Amazing and miraculous things happen every day here in Samachique—so much so, that we often forget how very amazing and miraculous they are. And we can sometimes even forget to acknowledge and thank God as the source of these blessings. I want to tell you about a day we had last July that caused me to stop and remember just how very extraordinary life here in our isolated canyons can be.

It was a day that started out like any other here at Hospital Misión Tarahumara. We had our morning devotions and singing with the staff and then prayed with our patients. The waiting room was full, so we knew it would be another busy day of attending to the illnesses and injuries of the Tarahumara people.

Around noon, an old truck rattled in from a remote village with a 17-year old girl in the pickup bed. She was experiencing a very difficult and dangerous labor. She had had no prenatal care and no one was sure how long she had been in labor. Midwife Michelle realized that the baby was stuck in the birth canal and that labor was not progressing. The ultrasound and the Doppler showed that the baby was in serious distress, and Michelle knew that a C-Section was urgently required to save the mother and child.

Dr. Chuck and I were just finishing up another surgery when Michelle advised us of the emergency. Within minutes the operating room was prepared and anesthetist Eric Kramer was putting in the spinal anesthesia. Another minute and the patient’s abdomen was prepped. Dr. Chuck said, “Say a prayer and let’s go!” Five minutes later the baby was out and being cared for by Michelle and Eric.

I can’t begin to say how proud I am of my crew. I only played a supporting role during the emergency—running around, grabbing supplies, medicines, and whatever else was needed. And all the time I was thanking God for His provision of a well-stocked storeroom and, most of all, for the team that was performing that emergency C-section as competently as any surgical team in the U.S.

I also thank God for you who make this life saving ministry possible as a vital part of our supporting team.

Every time I say your name in prayer—which is practically all the time—I thank God for you, the God I worship with my whole life...2Tim 1:3 MSG
On August 5th, the Literacy Center opened its doors to the first class of Tarahumara language learners. MMM linguists Andy and Deb Kramer have worked for the last 11 years developing the first comprehensive curriculum for front line missionaries in this very difficult Native American language. The class is designed as an intensive six month course with the mornings spent receiving grammar instruction and the afternoons in small group practice. Please pray God’s special blessings on this class - that missionaries would be able to better communicate God’s love to the Tarahumara people in their “heart” language.

We are so thankful to groups like this who will give of themselves, their talents, resources and even their vacations to help us with projects and just the plain, ordinary maintenance WORK that must be done in order that the gospel might go forth. Just as Aaron helped support Moses’ staff so that the battle was won, we are thankful for our brothers and sisters who support our work.

Greet those...who worked hard in the Lord. Romans 16:12 MSG

Maci and I realize that we have not been good at sharing news of all the wonderful work that Mexico Medical Missions has been doing. When people come to visit us here in Samachique, they always say something like, “This is unbelievable!” But to us, “unbelievable” has become our normal life and we often don’t see it. Our lives here are a whirlwind of births, life-saving midnight surgeries, treating children with dangerous dehydration and infections, limb-saving orthopedic surgeries, bedside prayer with patients, daily morning devotions with our wonderful staff, agricultural work, Gospel presentations in remote communities, school construction, well drilling and “Flights for Life” in our aircraft. A new demonstration farm has just been purchased, the new intensive care unit has been opened, and we have joined the first Tarahumara language class in the new Literacy Center. Maci and I are definitely stretching our aging brains as we try to assimilate yet another language.

We love what God is doing here and what your support has allowed us to witness first-hand. We know that you deserve more timely updates, and we are exploring new avenues of communicating all the happenings here in the Sierra Madre. You need to know what you have been supporting with your prayers and your money. So, if you Facebook and haven’t yet “liked” us at Mexico Medical Missions, please do so. (I hear that we’re Twittering next?)

Thank you for your love, your prayers, and most of all ....your patience.

-Mike and Maci Berkeley
Aviation remains an integral part of Mexico Medical Missions’ work in the Sierra Madre, and the previous year has seen many changes as we worked to improve the aviation program. The main change has been our new partnership with United Indian Missions. UIM is an aviation ministry that has worked for over 20 years in Mexico, flying missionaries and medical teams into the rugged Sierra Madre mountains. UIM will be providing aviation services to us and has placed pilot Brent Dodd full-time at Hospital Misión Tarahumara. Aircraft mechanic David Hardin has been receiving training from UIM in the maintenance of its primary workhorse aircraft—the Cessna 206. Together Brent and David will be working hard to expand the reach of the aviation program.

