

John Tarzwell had a passion for missions and serving wherever he was needed. He and his wife, Leeanne, joined OM in the fall of '83. They went through the bookkeepers' training course and were then sent off as support staff in South Asia where they served for two years. Their son Joel was born during that time. At the end of the two years they spent two months working in Pakistan with Afghan refugees. During that time, their hearts bonded with the Afghans, and they felt God's call to serve them. They returned to Canada to pastor a small church in British Columbia while preparing to return overseas with a long-term vision. Their second son, Matthew, was born during this time.

Visa problems slowed the return to Pakistan, so the family spent a year working in the OM Canada office in Ontario. In the fall of '88, they headed off to Pakistan for the second time. In October of '89, they were refused visas and asked to leave the country in one month. Leeanne flew home with the two boys before John. He was supposed to follow two weeks later which would give him time to train his replacement.

On the November 1, John left work at the office and was not seen again. It is thought that he went to visit two new Afghan "friends" who had set him up. No group ever claimed responsibility for taking him. About two years later, the general consensus was that he had been held for six weeks and then shot. The Canadian government declared him dead at the age of 33. Leeanne and the boys were in British Columbia, Canada, when this happened. Their third son, Caleb, was born on Dec. 14 of the same year.