily, weekly, monthly, and quarterly goals. However, a Kenyan still is influenced by a rural, slow pace that may view of noon appointment as sometime between sunrise and sunset. Efficiency, for which the west is known, can sometimes become frustrated and impatient with a society that is in no great hurry. There is most certainly a lesson there for the "visitor." Rushing to get things done can increase stress and keep you from living in the significance of the moment. It is not unusual for a Kenya to meet a friend on his way to town and spend 30 minutes on the roadside chatting even though it will make him late for his appointment.

4. Community Orientation vs. Individual

One of the hallmarks of the western perspective is the emphasis on individual responsibility. We have a pioneer mentality that elevates our individual desires above the needs of our neighbor. There is much to be said for this drive to succeed, plan, and take care of our families. What is often sacrificed is understanding and sympathy for our community. However, a Kenyan learns from the time he is a child that community objectives are vital and it is my duty to sacrifice for the sake of community. The strength of this perspective lies in the fact that extended family can find sympathy, support, and care when there is a need. This may frustrate the westerner who doesn't understand how a Kenyan can use a large portion of his salary to help his extended family instead of saving for his own future.

5. Simple staple food vs. variety

Americans are known for a varied diet. Most communities have a choice of Asian, Italian, Mexican and American food. A Kenyan will even say, *"If I have not eaten ugali then I have not eaten anything."* (Ugali is a maize meal with water until solid) An American may taste ugali for the first time and exclaim, "Ooo golly that is bland!" We may try to spice it up with chilis and other spices, to which the Kenyan will reply: *"That's an abomination!"*

There are many more cultural differences between the west and Kenya. Some are more significant than others. I trust I have given you a window into the world in which we have lived for almost 20 years. God bless you for your support of this vital ministry in Kenya.

One boy was rescued in October:

Barack Obama



Capstone Tour of US

Dan and Patty have just completed a 12-state tour of the US in which they visited 20 churches. Dan preached 37 times and Patty made the Capstone presentation in almost every church. Dan also led two chapel services for Lutheran schools. The highlight of the stays around the US was the wonderful hosts who welcomed us and let us park our RV on their property. This saved Capstone RV Park fees and gave us privacy and shared fellowship with people in the area. God has blessed Capstone with many many friends and supporters and for this we gave thanks to God.

Dan plans on making several visits next year to churches we missed on this 2021 tour.

Dan and Patty will be returning to Kenya on Nov.