

The Tarahumara Times

June 2019 - Issue 2

“Santa Teresita Medical Unit” Program Update

In the present year, the Santa Teresita Medical Unit will celebrate 55 years of having started its service in support of the Rarámuri indigenous people and under the inspiration and guidance of our beloved Father Verplancken, S.J. Today, our Medical Unit continues to provide a very needed service in the area where we live in the Mission of the Tarahumara.

Our government still does not have the necessary infrastructure to meet the needs of the population and our work remains essential. Thanks to the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul and their lay branch in the Vincentian Volunteers, our medical unit continues to pay special attention and dedication to the indigenous people of the area. Through May of this year, 2,073 people have been attended to in the outpatient clinic: 650 were pediatric consultations and 54 emergencies. 100 adults have been admitted for hospitalization as well as 98 children. There have been 1,493 laboratory studies, 398 X-ray studies and 136 transfers to other facilities.

We have a medical team composed of 5 general physicians and one pediatrician. The pediatric resident has been an excellent teacher for our doctors because she teaches particular aspects of the treatment to children. In recent weeks our

staff has also received supplemental training in the area of radiation protection (in the X-ray room).

We have recently started an organizational development study supported by the Iberoamericana University of the Jesuits in León, Guanajuato. Young social service providers, supported by their teacher, will help us to improve our performance as an organization. The study of all these processes will yield very useful elements in the design of our new digital clinical record program. With the favor of God we hope to receive the results of this evaluation by the end of this year. In the end, this will improve the accuracy of record keeping for all of the patients we serve.

Finally, 120 solar panels are being installed to produce clean electric power. We appreciate the support of the Fundación del Empresariado Chihuahuense A.C. (FECHAC) and the Tichi Muñoz Foundation, of Cd. Obregón Sonora. We are proud to be able to do our little bit in the production of clean energy to protect our common home. Much thanks to the nice people and patrons of the FECHAC.

*Memorial Tribute: Fr. Theodore "Ted" Weber
October 31, 1929 - May 31, 2019*

Greetings from Fr. Miguel Quintanilla, S.J.

In the midst of a world so convulsed by war, corruption and violence, it is very important to ask God our Father for a new perspective on our reality. This is a gift that God gives to those who, with humility and insistence, ask for it. God is the only one who can change our eyes so as to not get caught up on what social media may present to us. It is a gift from God to learn to direct our gaze to people who surround us: those that we meet every day and who are generous people. People who, in spite of difficulties, know how to trust in God and follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. People who recognize the need to extend a compassionate hand to those in need. These people exist, but do we realize what they may bring to us?

I extend to you a warm greeting with thanks for your prayers and support for our work in the Sierra Tarahumara.

Sincerely,

Father Miguel Quintanilla, S.J. (General Director)

I am saddened with the news of Fr. Weber's passing yet consoled because the struggle is finally over after a long life of service, compassion and exemplary pastoral care and sense-full-ness. I, over the past 18 years, came to admire Fr. Weber's down-to-earth style and warm smile. His solidarity with the Tarahumara Mission will be missed because of all of the promotional good that he did for us and also because it was our link to his wonderful family. Now, as our faith assures us, he is totally happy, free of aches and pains and toasting to us all, along with the Father. My gratitude forever! Fr. David, S.J.

We are extremely grateful to Fr. Weber who joined our Board of Directors as a founding member 20 years ago. His guidance and dedication inspired the entire Board to remember that our mission was to always help the Tarahumara Indians. He was a good man, a trusted advisor and inspirational mentor, and we are grateful for his service and friendship. John & Peggy Brockamp, TCHF President and Secretary

I feel deeply blessed by his friendship and by his love and compassion for the Tarahumara Indians. It is through our community of patrons that he and his love will faithfully stay with us. May God Bless him. Fr. Pedro, S.J.

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“Peter, do you love me feed my sheep.” John 21:17



Tarahumara
CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL
FUND
Of Oregon

A Brief History of the TCHF

The Tarahumara Children's Hospital Fund (TCHF) consists of three separate groups working together to support the Tarahumara Mission in the Copper Canyon of Mexico. These groups are located in Michigan, Louisiana and Oregon. The Mission headquarters is based in Creel, Chihuahua, Mexico with Fr. Miguel Quintanilla, S.J., serving as director since March of 2015. Long-time advisor and liaison Fr. David Ungerleider, S.J., is based in Tijuana, MX and works closely with Fr. Miguel to coordinate the activities of the U.S.-based groups.

The TCHF was first established in Detroit in 1966 as an independent, nonprofit, tax deductible organization. Since then, chapters were established in Louisiana in 1983 and Oregon in 1999. Our purpose is to raise money and awareness in the United States to support vital services provided to the Tarahumara Indians in the Copper Canyon region of Mexico. A population of 60,000+ Tarahumara Indians who live in the Sierra Mountains maintain lifestyles much like their ancient ancestors. Many still live in caves, without electricity or running water. Their dire poverty results in malnutrition, parasites, and many intestinal diseases, which still claim 25-40% of their children before their fifth birthday.

The Mission Tarahumara provides a range of services to the Tarahumara people. After many years of operating in the most basic way, a small hospital was opened in 1979. Today, it has 75 beds, 2/3 for children. The Mission is also responsible for digging water wells which provide safe drinking water for many people. A "Water for Life" initiative began in 2015 is currently in the process of testing, remediating and installing new clean and sustainable wells under the management of Schneider Water Services of St. Paul, OR. A boarding school has been developed which teaches the children about their own culture and language, the Spanish language and teaches them skills to make a living as farmers, craftsmen, and teachers of their people. In recent years, outdated and obsolescent oxygen and X-Ray equipment has been replaced as well as heavily used ambulances and rehabilitative playground equipment. All of these projects are funded and dependent on the generous help of patrons from around the country and world under the guidance of the Jesuit Provincial Authority in Mexico.

The Tarahumara people do not have the means to pay for these services themselves. The Mission must rely on the support of foundations and individuals who recognize the importance of both preserving a cultural heritage and ensuring the healthy future of a tribal community. Fr. Miguel continues the belief of "helping people help themselves" put forth by Fr. Verplancken back in the 1960's. The Mission does not just "hand out" charity today. It trains and uplifts the Indian people so that they can provide for themselves tomorrow.

Creel, Chihuahua, Mexico

Creel is a town in the Sierra Tarahumara (part of the Sierra Madre Occidental) of the Mexican state of Chihuahua. It is the second largest town (after San Juanito) in the municipality of Bocoyna. It is located some 175 km (109 mi) to the southwest of the state capital, Chihuahua City. At the census of 2010 it had a population of 5,026 inhabitants (down from 5,334 in 2005).

Near Creel is Divisadero, perhaps the best-known overlook of the "Three Canyons" area of the Copper Canyon, as well as Basaseachic Falls, one of the highest waterfalls in Mexico. Creel was historically a logging town, although tourism has become the primary industry over the last 25 years. Today, there are many hotels, restaurants and a number of tours down into the canyons.

Creel was founded with the name 'Estación Creel' on May 26, 1907 as a railroad depot on the Chihuahua - Pacific Line. It was named after Enrique Creeland Astolfo Nicolas Mendoza, governor of the state of Chihuahua at that time. He was the son of Reuben W. Creel, an American diplomat in Chihuahua. For many years before its eventual completion the line ended at Creel which aided its growth as a commercial center for the neighboring communities.



National Provincial View of Chihuahua



Regional City View of Creel

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Average Temperatures / Precipitation in Creel, MX in June:

High Temp 80 F / Low Temp 45 F / 2.75 Inches

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON CREEL AND THE COPPER CANYON:

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