



NMSI Affiliates gathered at Triennial Conference in Greece



Bob and Anne with Michelle and Roma church planter, Pastor Rumen

Seeking healthy, lasting change for missionaries

Missionary assessment

Have you ever noticed that often our highest goals, visions and dreams become hindered, bogged down and discouraged by life's "stuff"? Like conflicts, emotional pain and bad habits, for example. Helping missionaries, who are, after all, very normal human beings, to process, deal with and reduce these kinds of issues in their lives is a big part of what Bob and I do here at NMSI. *It is great when we see "lights go on," resulting in healthy, lasting change that will enable them to be stable and effective on the field or in the office.*

Occasionally, and thankfully pretty infrequently, the healthy changes don't happen and the lights refuse to go on in spite of long term input and efforts. Then it becomes necessary to remove a missionary from a situation that is potentially damaging to a ministry, to themselves and to others around them. That is also a

part of what we do, as difficult and painful as it is.

Recently, we have been collaborating with the Human Resources Division to develop ways of surveying and interviewing new applicants and their reference providers to surface profound issues that will be a hindrance to effective ministry. Our hope is that these efforts will help prevent a number of painful, damaging and time consuming problems in the future. This may result in postponing the date of deployment overseas until missionaries are more emotionally and spiritually mature, for example.

Connecting with missionaries in training

At the end of March, a new group of missionary candidates will complete the COAT (Community, Orientation, Assessment and Training) program. It has been fun to be the COAT "links" for newlyweds Craig and Rachel Frey.

We met weekly, sometimes individually and sometimes as couples, to process what they were learning, enjoying and struggling with. Craig is the missionary that was doing agricultural and community work that Bob visited in October 2007. Now his wife Rachel, who has been on the field with another organization in Uganda, will be joining Craig to minister in Mozambique.

After the last session of COAT ended in December, a couple came to Bob for their "marriage check-up" interview. Through that session and several others, some issues surfaced that they have now been able to work on together. In the husband's words,

"Then what happened next has been a miracle in (our) marriage; it has altered the course of our relationship, and we are in a whole new season in our lives... We are confident

in entering the mission field now, since we see our marriage in a place that can sail through winds of adversity as our love deepens for Abba and for each other."

The wife's face these days tells the story! They will be heading for the field later this year.

Counseling field missionaries

In October, we traveled to Bulgaria, then to northern Greece for our Triennial Conference for all NMSI affiliates. It was a rich and full time for Bob and other counselors who were scheduled between workshop sessions from breakfast through 10 p.m. to meet with field missionaries who desired help and counsel. Some were experiencing discouraging health issues, others needed help with personal or team conflicts, and a few were experiencing post traumatic stress from repeated exposure to the tragedies

continued other side

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BOB AND ANNE'S NEWSLETTER



Judah Tangshing does relief work in the Myanmar Delta area affected by devastating typhoon floods



Newlyweds Craig and Rachel Frey preparing for ministry in Mozambique



Bob and Anne meeting with the Bulgaria team in November



Anne mentors Jen, Administrative Coordinator for Events (that includes the Triennial Conference!)

resulting from natural disasters during relief work.

In November, we returned to Bulgaria to help the team there with a crisis situation. We visited and counseled with the missionaries based in

Sofia as well as some national church leaders, then traveled to a Roma village near Berkovitsa where Michelle Arnold is ministering to youth, women and children. It was a joy to attend the church services and fellowship with

Pastor Rumen and his family. Pastor Rumen has been responsible for starting over a dozen national churches among the Gypsy-Roma people in Bulgaria.

We are thankful for you and

your partnership with us in this ministry of equipping and healing those who are taking the gospel to the world!

*In His Love,
 Bob and Anne*

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