



# The ROPE

June 2020

**F**urlough is a word often used to describe the time a missionary spends back in their home country. They reconnect with their sending church and visit supporting churches eager to report all the great things God has done during their time on the field like Paul and Barnabas did in Acts 14. All those speaking opportunities mean lots of travel. For Joe and Amy Marshall, along with their four children, that means they need to be on the road traveling over 4,000 miles! As a family, staying at a hotel night after night was tiresome and not to mention very expensive. Joe had an idea to build a home much like they did on the mission field. This time, instead of building a dome house, why not build a bus house known as a Skoolie.

**W**hy a bus you might ask? Well there were several reasons:

**1** It would give stability to the Marshalls while they travel. They



could sleep in the same bed and not have to live out of a suitcase. It also makes homeschooling much easier.

**2** It would be more cost efficient. No more having to dine at restaurants or pick up fast food for every meal. They could cook their own healthy meals and eat as a family every night, saving on meals and hotel expenses.

**3** It would allow them to rest as they travel during the week. They can skip the packing and unpacking between meetings giving them a chance to relax.

**4** It would allow them to visit ALL of their churches and supporters during this furlough, sharing what God has been doing in Benin!

**5** It would provide them with a “home” during the furlough and allow them to travel as a family.

**I**n December of 2019, Don Brown Bus Sales in Johnstown, New York graciously sold a 36’ long school bus at a generous price. Joe drove the bus to Florida. They designed a floor plan which included a living room, kitchen, full bathroom, a four bed “bunk room” and a master bedroom. All that in 32 usable feet. That’s what you call “living tiny”! Except for Sundays the Marshalls worked tirelessly from dawn to dusk on the Skoolie. Amy’s father, Chris Marine, also dedicated many hours to assist with the project.

“We built a dome house in Africa so why not build a bus home in the US!”  
-Joe Marshall





The first step to converting a school bus into family living was to completely demo the interior of the bus. They removed the seats, inner panels, windows, nonessential wiring and interior lights. Once the interior demolition was completed, the original bus roof was raised 13 inches to increase the ceiling height. Additional steel supports were welded to the structural wall supports. New sheet metal was put in the place where the windows were once located. The walls were then sprayed with foam insulation. The plumbing lines, electrical and gas lines were installed followed by the bathroom and bedroom walls. When everything was in place, the wall-board and tongue and groove ceiling were installed. Each and every member of the family pitched in during the transformation. What was once a bright yellow school bus is now a for-



est green Skoolie. They believed as a family that it would be pleasing to the Lord to build this “home on wheels” debt free. Many of their supporting churches and individuals reached out with encouragement and financial support towards this project.

When the Skoolie was completed and ready to hit the road, the Marshalls faced a different type of obstacle, COVID-19. Like all of us, COVID-19 has forced changes in our daily habits and routines and this meant that many scheduled meetings were canceled. The Marshalls are eager to

share with their supporting churches what God has done in their ministry in Benin. They are using this furlough to raise additional support that would allow them to rejoin their team in Benin. Pray for wisdom as they navigate through these unknown times.

The Marshalls’ support level is at 83%. They are asking God to provide an additional \$1,000 in monthly support before they return to Benin. Should you feel led to partner with the Marshalls as a monthly supporter or to give them a onetime gift please fill out the contribution card. To see a video of the Skoolie build please visit our Facebook page at [facebook.com/faithbaptistmissionwh](https://facebook.com/faithbaptistmissionwh)

