

The Oliver Family Newsletter

John & Paula Oliver - Missionaries with New Tribes Mission
Serving at NTM Headquarters in Sanford, Florida
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Next Stop - Mexico!

Our NTM Field Accounting system was completed around 1992 in FoxPro for DOS and has been used by most of the fields where NTM serves. Paula and I traveled to Panama in 1993 and then again to Ivory Coast (in West Africa) in 1995 to install the system and train the bookkeepers in its use. The Field Accounting system includes support for multiple currencies and outstations and has served our missionaries well, but, as a DOS program in a Windows world, the system is showing its age.

Meanwhile, we have developed and continue to enhance our NTM Accounting & Administrative (NTMAA) system (written in FoxPro for DOS, but later migrated to Visual FoxPro for Windows). Designed originally for NTM Headquarters, it is a larger and more comprehensive system with an intuitive graphical user interface. We have continued to enhance the system and have installed it at our other U.S. locations - NTM Aviation (McNeal, AZ) in 2001, New Tribes Language Institute (Camdenton, MO) in 2002, and New Tribes Bible Institutes (Waukesha, WI and Jackson, MI) in 2003 and 2004.

Rather than continue to support two accounting systems, our goal has been to add multi-currency and outstation support to the NTMAA system and use it to replace the NTM Field Accounting system at our various overseas locations. This will allow us to leverage the time and effort we have invested in the NTMAA system, make additional functionality available to our fields, move them from DOS to a graphical Windows application, and allow us to concentrate on supporting a single system. This work is now nearing completion and so in April we (an accountant, another programmer, and I) are planning to travel to our Mexico field headquarters (in Chihuahua, Mexico) to install our NTMAA system for our missionaries there.

AWANA Grand Prix

Nicholas, Joy, and Hannah have been enjoying the AWANA program at a local church here in Sanford. Saturday, February 5 was the annual AWANA Grand Prix, a much-anticipated race of pinewood cars. We purchased three kits, cut and painted our cars, and glued "drivers" on top of the cars. To help improve their speed, we drilled holes and inserted lead weights (to bring their weight up to the 5 ounce limit) and lubricated the axles with silicone spray.

The race day arrived, boys & girls, moms & dads gathered, and the race began. The competition was keen, but friendly. All three cars performed well. Joy won her first two races, but in a re-run of her second race, her car came off the track and was out of the competition. Nicholas and Hannah both made it to the final races (Nicholas in the Truth 'n Training division and Hannah in the Sparks division) and each ended up winning a third place trophy for speed!

It sure was fun, but what is really great is seeing kids come to know the Lord, walk with Him, and serve Him. We are thankful that our kids can participate in the excellent AWANA program and are enjoying it so much.

Extreme Makeover – Kitchen Edition

Our NTM Headquarters building (where we live) was originally the Forrest Lake Hotel, built in 1925. It was later purchased by the New York Giants, and then became home to the Sanford Naval Academy (boarding school) before being purchased by New Tribes Mission in 1977. The bottom floor was used for offices and the top two floors were remodeled into staff apartments. Almost thirty years old now, the kitchens (especially the particle board cabinets) have needed some upgrading.

Each winter some volunteers come down to NTM headquarters to help out with different projects (like upgrading kitchens). This year a list was made of kitchens in need of upgrading and we made the number two position on the list!

They measured our kitchen, planned the new layout, and built the cabinets. We got to pick the countertop Formica, new vinyl floor tile, and cabinet handles. It took us a while to pack our pots, pans, and dishes, then they tore out the old cabinets and flooring and installed new; we also took the opportunity to paint the kitchen walls. They added some new electrical outlets, increased the height of the upper cabinets, and installed a lazy Susan. Needless to say, it is lovely and we appreciate the great job done by the volunteers and our NTM maintenance team!

New Team Member

Nathan Whatley (whose parents are also NTM missionaries in Indonesia) has recently joined our programming team and is already being a real blessing to us. I've been working with Nathan, helping bring him up to speed on Visual FoxPro, our development framework, and our NTMAA system. Nathan has been migrating some of our remaining text-based screens and popups to visual forms, helping us finish the migration of our user interface to a more normal Windows look and feel.

Health Update

We are happy to report that Paula's wrist and fingers are much improved! I had some prostatitis, which is also now much better, for which we are thankful. My teeth are continuing to do well, except that my bite is still off. Joy has also been having a problem with her gums recently, so we would appreciate prayer for guidance and healing for my teeth and Joy's gums.

Please pray also for Paula's mom, who is recovering from recent open heart surgery. We are thankful that my aunt (who had surgery for colon cancer) and my dad (who recently had a hip replacement) are both doing well after their surgeries. We are reminded that our bodies are getting older, they are a temporary dwelling place, and our time on earth is short.



If you would like to see some color photos of our AWANA Grand Prix cars or our new kitchen (before and after shots), drop by our web site (www.JPOliver.com), click [Our Photo Albums](#) and look in our 2005 Photo Album.

We recently had some new prayer cards printed and have enclosed a prayer card for you. Thanks for your love, prayers, encouragement, and support. We appreciate you being part of the team with us!

Your missionaries,

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