

The Oliver Family Newsletter

John & Paula Oliver - Missionaries with New Tribes Mission
Serving at NTM Headquarters in Sanford, Florida
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Hurricane Visitors

In August we spent a week house-sitting for some friends in Orange City; they have a couple acres with 2 large dogs, 2 kittens, 3 goats, and 4 chickens. During our time there, we had a special visitor – Hurricane Charley. Fortunately, their home was not damaged, but one large oak tree did fall, smashing part of their fence and a large branch landed on the chicken fence. We also lost power, and since they use a well, the water supply was off as well, but it came back on the next day.

After our time of house-sitting was over, we headed to the beach for a short vacation. I had found an excellent deal on eBay for a four night stay at the Fairfield Ocean Walk resort in Daytona Beach. We had a great time enjoying their pools, Jacuzzi, lazy river, and indoor miniature golf and, of course, we also visited the local library and our favorite chocolate factory.

Then, two weeks later, Hurricane Frances paid us an extended visit. There was no serious property damage at NTM headquarters, but there were some roof leaks, two large palm trees were blown over, and we lost power again (for 55 hours).

Juror Holdout

Have you ever been on a jury? I recently received a jury summons to perform my civic duty. I was hoping to be on a jury, since years earlier, I had failed to make it through the jury selection process. This time, I didn't make it onto the first jury, but after a period of interviewing by the state and defense attorneys, I was among the six folks selected for a second jury trial.

We returned later in the week for the actual trial, listened to the judge's instructions and the testimony of the two witnesses (sheriff deputies), and then re-convened in the jury room to determine a unanimous verdict. It seemed pretty clear that the defendant was guilty; I wanted to make sure in my heart, though, that there was no reasonable doubt as to his guilt.

I soon realized, however, that the other jurors were not as ready to convict as I was; the defense attorney had planted seeds of doubt. As we continued to deliberate, the other jurors eventually voted "not guilty" and I was the lone holdout. We asked to review the transcript of the testimony, but that was not an option, so we had to rely on our memory and some notes that I had taken during the trial. The other jurors believed that the defendant was guilty, but they felt that the evidence left some doubt. I wanted to just give in and vote "not guilty", but in my heart, I could not consider the doubt to be reasonable.

So, we reported back to the judge that we could not reach a unanimous decision and the judge declared a mistrial (meaning that the defendant would be tried again with another jury). We found out later that an additional witness (who would have helped confirm his guilt) had failed to show up. In the end, I was glad that I had held out and I think the other jurors were too.

Current Projects

My main project right now is preparing our NTM Accounting & Administrative (NTMAA) system for use at our overseas locations. We're adding multi-currency support (since they work with funds in multiple currencies) and outstation support (to import financial transactions from outstations) to the system in preparation for installation at our field headquarters in Mexico; eventually we plan to use the NTMAA system to replace our older NTM Field Accounting system on all of our overseas fields.

I'm also finishing up a new release of our NTM Hold the Ropes (HTR) system; it will allow our various NTM locations to receive personnel records updates via the internet by requesting updates from our web server here at NTM headquarters. We're also continuing to enhance our user interface (to a normal Windows look and feel) and to add other features. Two of our recent additions are a contact management tool and the ability to create and maintain user-defined data fields.

Good News!

As Christians, it is our desire that the whole world hear the Good News of Jesus Christ – His death on the cross for our sins, His resurrection, and His free offer of eternal life. We want to reach the unreached around the world, folks who have never had a chance to hear. But we also want to share the good news with folks nearby, across whose paths God may lead us.

Paula has been giving out more Gospel tracts recently and has been a challenge to me to be more proactive in witnessing. A few months ago, as I was sitting and thinking about our purpose on earth and the opportunity we have to share the good news, it occurred to me that I might be able to design a short gospel tract on a business card. That evening, I wrote an initial draft, picked out a business card template, edited my text, created the final design, and ordered the business cards online. Within hours, the idea had gone from conception to production; a few days later, I had the cards in hand. We've enclosed a copy for you, to read and perhaps to share - with a friend or with someone whose path God may lead you across.

Prayer Requests

We would appreciate your prayers for Paula's wrist and fingers. When we were house-sitting, Paula was holding the dogs while I drove in through the gate. As one dog spun around in excitement, it wrapped Paula's fingers in its cloth collar. She couldn't get her hand out and, as the dog continued spinning around, the cloth band squeezed her fingers and twisted her arm, injuring her fingers and wrist. Paula is now wearing a splint and hoping and praying that the ligaments will heal quickly.



We would also appreciate prayer for my aunt, Laurel Gustafson, who has been recently diagnosed with an aggressive form of colon cancer.

Thanks for being part of the team with us, through your love, prayers, encouragement, and support. Thanks too for your letters, cards, and emails. Let us know how we can be praying for you as well.

Your missionaries,

John, Paula, Nicholas, Joy, and Hannah Oliver ☺