Brent brings an amazing depth of aviation experience to us. He was born to missionary parents in Papua New Guinea and has spent his entire career there as a bush pilot for New Tribes Mission. Hollie Mae grew up on the mission field in Indonesia and lived there until marrying Brent 26 years ago. They have three grown children as well as 7-year old Brielle who comes with them to their new home in the aircraft hanger close to the hospital. Yes, they actually live in an upstairs apartment inside the hangar and Hollie Mae’s view out her kitchen window is the aircraft on the hangar floor below. But the view out the other side is a beautiful mesa stretching out towards the canyon.

Mexico Medical Missions’ Cessna 185 has served us well over the years, bringing sick and injured patients into the hospital and flying medical teams out to remote communities. But, with our new partnership with United Indian Missions and their provision of a Cessna 206, there wasn’t a need for the old workhorse and it was sold.

As we have reached deeper into remote canyons, both with the Community Health Evangelism teams and to support other ministries, we have realized the need for a smaller airplane able to land on extremely short and difficult airstrips. Therefore, we are planning on buying a Piper SuperCub to complement the Cessna 206. The SuperCub won’t carry as much as the larger airplane, but it is economical to fly and has proven itself to be a reliable aircraft for the most challenging strips. We will use the funds from the sale of the Cessna 185 for this purchase, but we still lack $50,000. Please consider making a special gift towards the purchase of this essential aircraft.

On May 26th, Hospital Misión Tarahumara opened its new Intensive Care Unit. The closest ICU has been 200 miles away, and seriously sick or injured patients requiring intensive care have had to endure a grueling transport to Chihuahua and some have even lost their lives in the process. The new ICU has two beds and two ventilators and is one of the most capable facilities in all of Mexico. Under the direction of Dr. Chuck, this new unit will save lives and will even allow us to perform certain surgeries that require an ICU for post-operative care. We are very thankful to the Doctor Simi Foundation of Mexico for funding the construction of this wonderful new addition.
other big brown-eyed kids (who remarkably look an awfully lot like some of my grandkids) that if I don’t call them “mine,” who will?

Mexico Medical Missions with Bob and Pam on Facebook will let you keep up with their new adventures!

Climb a high mountain, Zion. You’re the preacher of good news. Raise your voice. Make it good and loud, Jerusalem. You’re the preacher of good news. Speak loud and clear. Don’t be timid! Tell the cities of Judah, “Look! Your God!”..God, the Master, comes in power….

- Isaiah 40: 9-10

Sometimes we think that the real heroes of Mexico Medical Missions are the vehicles. Our trucks and Jeeps do yeoman’s work of hauling sick and injured persons from remote villages, transporting patients to referral hospitals, pulling the well drilling rig, bringing in medical supplies from the border and hauling medical and evangelism teams into remote villages. At the end of last year our vehicles were in sad shape. They were old, beat up and unreliable and we were sending them out “on a wing and a prayer.”

In our Christmas letter we appealed to our supporters for a new ambulance and with your overwhelming generosity we were able to purchase a new Nissan diesel van which was outfitted as an ambulance for paved roads. In February, we received matching funds for an “off-road” ambulance which could travel the terrible, rocky roads of the Sierra Madre. You again responded generously to the match offer and we were able to purchase a 4WD Toyota truck which was specially outfitted as an ambulance.

New Opportunity: $2 to $1 Match!

Our “heavy hauler” Ford truck which brings our supplies in from the border is 15 years old and worn out. A new F250 diesel 4WD costs $50,000 in Mexico. AlSuper, one of the major grocery store chains in Mexico, has pledged $35,000 towards the purchase of this truck with the condition that we raise another $15,000 to complete the purchase. That’s more than a two to one dollar match! The needs of the hospital have grown to the point that is it imperative to have a reliable method of bringing in supplies for the more than 10,000 patients a year we serve. This would be a great time for you to make a donation to Mexico Medical for the matching on this new truck.